

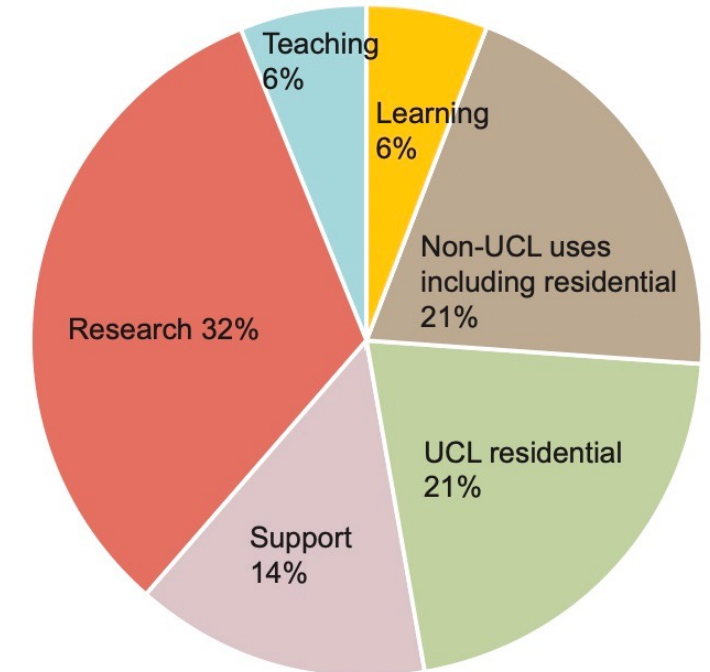
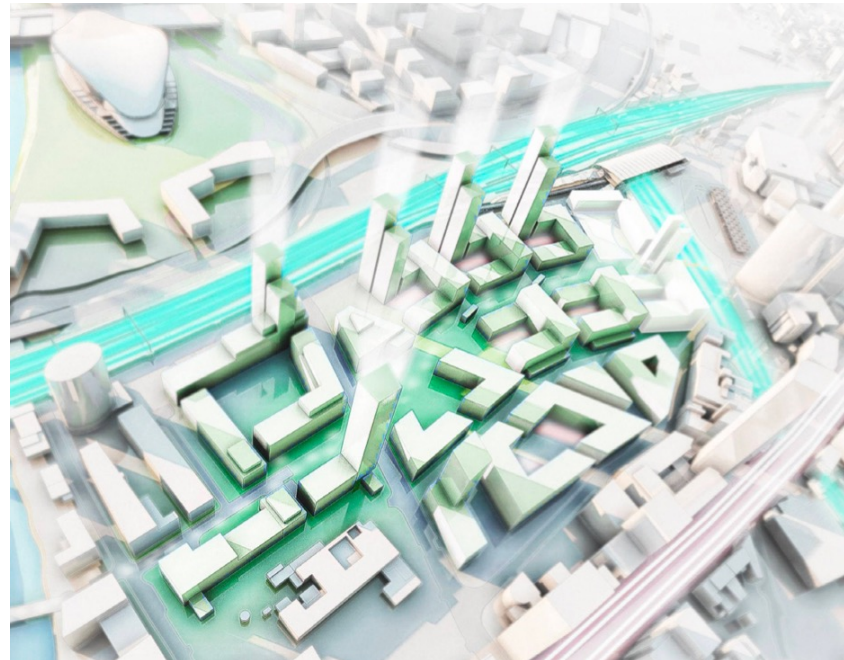


Questioning economic legacy: revisiting propositions for 'healthy growth' on the Carpenters Estate

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UCL Stratford: economic transformation via displacement and demolition

- Mayor of Newham claimed UCL's new campus would contribute to the Olympic legacy (UCL 2011a).
- LBN (2012a) suggested UCL's new campus would facilitate the borough's economic transformation.
- Treated the Carpenters Estate as a blank slate; already demolished?



UCL (2012) UCL Stratford: An update for residents of Carpenters Estate

Strong opposition to UCL Stratford, connecting with broader concerns about regeneration & the Olympics

- Residents re-asserted their wish to stay.
- UCL's Students Union actively opposed and Save Carpenters campaign formed. UCL Urban Lab academics attempted to influence the plans.
- Local activism connected with longer-term failure of Newham's regeneration plans and the Olympics to benefit the estate.
- UCL and LBN announced failure to agree commercial terms in May 2013.
- New proposal to take up space on the Olympic Park confirmed Nov 2013.



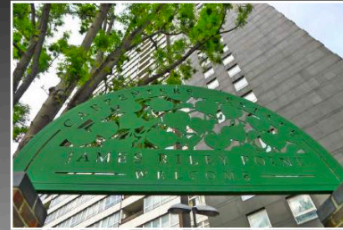
Paul Watt (2013)



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The Carpenters Community Plan

- UCL Stratford mobilised CARP! to initiate a community planning process in late 2012.
- Supported by Just Space / London Tenants Federation as part of anti-generation scholar-activist project (Lees and Ferreri, 2016; London Tenants Federation et al, 2014).
- Themes and proposals developed through a series of workshops, an exhibition, large-scale consultation and launch in September 2013.
- Evolved into the Greater Carpenters Neighbourhood Forum and Neighbourhood Plan (see Sagoe, 2016; Sendra and Fitzpatrick, 2020).



Carpenters Community Plan 2013

Supporting action on local economy

Critical reflection on conflicts and tensions between research and activism (eg Fuller 1999; Routledge 1996; Nagar and Geiger 2007).

Tools and ideas from diverse and community economies research (eg Cameron and Gibson 2005; Gibson-Graham 2005).

Resourcing collaborating groups (Derickson and Routledge 2015).



Everyday organizing work to mobilise threatened firms and other organisations

eg calling firms, inviting them to meetings, seeking views, presenting to meetings, taking notes, generally helping out.

Working with participating residents, firms and others to build a new understanding of the local economy

eg walkabouts; Business Directory, action-oriented interviews, informal conversations, drafting descriptive texts.

Supporting the Carpenters Community Plan group to put their ideas into action

eg community events; meetings with planning officials; planning consultations; the community plan.

RESEARCH DATA: 12 interview transcripts; two folders + 500 electronic notes and papers; 50 research diary entries.

Making economic solidarity through anti-displacement struggle

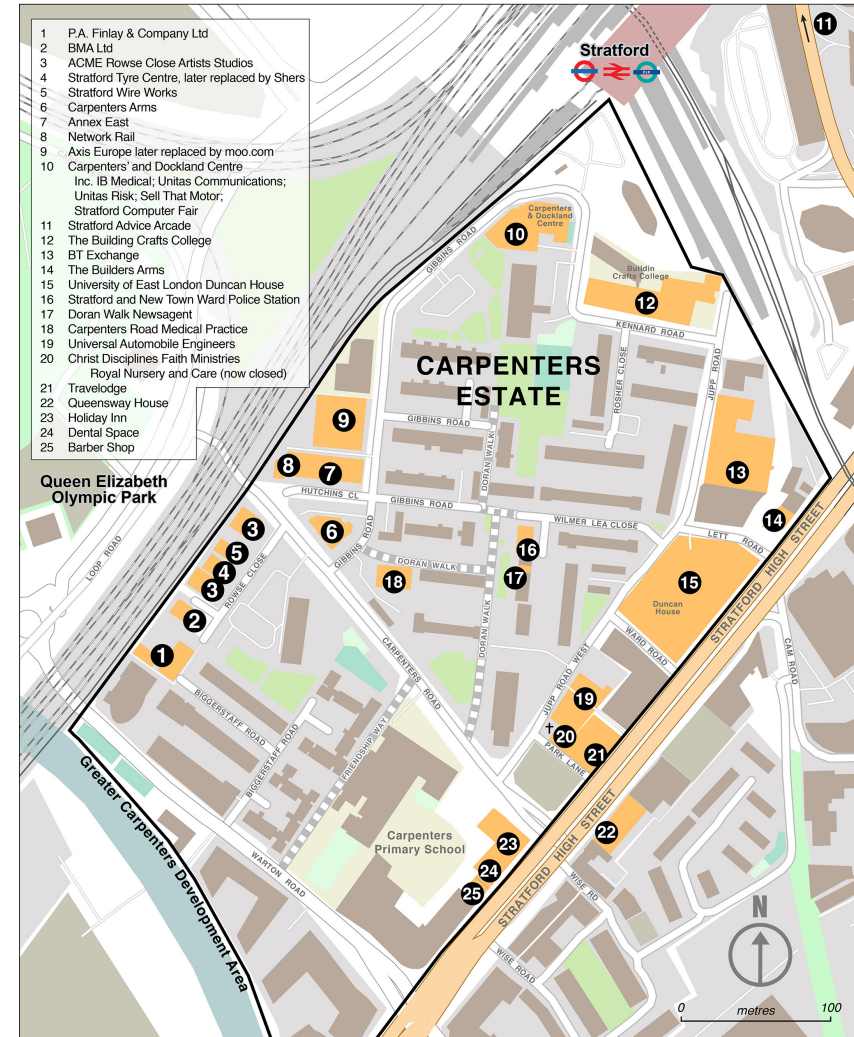
- Several firms had prior experience of displacement. Others experienced negative impacts from the Olympics.
- Testimony from businesses forged solidarity with residents; demonstrating shared experiences of displacement and marginalisation.
- Eight firms attended meetings and events; others took part in other ways.
- Businesses were keen to establish a Business Forum to represent their collective interests. Several joined the Neighbourhood Forum.



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Challenging the erasure of valued local economic activities and actors

- Residents wanted to find out more about local businesses as they wanted them to be able to remain in the area.
- No mention of local businesses by LBN or UCL but Business Directory revealed 13+ active businesses providing jobs for over 220 people.
- Previously hidden firms and specialisms were presented to UCL, Newham and LLDC via meetings and planning consultations.



Map and design: Miles Irving. Photos Myfanwy Taylor and Julian Cheyne.

A new narrative for the local economy

Our local economy has many strengths. The area provides excellent facilities for start-up businesses, which should be retained and potentially expanded. There are existing concentrations of businesses in construction, maintenance and refurbishment, as well as the Building Crafts College and artists' studios, which together should be recognised and seen as an asset for the future.

There are excellent training facilities in the Building Crafts College, the Carpenters and Docklands Centre hosts a popular computer fair, and there are a number of local education and training colleges. Improved transport and access to the estate is essential for these and other local businesses to thrive.

Carpenters Community Plan (2013, p11).

Economic development as ‘healthy growth’

- For Carpenters residents and businesses, UCL proposition represented a disturbing and discontinuous vision of economic development reliant on their displacement.
- Through the community planning process, residents and businesses began to shape other visions and proposals in which the future development of the economy was connected and entwined with their own needs, values and aims.
- ‘Healthy growth’: local economic development led by existing businesses, involving and benefiting local residents.

Local economy proposals

- Retain and support existing businesses by reversing depopulation and improving transport and access.
- Develop links between local businesses, education and training providers eg Building Crafts College; University of East London.
- Apprenticeships, work placements and up-skilling for local residents.
- New workspaces especially for skilled trades, manufacturing and for young people to try out new business ideas.
- Local employment policies and London Living Wage

Developing a Neighbourhood Forum & Plan

- Shift in responsibility for planning from Newham to LLDC in 2012.
- In Autumn 2013, the group decided to form a Neighbourhood Forum to advance their plans.
- Lengthy and technical process but could ultimately result in a Neighbourhood Plan that was part of statutory local plan.
- Twin track approach: developing a Neighbourhood Forum *and* influencing the emerging LLDC local plan via the 'Newham Network'.
- Around 10 local businesses participated in the Neighbourhood Forum. Designated in 2015; statutory consultation on Neighbourhood Plan 2019. Forum lapsed 2020.



Neighbourhood Plan economy policies

- Education and training via new Neighbourhood Education Partnership and Carpenters Centre for Learning Support.
- Encouraging local businesses and local employment, inc via low-cost workspace (inc above garages), local apprenticeships and London Living Wage.
- Diverse retail provision, focusing on providing shops and services needed in the neighbourhood; exclusion zone for takeaways.

Influencing the LLDC's local plan

- Further mobilisation of Carpenters businesses and artists via Newham Network.
- Proposed amendments to the local plan in line with Carpenters Community Plan → opened up debate via the Examination in Public.
- Mobilised evidence gathered through community planning process to make the case for recognizing existing local businesses, protecting employment sites and ensuring benefits for existing residents and businesses.
- No material policy changes secured beyond reference to Neighbourhood Plan.

Should the Greater Carpenters site allocation be amended in line with the Carpenters Community Plan to 'confirm it supports sensitive refurbishment, building on existing homes, businesses and community infrastructure, with active community involvement'?
Matters for discussion, Examination in Public 2015

53 artists work from ACME's Rowse Close studios on the Carpenters Estate. 1000 people on waiting list.
Evidence from Rowse Close artist

Helped 280 people back to work via low-cost play care, subsidised by income from facilities and offices.
Evidence from director of Carpenters and Docklands Centre

‘We are here’: mobilising businesses across the LLDC

- ~13 businesses and other organisations participated in Newham Network. Difficult to mobilise: no threat of immediate displacement; long and technical process; limited capacity for required organising work.
- Businesses had been surveyed about their businesses for the LLDC’s local economy studies, but not informed or included in discussions about the plan.
- Newham Network opened up a space for local firms and organisations to talk about their views, values and aspiration, and make their claims for recognition and inclusion.
- Meetings and workshops throughout 2013 and 2014, informing consultation responses and evidence to Examination in Public in 2015.

Small businesses

Stratford Wire Works (metal fabricator, Carpenters)
 Plot London (design firm, Hackney Wick)
 Truman’s Beer (Hackney Wick brewery)
 East End Trades Guild (small business alliance)

Artists and artist studio providers

ACME Rowse Close artists (Carpenters)
 Stour Space (Fish Island)
 Mother Studios (Hackney Wick)
 Space Studios

Community/enterprise hubs

Bromley by Bow Centre
 Community Links
 Carpenters and Docklands Centre

Campaign and interest groups

Affordable Wick
 Hackney Wick Cultural Interest Group

Reframing local industry as an asset for healthy growth

- One day allocated to debate the local economy chapter of the draft plan within the Examination in Public.
- Newham Network gathered evidence and experience of commercial displacement to challenge the plan's underpinning assumptions of deindustrialization as natural and inevitable.
- Used evidence from the LLDC's own studies to demonstrate the strength and value of local industry eg 2% vacancy rates for industrial land; 43% of industrial workforce is local (URS, 2014).
- No policy changes secured. New text in local plan stating that new development, investment and HE would benefit existing local businesses and residents.

Local economy proposals

- Protection from displacement for existing businesses: providers of valued local jobs and services that should have the same 'right to remain' as residents.
- Local industry as an asset to be retained and supported, including its capacity to provide good-quality jobs for local residents.
- Stronger policy needed to protect industry and retain low-cost workspace; efforts to do so at Hackney Wick innovative but not sufficient.
- Strong targets for new jobs, training and education for local residents for all new developments, rather than case-by-case negotiations.
- Future HE developments to be strongly rooted in the community
- Policy to encourage local supply chains

Returning to Carpenters - Newham's outline masterplan

ECONOMY

'Mixed use street': maker workspaces; shops; food growing, making & selling; performance spaces; learning skills.

New buildings for the Building Crafts College & Carpenters and Docklands Centre.

'Inclusive growth' via 100s of local jobs and apprenticeships, local procurement and inward investment. Policy levers???

Implications for existing businesses: Consultation; involvement; right to remain/return/compensation???

Economic vision???

Masterplan update

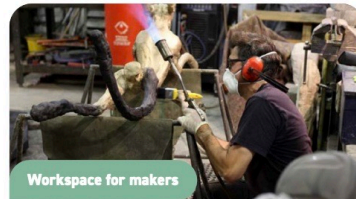
Mixed use street: a sensory place



Workspace for makers



Workspace for makers



Workspace for makers



Learning new skills



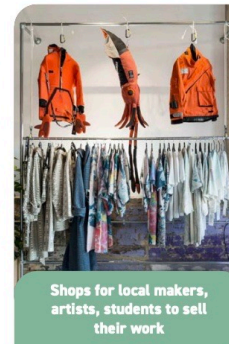
Food making & selling



Space for performances



Making spaces for growing



Shops for local makers, artists, students to sell their work



Food making & selling

Populo – Masterplan presentation (March 2022)
One slide on 'economy' out of 33.

Limits to (economic) legacy: some reflections so far

- LLDC legacy and convergence limits set too high to ensure any protections or benefits for existing residents and businesses. Failure to adequately deal with the problem of displacement.
- Participating in the local plan was *extremely demanding*, and not resourced. Support from Just Space & London Tenants Federation (and me on local economy) was essential.
- LLDC power to influence development much weaker in Carpenters than other LLDC areas: Newham majority landowner; masterplanning process stalled.
- History of conflict over the Carpenters Estate → lack of dialogue, trust and cooperation between Newham Council and Carpenters.
- Particularly weak involvement/protection/benefit for local businesses; broader and growing problem, especially in London due to escalating workspace crisis.
- Deindustrialisation ‘baked into’ thinking about urban economic development in UK → inability to see strength of local industry – even in the face of overwhelming evidence from LLDC studies.

Towards economic development without displacement

- ‘Healthy growth’ as a people-centred alternative to economic development via displacement:
 - No displacement: right to remain.
 - Build on the strengths of the local economy.
 - Meet the needs of local people.
 - Strengthen local economic networks and community/enterprise/education/training organisations.
 - Strong targets for local jobs and training from any new development.
- Requires local state to share power and resources with local residents and businesses; to respect and support them as central agents of local development.
- Challenges assumptions of industrial decline; strong interest in retaining and growing local industry to provide good quality jobs for local people.
- Synergies with ‘asset-based community development’, foundational economy, social infrastructure, just transition, economic democracy and public-commons partnerships.

The role of universities

- No displacement.
- Recognise and respect the authority, knowledge and expertise of local communities.
- Connect with local firms and organisations to ensure local people can access to jobs, training and education.
- Partner and collaborate with local community organisations via teaching, research and volunteering activities. Share resources and power.

Thank you for listening!

Questions, feedback and input welcome.

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