

**AN EMERGENT SENSE OF PLACE: EXAMINING THE SOCIO-CULTURAL
IMPACT AND EXPERIENTIAL CHANGE OF THE NEW LONDON MUSEUM
IN SMITHFIELD**

**A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

By
Tom Butler

Department of Social and Political Sciences
Brunel University London

27 September 2024

Abstract

In 2026 the London Museum opens in former market buildings in Smithfield, a historic working district on the edge of the City of London. The Museum's £437m relocation is a major component of a culture-led development scheme, one that is radically transforming the local area. This interdisciplinary research interrogates what constitutes the identity and social experience of an area undergoing accelerated change, a 'sense of place' that I conceptualise as simultaneously socio-cultural, political, embodied, and imagined. This frames an analysis of how a museum that is both an instrument and agent of change can establish an equitable relationship with its new locality. Undertaken between 2020-2024 as a Collaborative Doctoral Award with the London Museum, this study follows a grounded theory approach, engaging with the diverse experiences of Smithfield's social actors as well as the strategies of municipal and institutional agents. I apply a mixed methodology incorporating document analysis, ethnographic observation, walking interviews, and participatory workshops. This thesis argues that local identity and experience is relationally mediated by shared material, sensory, and imagined cues, produced through the rhythmic expression of power over time, and given meaning through real-and-imagined encounters. My research reveals the tangible and intangible effects of culture-led development processes, and their multiple aesthetic and experiential strategies of commodification and control. Ultimately, I argue for the reconceptualisation of a 'sense of place' into a dynamic concept that accounts for the inter-dependence of place and processes of urban change, the multiplicity of experience, and the uneven and negotiated effects of globalised capitalism. Drawing together literature from sociology, urban studies, and museum studies, I make key methodological, theoretical, and practical contributions to researching culture-led development. Respectively, these comprise the *adaptation* of Lefebvre's (2004) rhythmanalytical method through Massey's (1991) notion of place as process, a theory of *accommodation* within senses of place, and the development of a strategic *blueprint* for equitable museum approaches to new local contexts. The latter is disseminated as a research output through an online resource for museum professionals.

Contents

Acknowledgements	p5
Chapter 1 Introduction: The Changing Texture of London's 'Smooth Field'	p6
1.1 Why senses of place matter: My theoretical framework and methodology	p10
1.2 From the periphery to the centre: Introducing Smithfield	p13
1.3 'An Emergent Sense of Place': Chapter overview	p22
Chapter 2 Capitalising on Culture: Placing Smithfield	p26
2.1 Urban development: Setting the scene	p28
2.2 Rationales of culture-led development	p43
Chapter 3 The Potency of Place: Developing a Theoretical 'Sense of Place' Framework	p64
3.1 Socio-cultural and political senses of place	p66
3.2 Embodied senses of place	p78
3.3 Imagined senses of place	p89
Chapter 4 Methodology	p99
4.1 'A process of triangulation': My research approach and positionality	p99
4.2 Fieldsite specific: Using tailored 'inventive' methods	p107
4.3 Beyond rhythm analysis	p111
4.4 A changing fieldsite and methodological limitations	p114
Chapter 5 Boundaries: Defining a Sense of Place	p117
5.1 Sensible boundaries of place	p119
5.2 Relational boundaries of place	p136
5.3 Boundaries between the real and imagined	p147
Chapter 6 Rhythms: Producing a Sense of Place	p162
6.1 Planning rhythms	p164
6.2 Queer rhythms	p181

Chapter 7	Stories: Recognising a Sense of Place	p201
7.1	Emplaced stories: Real-and-imagined encounters in Smithfield	p203
7.2	Absent stories: Recognising LGBTQ+ heritage in Smithfield	p221
Chapter 8	Placing the Museum	p237
8.1	Approaching Smithfield	p238
8.2	A shared place?: Contextualising a socio-spatial vision for Smithfield	p256
Chapter 9	Conclusion: Re-placing Smithfield	p272
9.1	A place in process: Analysing Smithfield	p275
9.2	Within and beyond Smithfield: Accommodating senses of place in culture-led development	p281
Appendix A:	List of Participants and Sample ‘Boundary Walk’ Maps	p291
Appendix B:	‘Queer Smithfield’ Walking Tour and Workshop Overview	p304
Appendix C:	‘Placing Museums’: A Sense of Place Blueprint for Equitable Museum Approaches to New Local Contexts – Structure & Summary	p307
References		p321

Acknowledgements

Getting to know Smithfield has been an adventure and a privilege. I would like to thank the many people who have participated in this research and generously shared their time and their experiences of this fascinating place.

I owe a lot to my supervisors Monica Degen, Paul Moody, and Lauren Parker – thank you. It has been a life-changing journey and I have learnt so much from each of you. Thanks also to Tricia Austin and Richard Sandell for encouraging me from the start. I am grateful to the Arts and Humanities Research Council for funding this project, and the support and enthusiasm of the Techne team. I am also grateful for the opportunity to work with Masha, Anna, and Elisabet at the CCCB, a placement generously funded by Techne and which provided much-needed perspective and personal inspiration.

Thank you to my family and friends for supporting and recharging me when I have most needed it, especially Charlotte and Pip, Mum and Mike, Dad, Maureen and Michael, Siobhan, Maria and Dan, Richard and Dan, Richard and Saskia, James and Andrew, Clare, Zoe, Sarah, Isabel, Nick and Katie, Chaz and Kat, Annette and Dave, Lou and Liam, Daniel, Julie, Kevin, and Oli and Fred. I feel very lucky to have had your friendship and support. For Sean, I need words beyond ‘thank you’ for the belief you have shown in me. It would have been impossible without you and Patsy, your love and patience. I’m looking forward to the many places we’ll go.

My time in Smithfield has also been a pilgrimage of sorts. My grandfather worked as a watchmaker in nearby Hatton Garden, and he and my grandmother Jeanne lived in Clerkenwell for a time. Like them, I now have my own map of local associations, routes, conversations and friends. I hope this research, in its aspiration to expand the scope of culture-led development and advance museum planning and practice, will support improved outcomes and experiences for people in Smithfield and other sites of urban change.

I dedicate this thesis to Katie Ralfs.

Chapter 1 Introduction: The Changing Texture of London's 'Smooth Field'

Friday, 7:07am. A bright cloudless morning. A jogger and cyclist in hi-vis make their way up Charterhouse Street. Taxis vie with forklifts, pump trucks, and white vans around the market's perimeter. One van has 'Superior Meats' written on the side. I can hear the muffled noise of a radio from inside one of the vans, while outside people talk on the phone or to each other in a variety of languages. I try to get a coffee in Spice of Life. A man in butcher's whites is drinking out of a takeaway cup in the entrance and holding a lit cigarette just outside the door. He laughs in sympathy when the server tells me they shut at 7am. Across the road three men are sitting outside The Fox and Anchor with beers. I walk past the new TikTok offices which are still not open, although I can see inside the lobby where there are large screens showing TikTok content on a vivid loop. A security guard comes out and asks, "you ok mate?". I say I was just watching the screens, but he seems unconvinced. A sign "Smithfield. Goods vehicles loading only" is attached to the building's new stone and glass façade. A few metres up the street is an Elizabeth Line roundel, still wrapped in plastic and yet to be unveiled.

Fieldnotes, 1/7/22

This research examines how a museum that is at the heart of a culture-led development process can establish an equitable relationship with its new local area. To inform this, I analyse how the concept of a 'sense of place' can account for place identity and experience as well as the agents, effects, and ongoing processes of urban change. My thesis brings together questions of who urban renewal projects are for and what effects they have, how places are experienced by local social actors and affected by institutional agents of change, and whether a museum can 'land lightly' in a new local area. My case study is the culture-led development of Smithfield and the £437m relocation of the London Museum within it.

Smithfield is an area synonymous with its centuries-old meat market and variously characterised as liminal, an oasis, 'reeking of history', and at "the very fulcrum of London"

(Forshaw, 2015). In Smithfield, as elsewhere, the ambitions and processes of culture-led development both derive from and impact local contexts. As the quotation from my fieldnotes shows, Smithfield is rich with sensory, temporal, and socio-cultural tensions: the clashing trajectories of vehicles and commuters; localised yet offset cultures of consumption; the tentative arrival of a global social media firm; and the approaching Elizabeth Line poised to catalyse change. The London Museum is stepping into this complex environment and inevitably changing it. My thesis analyses this process, the experiential make-up of the urban ecosystem it affects, and the prospects for institutional participation. In doing so, I question what constitutes the sense of place of an area undergoing accelerated change, and how does a relocating museum approach its role within this place and this process?

In this *Introduction* I establish the principal dynamics of my research before providing an overview of my fieldsite and its histories. I then summarise my theoretical framework, methodology, and research questions, followed by a chapter-by-chapter outline of my thesis.

The London Museum (known as the Museum of London until July 2024, and herein ‘the Museum’) is the capital’s social history museum. It is funded jointly by the City of London Corporation (herein ‘the Corporation’) and the Greater London Authority. Its £437m relocation is part of a broader set of local economic, social, political, and spatial strategies to develop a cultural and creative quarter in the north-west corner of the City of London. Broadly defined, culture-led development describes schemes that use culture to improve an urban area spatially, economically or symbolically – or across all three dimensions (Della Lucia & Trufino, 2018; Evans, 2005; Miles, 2005; Sacco et al., 2014; Zukin, 1995). In Smithfield, various development narratives highlight the creation of new social spaces, the celebration of local heritage, and benefits to social mobility. However, other dimensions are also at stake. Academic analyses of approaches to culture-led development from urban sociology and urban studies have been largely critical, highlighting the limited improvements to local inequality (Degen & Garcia, 2012; Evans, 2005; Zukin, 1995), and the disruption to local senses of place (Patterson, 2016; Pratt, 2018) and belonging (Miles, 2005). Others question the social accountability of their underlying models (Sacco et al.,

2014: 2807). It is therefore vital to examine not only the aims and implementation of such schemes, but more importantly how they affect the social experience and identity of the places involved.

The relocation of the London Museum comes at a time of significant change and challenge for both the UK cultural sector and for London's economic fortunes. Many of the arguments for, and indeed physical scope of, the Smithfield scheme have shifted since it was first conceived in 2013, including those resulting from the UK's decision to leave the European Union in 2016 and its effect on the competitiveness of the City of London as a global financial centre. Further, the economic impact of COVID-19, the September 2022 'mini-budget', and the war in Ukraine have led to huge escalations in material and construction costs resulting in increased timescales and capital funding requirements. Estimated costs of the Museum relocation, for example, have risen by 30 per cent, from an original £337m to £437m (Stoughton, 2023) and its opening moved from 2021 to 2024 to 2026. This slippage has likewise affected the parameters of this research, initially proposed as covering the development and opening of the Museum to eventually spanning more than three years of its development.

While the COVID-19 pandemic initially emphasised the value of local socio-cultural amenities and communal experiences, it also disproportionately affected the financial sustainability of cultural institutions (Szántó, 2020) and has led to persistently reduced visitor numbers since the pandemic (Cheshire, 2023). The cultural sector also saw significant cuts by successive Conservative governments, affecting the viability of operating models and in some cases the ability of institutions to remain operational. Although the manifesto pledges and initial statements made by the new Labour government suggest a more receptive and supportive policy landscape, the outcomes remain uncertain. These macro-economic and political conditions have provided a febrile context for the culture-led development of Smithfield, one that has nonetheless been productive for this research.

The value of local places to individuals and communities in terms of their heritage, identity, experience, and amenities has become increasingly significant in recent years, amplified by COVID-19 but already reflected by UK arts funding bodies and government policy. Within

the cultural sector, the 2017 Mendoza Review highlighted the important role museums can play in contributing to their local communities and economies (DCMS, 2017), while Arts Council England centres ‘place’ in its strategy and outcomes, including the Creative People and Places fund (ACE, 2024). Focusing on design and planning, the Office for Place was established in July 2023 as an arms-length body to support the creation of “popular, healthy, beautiful and sustainable places” (UK Government, 2023). While these provide varied approaches to and understandings of what ‘place’ means, they all stress its value to local people in terms of community identity, health, and social and economic sustainability. This in turn informs the paradigms on which culture-led development is based, and the local relevance and deployment of culture within it.

Just as the social worth, economic value, and symbolic meanings of ‘place’ all present a complex field of enquiry, so too does ‘culture’, and the practices, organisations, and sites where it is produced and consumed. For Harvey (2012: 89) culture is “a form of commons” that is susceptible to commodification, a category in which he includes arts, theatre, music, cinema and architecture, as well as localised ways of life, heritage, collective memories, and affective communities. Indeed, many of these facets recur in this research. I also recognise a narrower definition proposed by Arts Council England, where ‘culture’ is a collective term for ‘the arts’, ‘museums’, ‘libraries’ and other forms of activity (ACE, 2020), one relevant to the terminological use of ‘culture’ in ‘culture-led development’. I use this sense herein, specifying broader economic, social, and experiential dimensions and values where relevant.

Within this, my research focuses on the role of a particular type of cultural institution – a *museum* – within a culture-led development scheme. This too is a contested term, with the International Council of Museums agreeing a new definition in 2022 (ICOM, 2022) after a long process of debate that reflects museums’ shifting purpose (see Kendall-Adams, 2019; Nelson, 2019). This is a role that now extends well beyond the preservation of objects to engage with dimensions of equality, diversity, and social justice (Janes & Sandell, 2019; Sandell, 2017) and the ways in which museums “might acknowledge and act upon inequalities within and outside of the cultural domain” in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, class, disability, or sexuality. This is underpinned by a belief in the capacity of museums to

“shape as well as reflect social and political relations” (Nightingale & Sandell, 2012: 3) and to work as agents of progressive change (Gurian, 2006; Janes, 2024; Murawski, 2021). Indeed, while ‘museums’ are linked with ‘galleries’ as a single DCMS sub-category (DCMS, 2022) they have epistemological, programmatic, and experiential distinctions. This is a specificity rarely addressed within academic analyses of culture-led development processes, one that I suggest affects the particular socio-spatial impact of distinct schemes.

Notably, the London Museum is also a ‘museum of the city’ (see CAMOC, 2024), with collections dedicated to London’s social and working histories, archaeological archives, and contemporary material culture. As a city museum, the Museum has a unique spatial and symbolic relationship both to London and to its immediate neighbourhood, as well as an inherently political role as a site of debate and collective memory (Calabi, 2009). For the Museum, this is expressed succinctly in its ambition to be “a force for good” in its neighbourhood (London Museum, 2023a: 6). This research examines museum programmes and practices in this light, arguing that within a culture-led development process a museum can play an active role in shaping the sense of place of its local area; to fully examine this role, however, means first reconceptualising what a sense of place is within a culture-led development process.

1.1 WHY SENSES OF PLACE MATTER: MY THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

As Cresswell (2015) suggests, “given the ubiquity of place, it is a problem that no one quite knows what they’re talking about when they are talking about place” (p6). The same sentiment extends to the term ‘sense of place’, a phrase whose often benign use to describe the local character of urban areas undergoing redevelopment belies its complex philosophical framing and diverse disciplinary interpretations (Westerholt et al., 2022). Reflecting this, I devise a theoretical framework that draws on relevant aspects of sociology, urban studies, human geography, and museum studies, an interdisciplinary assemblage necessary to analyse the intersection of social experience, museum practices, and strategies of urban change relevant to this study. Following Soja (1996), this reflects a disciplinary and conceptual ‘nomadism’ (p82) in which no single mode of spatial thinking is privileged over

others, a standpoint necessary to fully examine the multiple dimensions of a 'sense of place'.

Within this, I draw on Lefebvre's (1991) understanding of the social production of space to emphasise the importance of social processes, cultural practices, and power dynamics in shaping place. However, Lefebvre's differentiation of social actors is limited and a more fine-grained view of social relations is needed. Doreen Massey provides this. Massey (1991) highlights that subjective experiences of place are affected by uneven power geometries: who we are and how we are positioned in relation to global flows, she argues, determines our access to resources and shapes our sense of belonging and our agency. These are vital considerations when analysing senses of place, emphasised further by recent scholarship on intersectionality and inequality (Collins & Bilge, 2020; Giesecking, 2020; Puwar, 2004; Sharma, 2014). Massey also underscores the relationality of place, its openness to change, and its inherently political nature (2005), aspects that run counter to notions of a static and commodifiable place identity.

Alongside diverse socio-cultural, relational, and political senses of place, I also stress the *sensing* inherent to senses of place. This includes the body as the "condition for experiencing the world" (Tuan, 1977: 89) and the rhythm of bodily movement (Lefebvre, 2004; Lefebvre & Régulier, 1996), but more specifically the 'sensescapes' of urban development which reveal how local social actors are affected by a changing sensory landscape (Degen, 2010; 2014; Low, 2015; Simonsen, 2005). These are no less political, with Böhme (2018) highlighting how the production of 'atmospheres' reveals the politics of contemporary life within and through sensory perception (see also Degen & Rose, 2024; Pow, 2009; Swenson, 2021). In this way the embodied sensory experiences of local social actors are both a mediator of individual senses of place, as well as a barometer of simultaneously socio-cultural, sensory and political change.

Lastly, I assert the significance of imagination to both how senses of place are formed and how processes of urban change are communicated. The reframing of Lefebvre's (1991) 'lived' space (the everyday, experiential dimension of space alongside 'perceived' and 'conceived' space) as 'thirdspace' by Soja (1996) proposes a conflation of the 'real-and-

imagined' into a simultaneous experience. This means imagined aspects are co-present in everyday spatial practices. This framing, augmented through David Herman's notion of 'storyworlds' (2009) or mental models of fictional worlds, is significant for this research as it brings in imagined and narrative mediations of place experience, including local heritage (De Nardi, 2021) development imaginaries (Campkin, 2013; Degen & Rose, 2022) and affective place brands (Childs, 2008; Greenberg, 2008; Jensen, 2007), all dimensions relevant to Smithfield's evolving senses of place. This final aspect completes my development of an interconnected theoretical framework that understands a sense of place as socially-produced, political, embodied, and imagined. It provides a basis for the analysis of place, culture-led development, and museum engagement this research requires.

The multi-disciplinary theoretical framing, and the complex and ever-changing nature of urban development and museum planning, requires a mixed and inventive set of research methods. I consequently follow a constructivist grounded theory approach (Cresswell & Poth, 2018) to support rich and contextually-grounded research findings: this also supports the inclusion of new data and sources over the course of the research, underpinning the analysis of the *processes* of place rather than discrete phenomena – vital for a rapidly developing fieldsite. To examine varied aspects of social experience and institutional activity, I apply multiple qualitative methods comprising policy research, walking interviews, face-to-face interviews, and participatory workshops. Central to these is regular ethnographic observation in the fieldsite (spanning 2021, 2022, and 2023), within which there is a necessary sensitivity to observation at various times of the day and night (given Smithfield's 24-hour spatial practices) and to the multi-sensory dimensions of place experience and practice (Pink, 2015). I conducted 25 semi-structured walking interviews with local social actors, a method that captures the dynamic interaction of individuals with the fieldsite; participants span local residents, workers, business owners, and regular visitors. For institutional actors (those that work for organisations affected by and participating in Smithfield's redevelopment), I carried out 18 semi-structured face-to-face interviews, with individuals from organisations including Culture Mile, St Bartholomew's Hospital, St Mungo's, The Peel Institute, the Smithfield Market Tenants Association, Islington Council, Farringdon Without Ward, Cripplegate Ward, the Worshipful Company of Butchers, Barbican Action Quarter and the London Museum – a breadth that represents the

organisational complexity of the fieldsite and its ongoing transformation. I also use policy research to reveal the context, genesis, and evolution of the culture-led development scheme, as well as highlighting the divergent aims and values of institutions involved.

Further, I devise and apply a combined participatory walking tour and workshop that aims specifically to uncover the dynamic interaction of situated histories and senses of place. Working across all of these elements is an ‘adapted rhythmanalysis’, combining Lefebvre’s (2004) original mode of thought with Massey’s framing of place as process (Massey, 1991, 2005). This approach, one that integrates historical and longitudinal research to expand the temporal and rhythmic field of view, supports a richer understanding of the differential social effects of urban development processes pertinent to this study.

1.2 FROM THE PERIPHERY TO THE CENTRE: INTRODUCING SMITHFIELD

In this section I present a short history of my fieldsite, tracing Smithfield’s evolving topography, communities, and practices in order to foreground my analysis in the empirical chapters that follow. I draw attention to relevant historic economic, political, social, and spatial developments that are used by the Corporation, the Museum and others to frame Smithfield’s current identity and shape its future. Indeed as Miles (2005) suggests, acknowledging the “historical identities of people and places” provides a potent starting point “from which critical analyses can develop” (p923). While this section comprises Smithfield’s more normative histories, it provides a necessary backdrop to my subsequent discussions of the area’s diverse social experiences, counter-histories, and long-established power dynamics.

In 200 AD Smithfield was a broad, sloping, boggy area beyond Londinium’s walls, used by the city’s Roman inhabitants as both a rubbish dump and a cemetery. Almost a thousand years later and little had changed, with an account from 1102 describing “a moorishe ground and comon laystall for excrementes voided oute of ye citie” (Burford, 1990: 155). Alongside this particular practice, the open topography of the ‘smoothe-feilde’ – close to but outside the rules and restrictions of the City of London – also provided space for people and animals to gather in large numbers. This enabled the weekly live animal market that

would come to dominate the site, as well as crowd-pulling public executions, and regular jousting tournaments that were considered “grand social occasions” (Forshaw, 2015: 22). In 1103 Augustinian monk Rahere was granted permission to build “a church and an hospital to the glory of Sent Bartholomew”, along with a license to hold an annual three-day fair on St Bartholomew’s Day, the 24th August. While Bartholomew Fair would continue until 1855, both the hospital and church remain to this day, each celebrating their 900th anniversaries in 2023. As early as 1103 then, we have aspects of Smithfield’s sense of place – the meat trade, the hospital, the church, and a propensity for revelry – that, arguably, continue to shape its present identity.

The Corporation began to codify economic and spatial practices in Smithfield from the start of the thirteenth century, adding another aspect of place that still defines its current and future outlook: municipal intervention. This included the ‘Customes of Smythefeld’, a set of regulations for prices and weights in 1200, and in 1241 the designation of Cock Lane as an ‘assigned place’ for the City’s prostitutes beyond the City itself, creating what has been termed London’s first red-light district (Burford, 1990; Forshaw, 2015). In 1222, chains of wooden poles known as ‘bars’ were established at the top of present day Cowcross Street “to aid the collection of commercial dues and the keeping out of lepers, serfs and vagabonds” (1990: 19), a tactic that we shall see in Chapter 5 has painful echoes in the imposition of present day anti-social behaviour orders.

The Smithfield area in the 1300s was also a site of death, both unseen and deliberately public. This included mass graves in present day Charterhouse Square for victims of the Black Death in 1348, as well as the murder of Wat Tyler by Lord Mayor William Walworth in 1381, ending the Peasants Revolt. The latter is commemorated by a stone plaque on West Smithfield, close to a memorial for William Wallace, who was hung, drawn and quartered on that site in 1305. The area’s spatial affordances are again significant here: open spaces beyond the City that could equally accommodate a burial pit, a rebellious mob, and a crowded public execution (see figure 1.1). Smithfield also began to host other practices that were unwelcome in the City, including “pottery, tanning, slaughtering and dyeing”, trades that were “expelled from the City for environmental reasons” (Forshaw, 2015: 25), a relocation echoed in present day concerns over air-quality and hygiene in Smithfield.

Figure 1.1: Detail of the Civitas Londinium, c. 1633 showing animals and traders in ‘Schmyt Fyeld’ beyond the City’s walls, which are also clearly visible © London Metropolitan Archives SC/GL/CIL/001



The socio-spatial and regulatory developments of the seventeenth century are the next significant phase of Smithfield’s evolution. The market was paved and drained for the first time in 1614, and extended up towards present-day Charterhouse Square (Forshaw, 2015: 35); it was also granted a Royal Charter in 1638, with a provision for the reversion of land to Crown ownership “should Smithfield cease to be used as a market” (p107). This charter, and its provision, continues to affect the market’s operation and status to this day, with traders invoking it in negotiations over the site’s future in both the 1980s and in 2022 (see Chapter 2). The increased freedoms of Restoration-era London also saw a resurgence in the area’s status as one of the capital’s oldest ‘sin-centres’ (Burford, 1990: 158). In today’s terminology, this comprised both straight and gay brothels: as Ackroyd (2018) suggests, “there were probably as many ‘gay bars’, in terms of population, in seventeenth- as in twenty-first-century London” (p85). This included a ‘molly house’ *The Royal Oak* on Giltspur Street. The sense of ‘extra-mural’ revelry that had long marked Smithfield’s spatial practices continued to be felt, along with the less tangible dimensions of privilege, permissibility, and exploitation.

Calls for the relocation of the livestock market began as early as 1766, with one critic condemning the *'intolerable practice of holding a market for the sale of live cattle in the centre of the metropolis'*, and aspirations for *'a noble regular square'* for *'people of opulence'* to take its place (Forshaw, 2015: 59). There are again echoes today in the negative reactions of some local social actors to the noise and activity of market traders, as well as the association between urban degradation and regeneration projects more broadly (Campkin, 2013). Growth in both the population and the consumption of meat had expanded the market's trade, to what many saw as unsustainable levels. Yet then, as today, economic concerns played a part, and the re-siting of the cattle market was initially rejected by the Corporation given the income it provided: an example of 'market'-led dynamics in multiple senses. However, by 1855 'old' Smithfield was no more, the same year that Bartholomew Fair was suppressed for its tradition of rowdiness and occasional unrest (Forshaw, 2015: 66). Nonetheless, Bartholomew Fair has been 'reimagined' 168 years later, with the Corporation staging multiple events and performances in 2023 as part of its Destination City visitor promotion, an experiential precursor to the area's future public programming and increased visitor footfall.

The majority of the market buildings that stand today, and which are themselves set to be reimagined as part of the area's culture-led development, stem from the period following the live market's relocation. In 1860 the Corporation obtained an Act of Parliament to construct new structures for a wholesale meat market on the site. This coincided with the extension of the Metropolitan Railway from Farringdon Street to Moorgate, an infrastructural advance echoed by the recent opening of Elizabeth Line station entrances on Cowcross Street and Lindsey Street. The Central Markets were opened in 1868, the Poultry Market in 1870, and the General Market in 1883 (see figure 1.2). Three years later the first cargo of frozen meat from New Zealand arrived in Smithfield, spurring the construction and expansion of cold stores that still dominate the streetscape of Charterhouse Street, and which connected Smithfield to a broader network of imperial economic consolidation. The parapet of the largest cold store at Nos. 47-49 Charterhouse Street reads *'Floreat imperii portus'* ('Let the port of the empire flourish'). Auxiliary trades also established themselves in and around Smithfield, including banks and bacon smokers, premises that abutted slums and rookeries where living standards were poor.

Figure 1.2: Detail of Ordnance Survey Maps (1893-1896), showing the completed market buildings and street patterns that mostly remain today. © National Library of Scotland



The twentieth century brought disruption and decline to Smithfield. The Corporation’s slum clearance programme in the late 1920s removed many buildings on the grounds of their risk to public health. Numbers 41-42 Cloth fair, Jacobean structures completed 40 years before the Great Fire, were earmarked for demolition but were acquired by architects and partners Paul Paget and John Seely. The couple, who described the area as a being “like a rural hamlet” went on to buy several houses on the street. This followed a steep decline in the City’s residential population, falling from 135,927 in 1851 to 22,553 by 1921 (University of Portsmouth, 2024), spurred in part by suburban migration. Indeed, Paget wrote in 1931, “We City residents are a race that is becoming rapidly extinct” (RIBA, 2024). The lack of a residential population in Smithfield remains evident: at ward level (Farringdon Without) this is estimated at just 400 people, with 8,600 residents across the whole of the City of London (ONS, 2011). Nonetheless, as I evidence throughout this thesis, many more communities and diverse local social actors still populate and identify with Smithfield at various times and intensities, whether residents, workers, visitors, students or others.

The City was heavily bombed during the Second World War, with Cripplegate Ward to the immediate east of Smithfield effectively destroyed in December 1940. The Corporation purchased the area after the introduction of the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 (Historic England, 2024) and established plans to build a mixed-use residential complex with education and cultural facilities, with work beginning on the Barbican Estate in 1962. One of the primary drivers of the development was to return a stable residential population to the City (City of London, 2023a). In 1976, the Museum of London opened on this site, an organisation formed through the amalgamation of the Corporation's Guildhall Museum and The London Museum, previously housed in Kensington Palace. I discuss the Museum's organisational structure and funding in greater detail in Chapter 2. The Barbican Estate was completed in 1982, with additional cultural organisations based there including The Barbican Centre and Guildhall School of Music & Drama.

Smithfield market continued to operate successfully after the Second World War. The switch to lorry transport in the 1960s eventually led to the conversion of the market's underground railway sidings into a car park in 1970, and the reappearance of concerns over the meat trade's impact on the local environment. These were not dissimilar to those concerns that led to the relocation of 'polluting trades' out of the medieval City in the 1300s. But now the periphery was part of the centre. Also in 1970, The Greater London Development Plan called for the relocation of all wholesale markets out of central London "where such operations were considered an inefficient use of high-value sites and a cause of congestion" (Forshaw, 2015: 103). The next twenty years saw the gradual availability of these 'high-value sites' for redevelopment, with Covent Garden fruit, vegetable, and flower market closed and relocated to Nine Elms in November 1974, Billingsgate fish market moved to West India Dock in 1982, and Spitalfields relocated to Temple Mills, Leyton, in 1991. Smithfield market remained but saw a decline in trade from the 1970s onwards, partly the result of the growth in supermarkets and direct procurement practices. This led to the colonisation of vacant warehouses in the surrounding area by the creative industries and hospitality venues, sowing the seeds for its future design and creative cluster. The Fish Market closed in 1983, and the following year the Corporation's Smithfield Working Party recommended against the market's complete closure, instead resolving to refurbish the main buildings (Forshaw, 2015). This refurbishment was not completed until 1997. Two

years later, the General Market closed, followed by nearly twenty years of debates over its future.

The Corporation, with successive leaseholders of the site Thornhill Properties and Henderson Global Investors, tried twice to replace the 'Western Markets' including the General Market and Annex with commercial office and retail developments, arguing that the demand for new office space in the City made retaining the existing buildings unrealistic and financially unviable (Forshaw, 2015: 118), a stance echoed today in the debates over the former Museum of London site at London Wall. Although the 2004 and 2013 General Market schemes were approved by the Corporation's Planning Committee, they were both subject to criticism from heritage bodies, and both rejected after public enquiries. I return to the process and legacy of these schemes in Chapters 2 and 6.

This tension between the preservation of heritage buildings on the one hand and economic pressures on the other is expressed in the culture-led development scheme that followed these rejections, and which is the subject of this study. The creation of a cultural district in the City was first mooted in November 2013. In 2015, the Corporation suggested that the Museum of London might occupy the Western Markets; a detailed options appraisal undertaken by the Museum supported this proposal (London Museum, 2024a). For the Corporation this represents a welcome solution to a problem site; for the London Museum it promises larger galleries, street-level entrances, and better transport links. The Culture Mile place brand was formally announced in July 2017 (City of London, 2017). This branded territory comprised the Barbican Centre, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London Symphony Orchestra, the Museum of London and the areas in between. As well as local benefits, this district was conceived with economic intentions, playing "a pivotal role in strengthening the City of London's credentials as a place to do business" (Culture Mile, 2020: 28). Since disbanded as a formal brand (if not an intention), the territory Culture Mile covered is now associated with the Culture Mile Business Improvement District (BID), established in 2023. The area will also be further transformed after 2028, with the relocation of Smithfield Market from the Central Market buildings to Dagenham Dock. Figure 1.3 below shows a vision for the area's future, one predicated on the market traders' relocation making the East and West Market buildings (labelled 'Meat Market') available for

redevelopment. This early concept design indicates a largely pedestrianised public realm around and between all four historic market buildings and the Rotunda, supporting new cultural as well as commercial uses. This represents a radical transformation of the local area and its sense of place: Smithfield's practices and purpose are changing once more.

Figure 1.3: Detail of 2022 concept designs for Smithfield by Studio Egret West, commissioned by the Corporation. © Studio Egret West / City of London Corporation.



This introduction to the fieldsite, its history and recent events, bring us to the specific research focus of this study: what constitutes the sense of place of an area undergoing accelerated urban change, and how can a museum that is at the heart of this process establish an equitable position within it? Other questions are inevitably associated: will Smithfield become a corporate non-space, a heritage theme park, or a lively 'town square'? And does the Museum have any agency to affect this? This research proceeds from the basis that there is and can continue to be a dynamic relationship between the Museum and Smithfield's changing sense of place. This is an aspect of culture-led development brought into sharper focus with the Museum's adaptive re-use of the General Market – a vacant building that is nonetheless laden with political, economic, social, and historical associations and values – rather than the creation of an 'iconic' new building. Also significant is the

Museum's stated awareness of its impact and responsibility in its new context (London Museum, 2023a) within broader debates around museum neutrality and socially-engaged museum practices.

To investigate how a museum understands and approaches its relationship to a local sense of place within the broader frame of a culture-led development scheme, I ask three interconnected research questions:

1. How is a sense of place implicated in processes of culture-led development?
2. How do social actors define an area's sense of place?
3. How can an incoming museum engage with and be informed by a local sense of place?

The first question seeks to establish the aims of the main agents within the complex economic, political, and institutional landscape of a cultural regeneration scheme, and how they shape and are shaped by the character of the development site – essentially why a sense of place matters in culture-led development. This is important in understanding the power hierarchies at play in Smithfield, and how its identity is being both evoked and invoked as a discursive entity by the agents involved, including the Museum, the Corporation and others. The second question looks more closely at the empirical 'anatomy' of senses of place, how they are experienced, formed, and formalised by local social actors. These include people who live in Smithfield, who work there, who socialise there and those with longstanding connections to it. This is important in establishing the many concrete, ephemeral, and affective dimensions of place, and hence the potential parameters for a museum's engagement with them. The third question asks for a critical analysis of the Museum's existing approaches to local identity and experience, as well as examining and proposing paradigms and strategies for institutions within future culture-led development schemes. These three questions intentionally build on one another, establishing the strategic landscape, the fine detail of its sensory, social, and imagined topography, and potential routes for institutional arrival. They also prompt elements of a *blueprint* for equitable museum approaches to new local contexts, evidenced throughout the thesis and brought together in Appendix C. This key research output is functionalised through a

publicly-available website for museum directors, planners, and managers to inform museum planning and strategy development.¹

1.3 'AN EMERGENT SENSE OF PLACE': CHAPTER OVERVIEW

I begin by detailing my theoretical framework across two chapters. In *Chapter 2: Capitalising on Culture – Placing Smithfield*, I contextualise my research in the interdisciplinary urban development discourse, specifically from within human geography, urban sociology, and urban studies. I establish contemporary urban regeneration as an accelerated and intensified process of urban change, driven by the commodifying and exclusionary logics of capitalism (Harvey, 2006, 1996, 2012; Smith, 1979) and expressed in social hierarchies and cultural values (Ley, 1996). These have uneven social and spatial effects, deployed through associated aesthetic strategies and affective place brands (Degen & Rose, 2022; Ernwein & Matthey, 2019; Julier, 2005); and felt through diverse forms of displacement (Butcher & Dickens, 2016; Shaw & Hagemans, 2015) and the temporal power dynamics of urban change (Monstadt, 2022; Moore-Cherry & Bonnin, 2020; Raco et al., 2008). Bringing these elements together supports analysis of the multi-faceted effects of urban development and the forces that underpin it. Using examples from Smithfield's ongoing transformation, I then outline four inter-connected rationales for culture-led development specifically, comprising inter-city competition (Harvey, 1996; Miles, 2005; Jensen, 2007), local economic value (Bille & Schulze, 2006; Sacco et al., 2014), local social value (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; Miles & Paddison, 2005; Sandell & Nightingale, 2012), and adaptive re-use (Lang, 2022; Vafaie et. al, 2023). These rationales provide a framework against which to assess the varied ambitions of culture-led development in Smithfield. I conclude that such processes are neither monolithic nor linear, but rather negotiated between institutions with varying degrees of agency and modalities of power. These are all felt in and through place, and predicated on it.

In *Chapter 3: The Potency of Place* I focus on and re-evaluate the term 'sense of place'. I draw on foundational theories and relevant studies from urban sociology, human geography, and urban studies to argue for an expanded notion that is simultaneously socio-

¹ See placingmuseums.co.uk – currently in beta mode subject to consultation with intended audiences

cultural, political, embodied, and imagined. This definition allows for a critical analysis of the multi-faceted social experience of place, and its interaction with culture-led development processes; it also provides a basis through which to understand a museum's embeddedness within a local place. I first ground my thinking in the philosophical outlooks of Malpas (2018) and Massey (1991, 2005), establishing the multiplicity and openness of place. I then detail the necessity of recognising space as socially-produced (Lefebvre, 1991), but also imbricated with diverse and uneven power relations (Giesecking, 2020; Massey, 1991, 2005; Puwar, 2004; Sharma, 2014). This supports analysis of subjective and relational senses of place. To this, I add a focus on embodied perception, supporting analysis of local 'sensescapes' (Degen, 2008; Porteous, 1985, 1990; Rodaway, 1994) and 'timescapes' (Adam, 1998, 2004, 2008; Degen & Lewis, 2020) and their political and socio-cultural significance within processes of urban change. I complete this framework by establishing the simultaneity of the 'real-and-imagined' (Soja, 1996) within the experiencing and representation of places, supporting the analysis of institutional narratives of urban change and place brands (Austin, 2020; Jensen, 2007) as well as situated experiences of contextual memories, fictions, and histories (Herman, 2009; Ryan, 2004; Samuel, 1994). In bringing together these aspects of place identity and experience within an expanded notion of a 'sense of place', and combined with the rationales for culture-led development and market-led power dynamics outlined in Chapter 2, I create a theoretical framework that supports my analysis of a culture-led development's relationship to place, and the role of a museum within it. In *Chapter 4: Methodology*, I then detail the methods informed by this framework, my analytical approach, and my positionality as a researcher.

The first three empirical chapters each take a different conceptual viewpoint to interrogate how senses of place are defined in Smithfield, and to reveal the varied power geometries of urban change (Massey, 1991). In *Chapter 5: Boundaries – Defining a sense of place* I focus on the experiences of local social actors, explored through notions of Smithfield's 'boundaries' – a richly nuanced aspect of its identity. This reveals how material and sensory 'cues' are mobilised to define senses of place that are ostensibly shared but relationally diverse. I explore other affective dimensions of place, comprising 'intangible' experiences of Smithfield's timescapes (Adam, 1998, 2008), as well as the boundary between the 'real and imagined' (Herman, 2009; Soja, 1996). Thinking in terms of conceptual boundaries in this

way shows the need to acknowledge the material, sensory, and intangible aspects of place experience, and the factors that mediate them.

Smithfield is often characterised in terms of its 24-hour rhythms and atypical patterns of use. In *Chapter 6: Rhythms – Producing a sense of place*, I take Lefebvre's (2004) rhythmanalysis as a starting point to explore the localised experience of longer-term rhythms and processes as an aspect of its changing sense of place. I identify and detail two rhythmic categories: *planning rhythms*, which manifest a trajectory towards an imagined future, and *queer rhythms*, socio-spatial patterns which subvert heteronormative and capitalist processes. As locally-embedded, embodied, and imagined manifestations, these rhythms can be understood as expressions or negotiations of power over time, and elements of both the experience and production of Smithfield's senses of place. This chapter combines the idea of place as process (Massey, 1991, 1993, 2005) with the temporal politics of urban development. In light of this, I end this chapter by evaluating the Museum's approach to its new local context in terms of rhythm and suggest *temporal practices* as a paradigm for long-term and slow local engagement.

In *Chapter 7: Stories – Recognising a sense of place* I examine the role of stories as an aspect of place experience, considering notions of visibility, municipal power dynamics, and social encounters at different scales. This chapter thereby centres the experience and affective power of local histories, defined as *emplaced stories*, in Smithfield, an area celebrated for a rich past that continues to shape its future. As a critical counterpoint, I also detail the results of participatory action research into local LGBTQ+ histories. I highlight that encounters with *emplaced stories* can relationally mediate place experience and condition political senses of place, but which also operate across various degrees of recognition. I relate this to the programmes and practices of the Museum, proposing a framing of *narrative practices* to further describe and guide institutional approaches to a local area.

Chapter 8: Placing the Museum provides a grounded analysis of the frameworks and strategies of the London Museum as it approaches Smithfield, and its wider ambitions for its new context. I explore the Museum's agency, and its aim to be a 'shared place in the middle of it all' in the context of museum neutrality debates, socially-engaged practice, and the

value and complexity of shared social spaces. I propose a paradigm of *convening practices* to describe the Museum's current and future relationship to Smithfield and examine notions of *reciprocity* and *cultural propagation* in this context.

I bring the thesis to a close in *Chapter 9: Conclusion – Re-placing Smithfield*. In doing so, I call for a change in how a sense of place is conceived, reframing it as a dynamic concept, incorporating a greater awareness of time, power, and the multiplicity of place. Such an open and fluid understanding is fundamental to any analysis of the processes and effects of culture-led development. As a result, I conclude that despite being instrumentalised within a market-driven culture-led development process, the London Museum has agency to forge its own progressive and reciprocal relationship with Smithfield. This is not an interaction with a static sense of place, but with an emergent one; a changing landscape that the Museum is in part helping to both accelerate and define. In the final section I outline three further contributions my research makes. These comprise, firstly, a methodological approach to the study of culture-led development in the form of an *adapted rhythmanalysis*, one that traverses time periods and temporalities to reveal how economic and municipal power operates within the dynamic and evolving field of social landscapes. Secondly, a theory of *accommodation* that accounts for how a 'local' sense of place is represented and commodified as a discursive entity within processes of urban change. And lastly, a sense of place *blueprint* for equitable museum approaches to new local contexts. Disseminated, elaborated, and illustrated online (placingmuseums.co.uk), this contributes to professional museum practice with suggested ways of working to guide a museum's long-term equitable engagement and reciprocal relationship with its local area. I end by proposing areas for future research suggested by my research and the further questions it provokes.

Chapter 2 Capitalising on Culture: Placing Smithfield

The traditional city has been killed by rampant capitalist development, a victim of the never ending need to dispose of over accumulating capital driving towards endless and sprawling urban growth no matter what the social, environmental, or political consequences.

(Harvey, 2012: pXV-XVI)

What do such developments actually mean in terms of the lives of the people who live in that city? In short, to what extent is culture-led regeneration more about rhetoric than it is about reality?

(Miles & Paddison, 2005: 834)

Culture-led development processes are strategies of urban regeneration that derive from and transform local contexts. These unevenly disrupt local identity and experience. This research asks what constitutes the sense of place of an area undergoing accelerated urban change, and how does a relocating museum approach its role within this place and this process? My case study is the £437m relocation of the Museum of London from London Wall to former market buildings in Smithfield. The arrival of the renamed 'London Museum', along with the opening of the Elizabeth Line (May 2022) and the relocation of the Central Markets (2028 onwards), will radically transform Smithfield's character, from an area primarily defined by the meat trade to one focused on cultural consumption.

In this chapter I contextualise my research in the interdisciplinary urban regeneration literature, specifically from within urban sociology, human geography, and urban studies. I develop a critical perspective that accounts for capitalist power relations, their 'never ending need' to transform urban space, and their symbolic and social effects. I argue that urban regeneration today is driven by neoliberal capitalist dynamics, and deployed through multiple aesthetic, social, economic, and experiential strategies of commodification and control. However, within this I argue that culture-led development, as a form of urban regeneration, is not a linear process led by a single homogenous agent, but rather a market-

oriented rationale that is negotiated between organisations with varying degrees of agency and modalities of power. It is within this context that a museum, as an agent and instrument of change, must establish a relationship with its new local area. Where relevant, I relate these discussions to examples from my fieldsite. This chapter is hence both a theoretical analysis of the contexts and paradigms of culture-led development, and an illustration of how these are unfolding in Smithfield.

In the first section, I focus on the evolution of neoliberal urbanism in the West from the 1980s to the present, asserting that strategies of urban change have increased in speed and socio-spatial intensity. I begin by discussing the work of Harvey (1996, 2006, 2012), Ley (1980, 1996), Smith (1979, 1996) and Lees (2000, 2014), highlighting the dominance of capitalist growth imperatives, and the role of municipal agents and social hierarchies. I then look more closely at the relationship between these forces, their associated aesthetic strategies, and the specific spatial and sensory qualities of regenerated urban spaces, including experiential branding techniques (Degen & Rose, 2022; Ernwein & Matthey, 2019; Julier, 2005) and digital imagery (Degen & Ward, 2021). These are key paradigms in the transformation of Smithfield. I end this section by discussing less conspicuous dynamics of urban change in terms of non-residential displacement (Butcher & Dickens, 2016; Shaw & Hagemans, 2015) and the temporal politics of urban change (Monstadt, 2022; Moore-Cherry & Bonnin, 2020; Raco et al., 2008).

In the second section I focus on culture-led development as a specific strategy – and ‘rhetoric’ – of urban redevelopment. I synthesise four distinct but overlapping rationales from the literature, specifically inter-urban competition (Harvey, 1996; Miles, 2005; Jensen, 2007), local economic value (Bille & Schulze, 2006; Sacco et al., 2014), local social value (Della Lucia & Trufino, 2018; Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; Sandell & Nightingale, 2012), and adaptive re-use (Abdulameer & Sati’ Abbas, 2020; Lang, 2022), and illustrate these with examples from Smithfield. I conclude that culture-led development has evolved as a strategy of urban regeneration into a complex and multi-scalar process of market-driven change with international, local, social, and symbolic effects. Though instrumentalised in this process, I contend that there is a conceptual and practical space for museums within such processes to develop an equitable relationship with a new locality. However, to

understand this and the many ways that capitalist power dynamics are entangled with place identity and urban experience, requires a reassessment of what comprises a local identity, a question I discuss in Chapter 3 in relation to the need for a new conceptualisation of ‘sense of place’.

2.1 URBAN DEVELOPMENT: SETTING THE SCENE

Urban change is constant. Cities, as permanent but adaptive settlements, have always been sites of construction and reconfiguration, a process known by various names and which has followed myriad approaches. In the *Introduction*, I outlined how Smithfield has evolved over the last two thousand years, from a ‘smooth field’ beyond the Roman city, through religious and market uses, to its status today as a mixed wholesale trading, residential, commercial and hospitality district at the geographic heart of London. Its built environment is an accretion of private, municipal, and commercial constructions. The nearby Barbican Estate by comparison represents a different scale and approach. Modernist in spirit, though far from utopian given its hierarchical residential typology, the Barbican was a single top-down development overseen by the Corporation over 11 years between 1965 and 1976, the result of the devastation of Cripplegate Ward during the Blitz. The Museum of London and the Barbican Centre also opened on the estate in 1976 and 1982 respectively, an earlier form of cultural urban regeneration. Yet since the 1980s the purpose and intensity of urban development has changed markedly from these examples, driven by the commodifying logics of capitalism to alter not only the value and purpose of development but how it is conceived and experienced.

In this section, I begin by contextualising the current redevelopment of Smithfield through a discussion of Marxist economic and social scientific critiques of these accelerated and intensified processes of urban change. I then analyse the spatial and sensory effects of such processes on urban spaces, and their associated – and increasingly sophisticated – aesthetic, experiential, and marketing strategies. I end by examining less established facets and cohorts affected by regeneration, highlighting the fragmented and heterogenous nature of urban development and its tangible and intangible effects. I argue that while capitalist

power dynamics predominate in processes of urban change, this is a negotiated process producing both winners, losers, and positions in between.

2.1.1 Neoliberal urban regeneration

Contemporary urban development in the West needs to be understood within the framework of neoliberal politics that has emerged since the 1980s and the associated logics of advanced capitalism (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Degen, 2008; Harvey, 1990, 1996, 2006). In his Marxist critique of the power structures driving urban development, geographer David Harvey shows that processes of urban change are deeply embedded in capitalist dynamics. For Harvey (1990, 2006) urban areas are an expression of capitalism's economic geography, transformed by the need to absorb surplus capital. Although accrued over time, these nonetheless become commodities within advanced capitalism:

At any one moment the built environment appears as a palimpsest of landscapes fashioned according to the dictates of different modes of production at different stages of their historical development. Under the social relations of capitalism, however, all elements assume a commodity form.

(Harvey, 2006: 233)

Harvey describes this process as 'the spatial fix': both the 'fixing' in place of capital within particular spatial configurations, and a temporary 'fix' or resolution to the overaccumulation of capital through reinvestment (Harvey, 2006). Within this logic, urban development becomes a long-term speculative investment. Yet this 'fix' can only ever be temporary as the needs of capital accumulation change, and landscapes are demolished and remade by the market's search for profit. In this way, regeneration cannot be understood as purely the result of demographic or technological drivers, but as a means of perpetuating capital accumulation. In the UK, this was reflected in the urban policies of the Thatcher government, where "wealth creation replaced the distribution of welfare as the aim of urban policy" (Tallon, 2021: 51). This is a power dynamic that favours the status quo, making urban spaces commodities and reinforcing economic inequality.

Building on this, I draw attention to two specific dimensions of Harvey's thinking relevant to Smithfield's redevelopment: the cycle of destruction and renewal; and the value of place and its "marks of distinction" (2012: 103). I turn first to the 'cycle' of redevelopment. Harvey highlights the inherent tension between the built environment as a form of fixed investment on the one hand and the increasing mobility – and acceleration – of capital flows on the other (1996: 296). Within this, urban forms developed for a particular but now redundant purpose, for example a Victorian-era wholesale meat market such as Smithfield, impede the accumulation of further capital. Consequently:

The geographical configuration of places must then be reshaped around new transport and communication systems and physical infrastructures, new centres and styles of production and consumption, new agglomerations of labour power, and modified social infrastructures... Old places... Have to be devalued, destroyed, and redeveloped while new places are created.

(Harvey, 1996: 296)

This is a slow but accelerating process, one that informs a critical understanding of the current redevelopment of Smithfield, not least through its new centre of cultural consumption (the London Museum) and the opening of new transport infrastructure (the Elizabeth Line). It also illuminates historic attempts to 'devalue and destroy' aspects of its built environment, specifically the two failed proposals for the demolition and commercial redevelopment of the vacant Victorian-era General Market, schemes proposed in 2004 by Thornfield Properties and in 2013 by Henderson Global Investors, each supported by the Corporation. Notably, the rescued General Market will soon be home to the London Museum, a use that – superficially at least – appears to complicate market-led logics of urban redevelopment, a tension I discuss in section 2.2.4.

Harvey also highlights that the mobility of capital and the fixed nature of urban form means that location matters. Consequently, as Miles (2021: 99) suggests, the "relationship between market and place is tattooed into our very urban existence", making both the features and experience of place central concerns in this research. Harvey (2005), for example, emphasises that developers judge a site not only on its relative location, but its

prospects for development “according to a logic of exchange relations and the flows of people, commodities, and capital” (p16). Rather than a neutral plain, some places have more speculative value than others. Significantly, given the mobility of capital, this is both a spatial and symbolic value, dimensions Harvey describes as “special marks of distinction that attach to some place” and that “have a significant drawing power upon the flows of capital more generally” (2012: 103). These include connectivity and access as well as less-tangible qualities including heritage, quality of life, and status. The Corporation, as I will show, is keen to stress these ‘marks’ within its spatial reconfiguration of Smithfield, as well as through its associated aesthetic and branding strategies. This also establishes a further significant tension within capitalist dynamics of urban change: the commodification and appropriation of places for profit, and the exclusion of those originally responsible for creating and sustaining those places.

Harvey’s analysis reveals how capital flows shape cities materially and symbolically, exacerbating inequality. The work of another Marxist geographer Neil Smith, while also concerned with these dynamics, turns from broader structural forces to consider localised processes and impacts. His analysis of gentrification as a form of urban renewal suggests it is a class-driven process with socio-spatial effects, notably the displacement of low-income groups, one that has been aggressively weaponised (Smith, 1996). Here it is important to distinguish between the kind of urban development described thus far, and gentrification as a specific form of urban change. These are often linked, but not synonymous. As well as an expanded notion of displacement explored in section 2.1.3, I am concerned with gentrification in this study in terms of the connection between urban regeneration and cultural consumption (Pratt, 2018) and its class dimensions (Smith, 1979, 1996). These are notable aspects of Smithfield’s redevelopment, given its transformation from an area with a longstanding working-class heritage to one associated with a cultural institution traditionally steeped in middle-class hegemony.

First defined by sociologist Ruth Glass (1964) as the rehabilitation of dilapidated residential properties, gentrification was seen as a marginal process in the 1960s and 1970s but is now considered the largest subfield in urban studies (Lees & Phillips, 2018). For some it is a desirable process, leading to reduced crime in specific communities (Papachristos et al.,

2011) and improvements to local educational institutions (Freidus, 2019); others associate its uneven impacts with state-endorsed “racialized class projects” (Rankin & McLean, 2015: 218; Summers, 2019). Further, it is not a unitary phenomenon, but one that varies according to geography (Lees, 2000). ‘Classical gentrification’ of the 1970s was especially witnessed in parts of inner London – indeed, Glass’s pioneering study focused on areas of Islington only a few miles from Smithfield.

Formative studies into the causes of gentrification can be split into economic production-side and cultural consumption-side explanations. On the supply-side, Smith’s (1979) ‘rent gap’ theory describes gentrification as a systemic process designed to maximise profit and return on investment. The ‘rent gap’ describes the difference between the current rent or value of property versus its potential value after renovation, with the increase in value covering the costs and risks of the developer (Tallon, 2021: 226). For Smith this is more than a “quixotic oddity in the housing market” as first witnessed by Glass, but “the leading residential edge of a much larger endeavour: the class remake of the central urban landscape” (1996: 37). This is commensurate with dynamics identified by Harvey, whereby gentrification is embedded in the mechanics of advanced capitalism (Beauregard, 1986), with accumulated capital seeking out new more profitable geographies and resulting in social and spatial inequality. For Smith (1996), urban development under capitalism however is not only uneven, but aggressive, a “revanchist city” that reclaims urban space from low-income groups for the benefit of the wealthy. This is also associated with policing, zoning, and aesthetic strategies that work to reinforce economic growth and that further marginalise low-income groups (see also Lees et al., 2008: 222-234). Seen particularly in the urban landscapes of the USA, Lees (2014) also identifies revanchism in the New Labour government’s regeneration of the Aylesbury Estate, London, including its manipulated consultation process; arguably it can also be seen in the failure of the Corporation to maintain market buildings in Smithfield, a managed decline that supports redevelopment.

However, such supply-side explanations are criticised for being hard to measure empirically, and for their homogenisation of gentrifiers as “ruthless capital accumulators” rather than diverse agents and actors (Lees et al., 2008: 74). Ley (1996), for example, argues for the importance of socio-cultural dynamics and ‘taste’ as part of demand-side explanations;

here, cultural, social, and aesthetic values have a formative role in urban change as middle-class consumers seek out urban areas that correspond to specific lifestyles and identities. These also include sexuality (Castells, 1983), gender (Warde, 1991), class (Butler & Robson, 2003), and race (Freeman, 2006). Yet market-led dynamics arguably still play a part here, as tastes and values are co-opted into the logics – and aesthetics – of capitalist urban development and its prospective consumers. Miles (2021) extends this to the level of everyday experience, arguing that “our adherence to the social and cultural norms determined by consumer capitalism is entrenched in ever-more sophisticated ways” (2021: VI). I return to the theme of the aesthetics and experience of urban change in the next section.

While a sensitivity to the mechanisms of gentrification is pertinent to this research, it is also important to understand how they fit into a larger framework of market-led urban development globally, particularly “the role of real estate developers, mortgage financiers, and global capitalists; and the propitious role of the local and national state” (Lees et al., 2008: 121). For urban geographer Loretta Lees (2000) gentrification is part of a global urban strategy in which local authorities or municipalities are key actors, prioritising investment and economic growth over the needs and rights of local people. Further, the repopulation and redevelopment of city-centres since the mid-1990s is seen by Lees (2003) as a policy-led process, one found for example in the ‘urban renaissance’ policies of the New Labour government (Tallon, 2021), and more recently in the market-oriented approaches of successive Conservative governments. Such a top-down approach is evident in the culture-led development of Smithfield, an area whose complex and staggered transformation is overseen by the Corporation – as both freeholder of the area’s market buildings and its local planning authority – along with associated developers, including Henderson Land and Helical Plc, and organisations, including Culture Mile BID and the London Museum. As I explore in section 2, this is a complex ecosystem of agents and instruments of change, one that requires a more nuanced explanation than (only) market-led hegemony.

Lastly in this section, I draw attention to *competition* as a catalyst of urban development, a driver that shapes the spatial form and experiential re-coding of urban areas globally. David Ley’s (1980) post-industrial city thesis proposed that, as a result of the movement from

manufacturing to service sector employment, cities in the Global North were guided by the values of consumption rather than production. This was a shift that affected urban land use strategies, including the future use of de-industrialising urban areas. Combined with the deregulation and globalisation of the 1980s, city and national governments were actively involved in creating urban areas that competed internationally to attract and retain capital investment and global talent, in the process becoming “sophisticated entrepreneurs – doing whatever it takes to lure wealthy investors, residents, and tourists to town” (Lees et al., 2008: 165). This then is an instrumentalisation of urban development, whereby:

...regeneration is being ‘put to work’ by politicians as part of a strategy to remove obstacles to economic growth and to create the social and physical infrastructure required to compete for inward investment.

(Imrie et al., 2009: 5)

These same processes also largely prioritise the interests of wealthier newcomers over existing communities. So, while Harvey contends that cities are sites of speculative investment, Lees and others highlight how these investments are encouraged, enabled, and financially supported by municipal authorities and civic structures themselves.

The spatial and social consequences of competition for inward investment are palpable in London (see Campkin, 2013; Wall, 2022), a metropolis within which distinct urban areas have become part of what Degen (2003) terms the “global catwalk”. This describes the physical and sensory re-coding of urban areas in order to compete for international capital – a ‘facelift’ that has significant local experiential and socio-cultural impacts, as I examine below. In the UK this is exemplified by the redevelopment of the Isle of Dogs into the financial district of Canary Wharf, achieved through the use of special ‘enterprise zone’ legal and tax status and funding by Canadian property developer Olympia & York. The result was one of total spatial and social reconfiguration. This development can also be seen as a manifestation of London’s ‘global city’ status (Sassen, 2005), those cities that by the early 2000s had become the pre-eminent global conduits of capital, knowledge and talent. Sassen’s notion is also pertinent to Smithfield, highlighting that its geographic and municipal context, the City of London, is the economic and symbolic heart of London’s ‘global city’

status. As a result, Smithfield's spatial, sensory, and symbolic reshaping can be linked to global capital flows, the speculative investment of the 'spatial fix', and the need to attract and retain international talent and prestige.

While this study is grounded in an understanding of urban development as driven by capitalist growth imperatives, I am particularly interested in *how* these manifest in the social experiences of a changing urban area, effects that are no-less implicated. It is these strategies and effects I turn to next. Further, mirroring Lees's (2014) conclusion to her analysis of the regeneration of the Aylesbury Estate, I am also keen to challenge interpretations of urban development processes that "seem all powerful, all pervasive and impossible to challenge" (p940), questioning binary conceptions of the powered and disempowered, and complicating notions of instrumentalisation and agency.

2.1.2 Spatial and sensory strategies of urban development

I have established that processes of urban development are driven by neoliberal capitalist dynamics that seek to maximise profit through the commodification and remaking of space; this transformation is not only spatial, but profoundly social, sensory, and symbolic. But how are these effects strategically mobilised within urban development schemes? I begin by examining the aesthetic strategies that reshape urban experience. Regeneration entails the physical and sensory redesign and 're-coding' (Miles, 2000) of an urban area, in line with the needs of the 'global catwalk' (Degen, 2003). This restructuring of urban space not only reflects economic, political, and cultural forces but also radically conditions the experiences of local social actors within those spaces (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Degen, 2008; Degen & Rose, 2012; Lefebvre, 1991). As Zukin argues:

The look and feel of cities reflect decisions about what – and who – should be visible and what should not, on concepts of order and disorder, and on uses of aesthetic power.

(1995: 7)

Within the City of London, such decisions are regulated on an everyday basis by statutory planning guidance and broader spatial, environmental, and public order policies including the *Lighting Strategy*, *Air Quality Strategy*, *Noise Strategy*, and *Policing Plan*. As such, embodied, sensory, and political aspects of Smithfield – its smells, sounds, illumination, and regulation – are always already substantively controlled. Such aesthetic control is however modified and intensified by processes of urban development, where the sensory has become a key component of the ‘new experiential landscape’ of cities (Degen, 2014). While I discuss this in terms of embodied experience and urban ‘sensescape’ (Low, 2015; Pink, 2015; Porteous, 1985, 1990) in Chapter 3, here I am concerned with its strategic deployment. This is again evident in my fieldsite, where the culture-led development of Smithfield is accompanied by a further set of area-specific strategies that inform and materialise the area’s regeneration. These include the *Culture Mile Look and Feel Strategy* (Culture Mile, 2018), *Smithfield Public Realm Statement of Significance* (Alan Baxter Associates, 2022) and the *Smithfield Public Realm Project* (Hawkins\Brown, 2020). It is these and other plans and policies that detail what Harvey terms the “distinctive aesthetic judgements” (2012: 106) of urban entrepreneurship, evaluating, removing, and introducing elements to suit prospective consumers – and alienate others. Further, in the context of competition for investors and visitors, such ‘entrepreneurialism’ is accompanied and amplified by experiential urban branding strategies that obfuscate the true purpose of urban regeneration and its ultimate beneficiaries.

Cumulatively these amount to what Julier (2005) calls the ‘urban designscape’, a term that reflects a breadth of aesthetic tactics involved in regeneration and their holistic effect on social actors. For Julier, a ‘designscape’ (p869-870) expresses the network of activities and artefacts that produce place-identity within cities; this includes the branding and marketing tactics commensurate with inter-urban competition as well as broader aesthetic strategies of regenerated urban districts. The latter extend from but also disrupt existing senses of place and – notably in gentrifying contexts – appropriate, commodify, and consume what are considered to be ‘authentic’ spaces (see Harvey, 2012; Jager, 1986; Ley, 1996). Indeed, consumer desire for authenticity is a paradox of market-led urban development, driving the commodification of previously desirable *uncommodified* places and experiences (Summers, 2019; Zukin, 2010).

Spatially and sensorially-attuned tactics of urban development are seen not only in the long-term remaking of city districts but also in modes of promotion and branding. It is telling for example that the marketing slogan used to promote Canary Wharf was “It will feel like Venice and work like New York” (Sudjic, 2021); this reflects both the importance of branding activity to gain competitive advantage over other cities to attract attention, capital, residents and tourists (Greenberg, 2008; Jensen, 2007; Miles, 2020), and also acknowledges the importance of the area’s *sensuous* character to its prospective consumers. How have tactics like these evolved in the branding strategies of contemporary urban regeneration? In the culture-led development of Smithfield this is found in the diverse activities of the Culture Mile place brand, the City of London-wide Destination City tourism promotion programme, Culture Mile BID, and the activity of the London Museum. Beyond the development of logos, websites, and graphic design language, these include temporary public realm interventions, large-scale public events, and the visualisation of completed (though still speculative) design schemes. These are increasingly sophisticated, emphasising the consumption of experiences to raise the profile of development, anticipate change (Anderson, 2010), and condition experience as part of a phenomenological regime (Ernwein & Matthey, 2019). In this study I am particularly interested in two aspects which I discuss in turn: the deployment of public events and the use of computer-generated images (CGIs), and specifically how these both draw on and mediate local identity and experience.

The use of events by developers and municipalities to anticipate and legitimise urban change through ‘immersive’ public experiences is consistent with the increase in experience-oriented marketing that began in the 1980s (Mikunda, 2004), and is an emerging area of academic attention (see Ernwein & Matthey, 2019; Lamond & Platt, 2016). Whether performances, markets, or smaller-scale events, these have both experiential and narrative dimensions, often drawing on local histories and imaginaries. As Degen and Rose highlight:

Storytelling is increasingly considered as a strategic branding tool for urban places as they engage audiences on an emotional and experiential level.

(2022: 128)

This is seen in activities programmed in Smithfield before the pandemic, including ‘Smithfield 150’ in August 2018, a free two-day ‘street party’ organised by the London Museum in collaboration with Culture Mile and the Smithfield Market Tenants Association; ‘The Golden Key’, (discussed in Chapter 7) an immersive theatre event organised by Destination City in October 2022 that drew on the City’s “mythologies and hidden tales” (City of London, 2022a); and ‘Bartholomew Fair’, a three-week “cultural spectacular” (City of London, 2023b) that selectively reimagined the original – and notoriously debauched – fair held annually in Smithfield between 1133 and 1855. These events serve multiple spatial, political, and economic purposes. As Ernwein and Matthey (2019) suggest, events like these can become a tool of community control beyond their obvious representational or visual intentions, aiming to produce “an affective alignment” of embodied subjects towards a specific political project (p296). Miles (2021: 99) however goes further, recognising that the ‘pleasures of experience’ are an increasingly intense aspect of our relationship to place and space more broadly; this distances us from acknowledging the capitalist power dynamics and aesthetic strategies implicated not only in staging the events but also transforming their urban setting.

Lastly in this discussion of the aesthetic strategies of market-led urban development I consider the use of CGIs. These are part of the proliferation of digital technologies in the conception and experience of new or regenerated urban districts, aspects that include social media and smartphone functionality, and which mediate our experience of cities (Degen & Rose, 2022). CGIs in this context are representations of a future site or structure produced by a range of institutional agents engaged in urban development processes. In Smithfield this includes visualisations of the future London Museum (by architects Stanton Williams and Asif Khan), visualisations of a redeveloped Smithfield public realm (by architects Hawkins\Brown), and illustrations of the future East and West Central Market buildings (by architects Studio Egret West). These are the “digital foundations” (Degen & Ward, 2021: 132) that establish future urban imaginaries long before a redevelopment takes place. As with the aesthetic strategies discussed above, these also reflect the aims and values of those driving change. Other questions naturally follow: what elements of a neighbourhood are retained in such visualisations, and which are excluded? And who is depicted and why? For this research, I am specifically interested in how CGIs both *evoke* a future sense of place,

but also *invoke* selected sensory aspects of an extant place identity; this can inform a richer understanding of the relationship between the experience of a changing locale and the municipal and economic forces that are shaping it.

I have highlighted the sensory and symbolic re-coding that accompanies neoliberal urbanism and its aesthetic strategies. These must be acknowledged as political tactics, approaches that work together to create a hybrid experiential landscape that not only accompanies but prefigures urban transformation, with potent socio-spatial consequences. Indeed, taken to its extreme, “the successful branding of the city may require the expulsion or eradication of everyone or everything else that does not fit the brand” (Harvey, 2012: 108). It is crucial however not to conflate ‘everyone or everything’ as a casualty of urban development, indeed there are winners and losers, as well as complex intersectional relationships to a changing local identity. Here the multiplicity of place (Massey, 2005) is paramount, as well as the diverse relationality of its social actors, aspects I develop in Chapter 3. This suggests not only a more “spatially sensitive” approach to urban branding (Jensen, 2007: 211) and the wider sensory re-coding of regenerated places, but one that is also sensitive to social actors and their diverse embodied, socio-cultural, political, and representational relations.

2.1.3 Examining the multi-dimensional effects of urban development

I highlighted above that displacement is conventionally discussed in terms of gentrification, and a consequence of middle-class entrants forcing-out existing lower-income residents (Glass, 1964; Smith, 1979, 1996). While this study focuses on the specific dynamics of culture-led development as a form of urban development rather than gentrification per se, recent critical approaches to displacement within and beyond the gentrification literature provide a relevant critical perspective. In his analysis of regeneration sites across London, for example, Campkin (2013) links displacement to the “imposition of elite perspectives on what a ‘good’ or ‘world class’ city is” (p166), and hence the competitive inter-city dynamics of urban renewal. Further, while central urban areas remain “the classic location of gentrification” (Tallon, 2021: 224), for my fieldsite this dictates a more diverse range of impacts beyond the residential. Indeed, Smithfield is a mixed urban district with only a small

residential population (estimated at 400 people at ward level, and 8,600 across the City of London (ONS, 2011), alongside longstanding commercial, wholesale, hospitality, and healthcare uses and commuter flows. This indicates multiple publics and diverse non-residential place attachments all susceptible to change.

These dimensions have been explored in studies that examine displacement in various settings including work (Curran, 2004), commercial streets (Rankin & McLean, 2015), and public space (Langeegger, 2016; Low & Smith, 2006). Further, more recent analyses have looked beyond spatial effects to consider less visible displacements, including socio-cultural or emotional forms (see Butcher & Dickens, 2016; Curran, 2018; Lees & Hubbard, 2020), and the impact of urban development on non-normative and marginalised groups in terms of race (Summers, 2019), and sexuality (Giesecking, 2020). In their study on young people's experiences of gentrification in Hackney, for example, Butcher and Dickens (2016) define an embodied emotional sense of otherness – or “affective displacement” – as their research participants' neighbourhood changes around them (p801). Similarly, Davidson (2009) draws on the work of Lefebvre (1991) to emphasise lived experience, arguing that displacement is not just a material-spatial experience, but is rooted in a relational and socially-constructed definition of place. Shaw and Hagemans are more specific:

Transformations in shops and meeting places, and in the nature of local social structure and government interventions, cause a sense of loss of place even without physical displacement.

(2015: 323)

Market-led urban development thus produces simultaneously physical, socio-cultural, and emotional effects, unsettling place experience regardless of a person's spatial relationship (i.e. if it is their home or not) or temporal relationship (i.e. how often and for how long they have frequented it). This suggests a more nuanced approach to the impacts of urban development, how they shift over time as well as who is doing the 'transformation' and why.

Implicit in these effects is also the role of time, a paradigm intrinsic to processes of urban development. Time is not a neutral dimension, but replete with the power dynamics of various actors – whether developers, institutions, or local people (Campkin, 2013; Degen 2018; Moore-Cherry & Bonnini, 2020; Raco et al., 2018). Understanding what temporal tactics are deployed, by who, and how they are experienced is key to understanding the relationship between regeneration processes and the social experience of urban change. Indeed, urban studies and infrastructure scholar Jochen Monstadt suggests that processes of urban change reveal “various temporalities, asynchronisms, and misalignments that are otherwise invisible or neglected but are crucial for the broader understanding of urban change and its governance” (2022: 69). The culture-led development of Smithfield provides just such an opportunity to analyse and understand these otherwise ‘neglected’ dynamics, not least because of the Corporation’s ostensibly commanding position as funder, developer, and planning body.

Although conceptualizations of time are far from “a novelty in urban studies” (Monstadt, 2022: 69), the temporal politics of urban development has remained relatively unexplored (Moore-Cherry & Bonnini, 2020; Raco et al., 2008). These include administrative timeframes, political timeframes and developer timeframes, as well as those of residents, SMEs, environmentalists and conservationists (Raco et al., 2008). The complex interplay of these different temporal frames – an “informal politics of time” (Moore-Cherry & Bonnini, 2020: 1209) – not only echoes the power relations and social inequalities involved in urban change but is also responsible for reinforcing them spatially.

An alternative ‘slow building’ approach is advocated by Weber (2015), one that eschews the imposition of a dominant vision to enable the gradual evolution of the built environment, deferring to place attachment and allowing increased civic engagement. Yet neoliberal capitalist forces can again exploit these dynamics for profit: in their study of London’s Centre Point development, Raco et al. (2018) highlight that the slow pace of development actually *enables* some developers while excluding others. They argue that “far from encouraging the preservation of difference and place attachment, the relatively slow pace of the English planning system opens up opportunities for adaptable and well-resourced development interests to engage in market capture” (p1177). Protracted planning processes

abound in Smithfield: the date for opening the Museum was initially suggested as 2021, while proposals for relocating the wholesale meat market have been made since the 1970s.

Yet geographers Moore-Cherry and Bonnin (2020) provide a compelling counterpoint that complicates these hierarchies, highlighting the potential failure rather than dominance of planning timeframes within urban development, and the agency of groups conventionally framed as disempowered. Their study of the redevelopment of Moore Street Market, Dublin, reveals the power of heritage campaign groups as 'elite' social actors capable of disrupting seemingly dominant ideologies with alternative spatio-temporal frames. This problematises the hegemony of neoliberal capitalism suggested by Harvey (2006, 1996), and of the relentlessness of developers (Raco et al., 2018). This analysis is particularly relevant for Smithfield, given that the demolition of the General Market was twice thwarted by heritage preservation bodies and public petitions (Forshaw, 2015; SAVE, 2014). The public value of heritage buildings – themselves a representation of past and accrued time – appears here to interrupt the development timelines of conventionally dominant actors. My research consequently approaches the complexity of an ongoing urban development process with a sensitivity to the temporal politics of planning as well as its negotiation, an aspect I discuss in terms of adaptive re-use in section 2.2.4.

In this section I have examined the drivers of urban change within advanced capitalism, as well as accompanying aesthetic, experiential, displacive, and temporal strategies pertinent to analysis of the long-term spatial and symbolic restructuring underway in Smithfield. This has not only 'set the scene' for this research but shown how the logics of market-led urban development also work to spatially, socially, and symbolically 'set the scene' for local and global audiences and consumers. These forces are felt unevenly by local social actors, aspects of experience that I suggest are simultaneously socio-cultural, political, embodied, and imagined, and need to be understood as such. I establish this expanded 'sense of place' as a theoretical framework in the next chapter. However, I am keen to emphasise here not only that urban development is unevenly distributed and unevenly experienced, but that it is also a more negotiated process than the domination of the powerful over the weak. I develop this further in the next section.

2.2 RATIONALES OF CULTURE-LED DEVELOPMENT

I now change focus to analyse the deployment of culture-led development as a specific strategy of urban regeneration, an approach the conceptual foundations of which are “still somewhat shaky” (Sacco, et al., 2014: 2808). I use culture-led development to describe both the London Museum’s relocation to former market buildings in Smithfield, and the wider area’s transformation over a period of decades. Broadly defined, culture-led development refers to national and/or local government-backed schemes that use culture to improve an urban area spatially, economically, or symbolically – or across all three dimensions (Della Lucia & Trufino, 2018; Evans, 2005; Miles, 2005; Miles & Paddison, 2005; Sacco et al., 2014). Academic analyses of approaches to culture-led development have been largely critical, highlighting the limited correlation between regeneration and improvements to local inequality (Degen & Garcia, 2012; Miles, 2005; Zukin, 1995) and the disruption to local senses of place (Patterson, 2016; Pratt, 2018). Others question the conceptual foundations of such schemes, and the social accountability of their underlying models:

There is a growing awareness that paying attention to culture, even if potentially conducive to the creation of new social spaces for more responsible forms of consumerism and for energising creative activity, may actually pave the way to developmental initiatives that exacerbate issues of social marginalisation and exclusion.

(Sacco et. al., 2014: 2807)

It is therefore crucial to understand both the aims and implementation of culture-led development schemes, and their effects. Below, I outline four distinct but overlapping rationales for culture-led development. These comprise three established approaches: inter-urban competition, local economic value, and local social value; and one emerging rationale: adaptive re-use. I illustrate these by identifying strategies and vehicles in use in Smithfield; in doing so, I argue that culture-led development is a complex process of socio-spatial transformation that is negotiated between and within agents and instruments of change.

I recognise here the potential usefulness of de Certeau's distinction in *The practice of everyday life* between 'strategies' and 'tactics' as a framework to understand power dynamics in Smithfield: for de Certeau, 'strategies' are the tools of the powerful that "seek to create places in conformity with abstract models" (p29), and 'tactics' as the tools of the powerless or the "art of the weak" (p37). However, I follow Doreen Massey who critiques De Certeau's binary construction, suggesting that:

It involves a conception of power in society as monolithic order on the one hand and the tactics of the weak on the other. Not only does this both overestimate the coherence of 'the powerful' and the seamlessness with which 'order' is produced, it also reduces (while trying to do the opposite) the potential power of 'the weak' and obscures the implication of 'the weak' in 'power'.

(Massey, 2005: 45)

Therefore, rather than simply authority versus resistance, power as it relates to place is more fragmented and circuitous. Indeed, in Smithfield it is negotiated between institutions with varying degrees of agency and through diverse modalities of power. Rather than an all-pervasive process of displacement and control, I suggest there is scope for more equitable and socially-engaged approaches to culture-led development as a result of the 'new museology' and progressive agency of museums at the heart of such processes. I begin by returning to the theme of global competition.

2.2.1 Culture as international differentiator

The deployment of culture-led development strategies in the West can arguably trace their origin to post-industrial urban decline (Ley, 1980) and the resulting inter-city competition for investment and talent, introduced above. Within this context, culture is invoked as a distinctive differentiator. Indeed, Harvey (2012) explicitly links culture (broadly defined) to the special 'marks of distinction' hungered for by global capital flows seeking monopoly rents and profit. In this framing, culture-led urban development is then a process of developing an area's "quotient of symbolic capital", or its cultural and experiential reputation. Indeed:

How else can we explain the splash made by the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, with its signature Gehry architecture? And how else can we explain the willingness of major financial institutions [...] to finance such a signature project?

(Harvey, 2012: 104).

It is important here to establish the unique make-up and authority of the City of London Corporation as – simultaneously – a geography, a corporate democracy, a freeholder, a planning authority, and a funding body. To summarise its political architecture, the City of London is a territory overseen by the City of London Corporation as a quasi-Local Authority, one with its own police force. The Corporation is governed by the Lord Mayor and the Court of Common Council, composed of 100 representatives from the area's 25 wards, as well as 25 Aldermen (City of London, 2024a). Some representatives are elected by residents, but in the majority of wards votes are cast by corporate interests; as a result, critics highlight that the Corporation exists beyond "the laws and democratic controls which govern the rest of the United Kingdom" (Monbiot, 2011), resulting in a lack of transparency and potential conflicts of interest (Bostock, 2021; Transparency International UK, 2021). This is relevant for this research as, unlike other UK Local Authorities, the Corporation is responsible for planning decisions as well as being the predominant freeholder. This in turn underlines the Corporation's own 'willingness to finance' investment in a cultural district and the relocation of the Museum as part of market-led and internationally-competitive urban development logics.

Beyond standalone cultural institutions, the cultural and creative industries are also recognised as an economic driver in their own right, one equally vying for international attention. The prevalence of policies promoting and investing in creative industry clusters has been partly attributed to Richard Florida's (2005) identification of the 'creative class', an internationally mobile cohort that, attracted by culture, settles in creative clusters and spurs economic activity. The 'creative hub' of Clerkenwell with its annual Design Week, and increasingly parts of neighbouring Smithfield, arguably fit this description, an association the Corporation is keen to develop. Although Florida's work has been criticised as contradictory

and lacking empirical evidence (see Lees et al., 2008; Sacco et. al., 2014), it nonetheless remains influential, with cities using creative quarters and 'iconic' cultural developments as part of international marketing activities. Miles and Paddison suggest the 'orthodoxy' of this practice and cultural regeneration more broadly:

The idea that culture can be employed as a driver for economic growth has become part of the new orthodoxy by which cities seek to enhance their competitive position.

(2005: 833)

This is an orthodoxy that is today multi-dimensional in its deployment, and in its local social effects. In his analysis of a culture-led development scheme in NewcastleGateshead, Miles (2005) also describes "a city seeking to establish a sense of itself for consumption by the outside world" (p924). This suggests an interrelation between spatial reconfiguration, cultural consumption, urban experience, and (a marketable) narrative of place identity. Jensen concurs:

The city becomes the frame upon which its physical surface is inscribed with new ways of playing the global competitive game.

(2007: 213)

Multiple dimensions of the 'competitive game' can be seen in the Corporation's approach to culture-led development in Smithfield, specifically its desire to amass further 'marks of distinction', to advance an existing creative cluster, to emphasise the area's experiential qualities, and to promote a compelling adjunct to the City as a global financial hub. Indeed, Corporation reports that prefigure Smithfield's regeneration show a desire to create a distinctive cultural identity as part of both inter- and intra-city competition:

What the area needs is a distinctive and dynamic identity that differentiates it from other cultural districts within London and across the world.

(City of London, 2016: 1)

In July 2017 this was announced as Culture Mile, a branded cultural district in the north-west of the City (City of London, 2017). The geographic extent of this district linked a relocated Museum of London, the Barbican Centre, the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, and London Symphony Orchestra (see figure 2.1), encompassing Smithfield as well as areas beyond it.



Figure 2.1: Map of Culture Mile area in the north-west of the City of London. (Culture Mile, 2020: 7)

From the beginning, Culture Mile was considered as both a branding and urban regeneration scheme, with the Corporation's Policy and Resources Committee calling for the "regeneration of an area with outstanding arts institutions" but which "inhabits an underwhelming, tired and disorientating environment" (City of London, 2016: 2). Culture is here framed as distinct from its urban context, occupying an environment which is described in the abstract, distanced terms of Lefebvre's 'conceived space' (1991), that of 'planners and urbanists' (p38). Summers highlights the necessity of such a framing to foreground and legitimise change:

Elites and state actors use physical structures within urban landscapes as abstract, neutral sites for architectural redesign and reinvention. Therefore, development is heralded as a necessary process in the city remaking itself and its perpetual state of becoming modern.

(2019: 21)

However, rather than ‘a neutral site’, the Corporation – through Culture Mile – selectively references elements of its locality that are loaded with socio-cultural and aesthetic value, specifically its existing cultural infrastructure and its atmospheric heritage identity: a process of augmenting its ‘marks of distinction’. Further, the formation of the Culture Mile brand also conforms to the established conventions of cultural place branding globally (Degen & Rose, 2022) in its combination of not only branding and marketing, but placemaking, events, urban design (Degen & Ward, 2021), and the broader aesthetic geographies of Julier’s ‘designscapes’ (2005). In the case of Culture Mile the strategies required to deliver a ‘distinctive and dynamic identity’ are explicitly described in terms of the area’s sense of place:

The use of a marketing/communications strategy will allow a distinctive, cohesive sense of place and sense of arrival to be created that will draw audiences to the cultural district. Examples of how this could be achieved are through the use of colour, alternative street furniture, on-street activities, creation of new public space and innovative lighting technology.

(City of London, 2016: 2)

The desire for a specific place experience is therefore linked to material interventions in the built environment and to a cohesive brand. Significantly, Culture Mile is not predicated on demolition but on regeneration through re-use and ‘enhancement’. While this appears to differentiate it from culture-led development schemes based around ‘iconic’ architecture, new buildings are still an aspect of the area’s transformation, with the rationale for the district explicitly linked to “significant investment in commercial property in and around the Cultural Hub plus an established development pipeline” (2016: 4). This includes the now completed JJ Mack office development on Charterhouse Street and the Lindsey Street ‘Kaleidoscope’ development, occupied by TikTok. Therefore, the pervasive cycle of destruction and renewal remains intrinsic, albeit framed as a secondary effect.

Crucially, the attractiveness of the Culture Mile district is also tied to the success and reputation of the ‘Square Mile’. This association is emphasised in a Culture Mile annual report (2019-20), which reiterates that the hub “plays a pivotal role in strengthening the

City of London’s credentials as a place to do business” (Culture Mile, 2020: 28). Culture Mile is thus framed as a cultural district with both an existing distinctive sense of place and a new one created through material intervention; as a realm of cultural consumption, it is also an adjunct to existing property investment and a global differentiator for the attractiveness of the City’s financial district. Considered as a 10-year strategy (City of London, 2018), Culture Mile was nonetheless formally disbanded in 2022, and aspects of its programme, including its local socially-engaged activities, were distributed among partner organisations as well as the Corporation’s reimagined tourism programme Destination City. Notably, despite the end of Culture Mile as an entity and brand, the Corporation remains committed to creating a “distinctive look and feel” for the Smithfield and Barbican area in its recent City Plan 2040 (City of London, 2024b: 278). It also reiterates that:

The City’s cultural infrastructure is important to the distinctive and historically significant character of the Square Mile. The international reputation and high quality of this cultural activity has a critical part to play in the vibrancy of the working environment and adds to the appeal of the City as a place to do business.

(City of London, 2024b: 97)

While the vehicles for the area’s rebranding may have changed, the rationales for its development appear to remain the same, linking urban experiential character to international reputation on the global catwalk.

It is important to also note the attention given to intra- as well as inter-urban competition in Culture Mile’s formation. This is in line with a proliferation in hyper-localised place brands that highlight experiential characteristics of different urban areas within the same city. The Mayor of London’s Borough of Culture Award (GLA, 2024a) illustrates this trend, through which individual London boroughs compete to receive £1m in funding for local cultural initiatives and events. This strategy is in the same vein as the European Capitals of Culture programme, which has “effectively promoted both major and minor cities as urban experiences” (Lord & Blankenberg, 2015: 16). It is also a strategy adopted by Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and their associated place-brands (Anderson & Arms, 2022).

BIDs are defined areas in which rate-paying businesses are charged a levy by a business-led partnership, with accrued funds spent on additional services to benefit local businesses (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2014), for example street cleaning, enhanced security, and public realm improvements. Culture Mile BID operates in Smithfield, as an independent successor to the cultural partnership and place brand which preceded it. For Ward (2007), BIDs effectively divide a city into “discrete, governable spaces” which “encourage inter-urban competition as one Business Improvement District competes with another to capture value” (p667). The centrality of ‘culture’ to Culture Mile BID is explicit and unironic; as such it can be seen as a coming-together of capitalist territorialisation, of the ‘orthodoxy’ of cultural differentiation, and of market-led spatio-sensory re-coding. It is representative of the multi-scalar strategies and effects that derive from urban competition and the symbolic uses to which culture is put therein. Acknowledging these dimensions affords a more holistic view of the processes and effects of culture-led development as they relate to place.

2.2.2 Local economic rationales of culture-led development

I now turn to consider rationales for the *local* value of culture-led development schemes. I categorise these in terms of those that are, firstly, predominately economic and, secondly those that are predominantly social (section 2.2.3 below). This is an artificial separation for the sake of analysis: in practice, these categories overlap both operationally and experientially in Smithfield. These two rationales also imperfectly mirror the models determined by Sacco, Ferilli, and Tavano Blessi (2014) in their urban studies’ meta-analytic review of culture-led local development. They categorise instrumentalist approaches, where culture is used as a source of economic value; functional approaches, where culture supplies an economic demand; and a non-market-orientated ‘capability approach’ that aims to produce social capital and community cohesion. Adapting this model, I approach functional and instrumentalist approaches together to better understand their interrelation with notions of place identity and experience, and the processes unfolding in Smithfield; this is also informed by Pratt’s (2008) contention that recognising the whole cycle of culture, from production through to consumption, provides a more revealing basis for its role in urban regeneration. Given my focus on the relationship between culture-led development, a local

area, and museum agency, I am also mindful of Miles and Paddison's (2005) warning that "the single most dangerous aspect of cultural investment is that it simply does not sit comfortably in the context for which it is intended" (p 837). Understanding the parameters for such *local* relevance is at the heart of this research.

Culture today is understood as an economic category in its own right (Brook et al., 2020), and its value judged in terms of its economic contribution. I have shown above the interrelation between culture-led development and strategies to attract international investment and a 'creative class' into redeveloped urban areas. Its proponents claim that the local impact of such investment and activity has additional economic benefits. Arguments here include short term property-led 'trickle-down' benefits, increased visitors and associated spend, and inclusive forms of 'sustainable' urban regeneration (Campkin, 2013: 122; Guerzoni, 2015; Raco et al., 2008: 2654). Both tourism and the economic revenue generation of cultural institutions themselves fall into instrumentalist approaches (Bille & Schulze, 2006; Sacco et al., 2014). Unsurprisingly, as Dean et al. highlight in their analysis of Tate Modern's development, "a central plank of contemporary urban regeneration is a good marketing strategy and an active tourist office" (2010: 85). Once again this has both international but also local relevance – seen for example in the Corporation's Destination City campaign, launched in May 2022 and targeted at Londoners as well as wider UK and international visitors (City of London, 2024c). Here then the 'culture' within culture-led development is emblematic of wider local economic benefits and intentions.

Yet this view of culture has social as well as economic effects, extending dominant forms of consumerism and arguably "beneficial only to specific high-income and educated social segments" (Sacco et. al., 2014: 2807). Culture here is not a benign economic engine but may instead extend inequality. Indeed, Zukin argues that culture is used within a 'symbolic economy' that seeks to impose a cultural hierarchy and to control public space (1995). Rather than providing an opportunity to escape or contest capitalism, culture becomes a means of control that extends existing power hierarchies. As Miles and Paddison highlight:

The degree to which culture itself is implicated in the reproduction of inequality is largely neglected as a result of the apparent fusion of the social, the economic and the cultural.

(2005: 836)

While investment in culture is conventionally welcomed, attention needs to be paid to the *type* of culture and the audiences – or ‘consumers’ – it seeks to bring to an area as part of culture-led development processes.

I have shown that culture-led development is a multi-scalar process of spatial transformation and economic growth. As well as considering the broad dynamics of this process, this research focuses on the interaction of a specific cultural institution, the London Museum, within this broader transformation. This then concerns not only the instrumentalisation (and commodification) of ‘culture’ as a driver of the local economy, but also the instrumentalisation of a cultural institution within this process. To what extent is it readily instrumentalised? For Dean et al. (2010), “museums and galleries have become notable (and willing) players in this game” (p84). Indeed, for institutions involved there are obvious benefits including new and expanded buildings, improved transport infrastructure and footfall, and an increased profile as part of promotional campaigns and place brands. Further, paying visitors are essential to the income of many museums given reductions in public funding (Janes, 2013), a status severely tested during COVID-19, which “laid bare the fragility of the museum’s business model” (Szántó, 2020: 10). This fragility is at odds with the economic and symbolic value they contribute.

The role of the London Museum within the culture-led development of Smithfield is complex, negotiated, and entwined with economic and political considerations. The Corporation was the Museum’s landlord at London Wall and will be at West Smithfield, and alongside the Greater London Authority (GLA) it is also its primary funder. Together this funding – £5.7m and £7.6m respectively in FY22/23 (London Museum, 2023b: 39) – accounts for 81 per cent of the Museum of London Group’s donations, grants and legacies revenue funding (p18). Financial support is additionally provided by Arts Council England (£1.4m FY22/23) as well as private donations and corporate sponsorship, and the Museum’s

own commercial activities at London Wall and the Museum of London Docklands (London Museum, 2023b). In the financial year 2022/23 the Museum generated £1.7m in trading income (p12), and estimates that this will increase once it has relocated to Smithfield. The Corporation also appoints half of the Museum's 18-member board of Governors, six of whom also sit on the Court of Common Council. Beyond its support in terms of operational funding, the Corporation is also the primary funder of the capital costs of the Museum's relocation, contributing £37.7m in direct funding in FY22/23, as well as indirect funding for advance works on roadways and the Poultry Market and Annex buildings, as well as through the Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund.

The financial and operational complexity of this organisational structure is not uncommon within the cultural sector. However, the Museum's relocation from one Corporation-owned structure at London Wall to another Corporation-owned structure in Smithfield makes it unusual. The scale of the project also sets it apart: estimated at £437m (Lowe, 2023), it is one of the largest cultural capital building projects in Europe. Given this funding and political interrelationship, it is therefore difficult to think in terms of a straightforward 'instrumentalisation' of the institution; and even of 'the institution' as a single monolithic entity, again highlighting the usefulness of Massey's (2005) critique of de Certeau's (1984) more 'seamless' conception of power. Indeed, the Museum has differential agency in its programmes and practices, and I argue, diverse social and cultural effects. So while museums may be economically instrumentalised within culture-led development processes, not least as a 'key experiential sector' in the new experience economy (Miles, 2021), they are simultaneously an agent of change in their own right. As Dean et al. (2010) contend, these are effects that traverse local economic value:

Cutting across these economic discourses are the social and cultural ones that primarily have emanated from inside the museum. Generally the new museology has generated a rethinking of the role and social engagement of the museum in society, issues that very much cut across the physical threshold of the building.

(2010: 87)

It is these and other local social benefits that I now turn to.

2.2.3 Local social rationales for culture-led development

A third rationale for culture-led development is its local social value. Indeed, “a culture-led regeneration that is infatuated with economic outcomes constitutes a model for change that is not based on any kind of discernible reality” (Miles, 2020: 218). While the tension between state-led or centralised regeneration programmes and community-focused or community-led visions of urban improvement is well established (Campkin, 2013), as Lin and Hsing (2009) argue, a greater focus on the “relationship between place and community mobilisation” (p1317) is required in strategies of post-industrial culture-led development. I firmly align this study with such a focus through an examination of the agency and programmes of a museum within a culture-led development scheme. This necessarily includes theories and analysis from museum studies and recent developments in ‘new museology’ that emphasise the social and political roles of museums. This is the other side of the “Faustian bargain” that institutions make as part of culture-led development processes (Dean et al., 2010: 85) and includes the ‘capability approach’ that values the contribution culture makes to quality of life (Sacco et. al, 2014). Understanding local civic or social outcomes as a rationale for culture-led development processes provides a critical lens through which to analyse the aims and interactions of culture-led development in Smithfield, as well as – crucially – the London Museum’s own local social programmatic strategies and interventions.

I have shown above that the culture in culture-led development schemes is predominantly framed in terms of its economic and symbolic value; however, as Miles and Paddison (2005) suggest such “rhetorical promotion of culture ... is profoundly short-sighted and indeed underestimates the value of culture for the people of a locality” (p837). Although still imbricated with economic value, recognition of the local social value of culture has increased since the high-water mark of ‘iconic’ cultural regeneration projects in the 1990s and early 2000s, and has been associated with a variety of additional roles and impacts. These arguably go beyond the conventional ‘intrinsic’ versus ‘instrumental’ binary value of culture (Brook et. al, 2020) to include health, education, quality of life, local identity, and community cohesion.

Embedded in policy frameworks, funding programmes, and placemaking strategies, such rationales are often explicitly tied to notions of place and local identity, as well as local economic growth. These include Arts Council England's (ACE) *Creative People and Places* fund (ACE, 2024), the DCMS/ACE *Cultural Development Fund Network and Cultural Placemaking* initiative (Ganga et al., 2022), and – locally to Smithfield – Islington's *Imagine Islington* culture strategy (Islington Council, 2024) and the Corporation's *Cultural and Creative Learning Strategy* (City of London, 2019). For ACE, "culture and the experiences it offers can have a deep and lasting effect on places and the people who live in them" (ACE: 2020: 37). Focusing on the value of museums specifically, the independent Mendoza Review (DCMS, 2017), commissioned by the then Conservative government to understand the challenges and opportunities of the museum sector in England, suggests museums' capacity to support learning, improve community cohesion, and promote better health – notably alongside economic regeneration. The roster of services has continued to expand in recent years, with institutions even acting as 'warm banks' to provide shelter for vulnerable people against extreme cold (McRae, 2023). This highlights the substantial mandates of contemporary museums, encroaching even on the responsibilities of the welfare state. Politicisation is a major factor, with the actions of successive Conservative governments reducing state support or delegating it to other bodies and third sector organisations, albeit with little commensurate funding or appropriate skills and resources.

Developments from within museum studies and professional practice over the last two decades have established further paradigms of local value and social engagement. These have emerged from the 'new museology', or 'the post-museum' (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000), a critical framing of museum practices that acknowledges the politics of representation, shares power with communities, and recognises that audiences and visitors are not passive consumers. Museums in this framing are also sites that provide a support structure and nexus of local identity, and as museum studies scholar Janet Marstine (2006) outlines, become locations "from which to redress social inequalities" (p19); indeed, objects and collections, historically museums' primary purpose, are arguably of secondary importance to this work (Brown & Mairesse, 2018). This discourse is also concurrent with a process of acknowledging and attending to museums' own institutional foundations in the historic construction and maintenance of inequalities. American museum professional Nina Simon's

(2010) influential guide *The Participatory Museum* encapsulates this disruption to conventionally hierarchical and didactic museological approaches, with community engagement and participatory practices supporting increased relevance and social impact, and steering museum programmes, practices, and policy.

More recently, museum studies academics and museum professionals have argued for a strengthening of the political and even activist potential of museums to promote human rights, climate resilience, and social justice (Janes, 2024; Janes & Sandell, 2019; Sandell, 2017). This is underpinned by a belief in the capacity of museums to “shape as well as reflect social and political relations” (Nightingale & Sandell, 2012: 1). In this context, social justice is defined as the ways in which museums “might acknowledge and act upon inequalities within and outside of the cultural domain” in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, class, disability, or sexuality, and for Janes (2024) as a “lifeboat” in the face of environmental and societal collapse.

It is this framing of museums as (potentially) active, collaborative, political participants in society that I particularly emphasise in this study. Added to this is a progressively local focus and an “expanded role as an agent of community life”, a role intensified by COVID-19 (Buxton, 2020; Szántó, 2020: 8). This local ‘situatedness’ is articulated by museum design scholar Laura Hourston Hanks in her analysis of the local inclusion ambitions of the Piers Arts Centre, Orkney. She argues that the institution’s response to the meanings, values, and place identity of its context strengthens exhibition and institutional narratives, and extends community engagement (2018: 98). This expansion into local areas can be seen as an attempt to reverse what museum professional Elaine Gurian terms ‘threshold fear’, the idea that there are programmatic and physical barriers that prevent the uninitiated from visiting a museum (Gurian, 2006). Yet potential issues of socio-cultural exclusion and dissonance with local identity and meanings remain, exacerbated within processes of culture-led development. The challenge for institutions is therefore “to think about inclusion and regeneration together” (Dean et al., 2010: 82). This provocation provides this research not only with an analytical perspective through which to examine this process, but also a basis for practical recommendations to inform more equitable dynamics between cultural institutions and their changing local contexts.

However, I add a note of caution, given the tendency of capitalist logics to commodify all aspects of cultural production and consumption. Indeed, as well as its role in inter- and intra-city competition dynamics, Culture Mile also had both local economic *and* social ambitions, extending from the Corporation's overarching *Corporate Plan*. This is commensurate with a 'capability approach' (Sacco et al., 2014) that aims to produce social capital and community cohesion. Yet they can also be framed within the increasingly diversified and programmatic nature of brand activity tied to culture-led development schemes (Degen & Rose, 2022; Jensen, 2007). As I identified in section 2.1, this includes "all the artifices of advertising and image construction" (Harvey, 1996: 297-298) as well as digital approaches, public events, material interventions, and arguably social engagement. Indeed, social engagement here could be considered a strategy of "affective alignment" (Ernwein & Matthey, 2019: 296) around the achievement and experience of a future cultural district, a form of 'anticipatory action' (Anderson, 2010) towards a nascent geography of cultural participation and consumption, and a 'placing' of culture not only materially but socially (see also Degen & Ward, 2021). In the context of Smithfield's culture-led development, this both encourages new audiences and new urban imaginaries, as well as attempting to condition local social actors' existing relationship to place. This suggests an attentiveness to commodification of even socially-engaged practice, and the nuance of who ultimately benefits.

2.2.4 Adaptive re-use

Lastly, I identify a fourth rationale for culture-led development: its strategic application within adaptive re-use schemes. I suggest that the use of culture in such schemes is rarely a straightforward narrative of heritage preservation, but entangled with economic, political, and socio-cultural values and experiential meanings: its purported value should therefore be examined in this light. As a relatively recent subject of critical analysis, it is a timely consideration given my study's overarching concern with a museum's relationship with its locality, the adaptive re-use of the area's historic market buildings by the London Museum, and the planned redevelopment of the Central Markets as part of the area's broader cultural regeneration.

There is a vast discourse on the experiential and cultural meanings given to the built environment, architectural style, and social interaction (see Bachelard, 1994; Lynch, 1960; Pallasmaa, 2005; Tschumi, 1997), elements of which I explore further in Chapter 3. However, despite the longstanding conversion and re-use of buildings of all kinds, it is only recently that ‘adaptive’ or ‘creative’ re-use – the adaptation of existing structures at different scales for new functions (Lang, 2022) – has been formalised as an architectural strategy and academic field, one that nonetheless remains terminologically unstable (Plevoets & Van Cleempoel, 2019).

The relocation of the London Museum is a large scale and high-profile example of adaptive re-use, with the Museum moving from a purpose-built 1970s structure that once represented all that was modern, to a cluster of market buildings that can trace their function back nearly 2,000 years (see figure 2.2). Indeed, London Museum Director Sharon Ament has described the General Market building as “the last ruin in central London” (Watts, 2018).

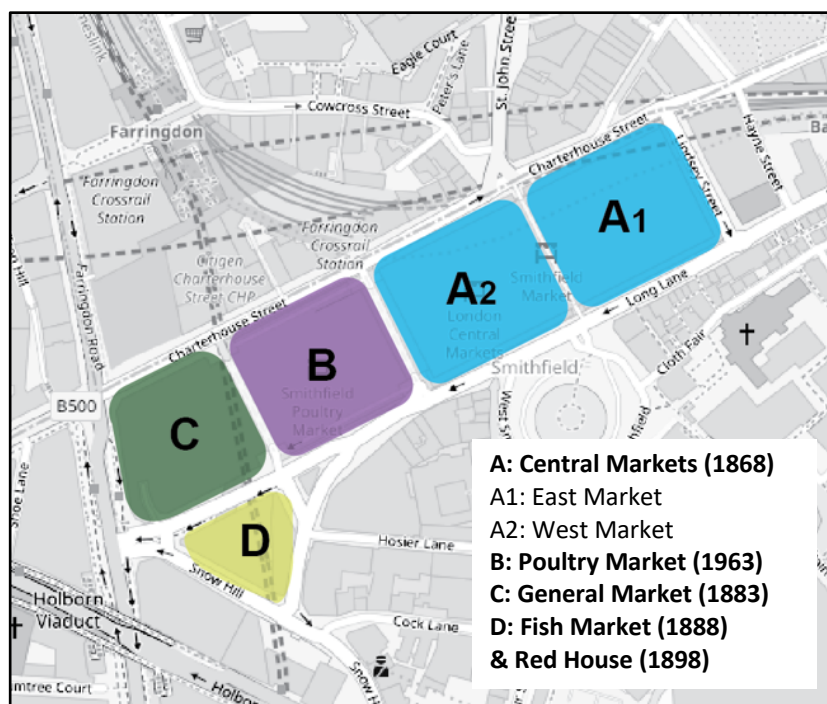


Figure 2.2: Map of Smithfield Market structures and year of opening.

A1 and A2 are the working wholesale market.

B and C are the future home of the London Museum.

D, at one time part of the Museum plans, will now house commercial uses.

Unlike new showpiece buildings whose designs are increasingly questioned on the grounds of carbon accounting (Lang, 2022: 5), the adaptive re-use of heritage buildings is largely framed positively as “a form of sustainable urban renewal” that can improve the image of a city (Abdulameer & Sati' Abbas, 2020: 1). Further:

It is not only a process of building conversion by recycling useable components for the purpose of new use, but also a method and strategy that can be used to preserve its cultural heritage.

(2020: 1)

Other benefits attributed to re-use include reductions in vandalism and crime, improved community cohesion, and increased property values (Hill, 2016; Remøy & Wilkinson, 2012). The adaptive re-use of historic former market buildings in Smithfield is described by the Corporation primarily in terms of heritage preservation:

The new museum will occupy Smithfield's iconic market buildings and save the historic Victorian structures for future generations.

(City of London, 2024d)

The rationale for the relocation is here framed in terms of ‘salvation’, and is explicitly linked to the area’s heritage, an instrumentalisation of culture for public good. As I have previously indicated, the unspoken context however is the Corporation’s failed attempts to either partially or completely demolish the General Market as part of commercial redevelopment. The relocation of the Museum is then as much a tactic by the Corporation to *save* the General Market as is to *solve* it as a problem of productive land use.

Adaptive re-use within culture-led development represents a shift in emphasis away from the architectural bombast of schemes in the 1990s and 2000s – notably before the 2008 financial crisis – which featured ‘iconic’ new cultural buildings, albeit with Tate Modern’s conversion of Bankside Power Station a notable exception (Dean et al, 2010). Such approaches not only provided an easily-communicable landmark of civic transformation and cultural capital, but locations were also distinguished by their discerning patronage of global

'name' architects (Julier, 2005: 871). This is "phantasmagoric" architecture that Miles (2021: 105) suggests presents "what appears to be a progressive agenda, but one which drowns and camouflages the reality of an institution that props up the status quo while giving it an iconic physical presence." Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum is perhaps the most well-known example, one Arantes (2018) hails as an example of capital's "self-valorisation" and redolent of a boom-and-bust economic cycle (p208). Miles's (2005) study of the NewcastleGateshead Quayside scheme that featured an 'iconic' Foster + Partners concert hall raises symbolic as well as economic concerns, arguing that such projects are successful only in as much as they engage in a sense of community belonging. The adaptive re-use of existing structures in Smithfield perhaps presents an opportunity to galvanise such belonging as a component of local identity and experience, rather than imposing a new architectural and symbolic order. Indeed, as Hourston Hanks (2018) contends, although showpiece cultural buildings are "reassuringly familiar" (p87) they also have an inherent placelessness.

Is adaptive re-use then a straightforward shortcut to local belonging? It is not so clear-cut. Existing heritage structures are not neutral containers, but laden with contested symbolic, socio-cultural, and aesthetic meanings (Campkin, 2013; Edensor, 2012). This can be part of their value, as seen in Zukin's discussion of the re-appropriation and recycling – or what we might term the 're-use' – of New York lofts by artists and subsequently property developers in the 1980s (Zukin, 2014). As much as a genuine opportunity for material preservation and socio-cultural continuity, heritage structures are thus ripe for commodification as part of broader processes of urban transformation. As Campkin argues, this is part of a wider challenge "of how to connect urban and architectural history to regeneration practice more successfully" (2013: 166). So, while the Museum is saving "the historic Smithfield site for generations to come" (London Museum, 2023c), this is not an act of preserving in aspic or one of ready-made authenticity, but an active strategy of transformation within a changing urban context. This is again a complex field of negotiation between market forces, socio-cultural values, and urban identity.

In Smithfield this complexity is exemplified by the relationship between the wholesale market traders (herein 'the Market'), the Corporation, and the market buildings. As of July

2024, the Market operates out of the East and West Market buildings, having vacated the Poultry Market in 2023, and the General Market in 1999. While the latter two buildings will house the new London Museum (see figure 2.2), the East and West Markets will be redeveloped by the Corporation into a mix of new food retail, entertainment and cultural spaces after the relocation of the wholesale meat market to Dagenham Dock from 2028 onwards. While the relocation was not part of initial (official) plans for the area's redevelopment, it is now a major aspect of Smithfield's redevelopment, one that will enable an intensification of the area's 're-coding' (Miles, 2000). This outwardly aligns with the class dimensions of what Harvey terms the "creative destruction" of urban transformation, brought to bear on "the underprivileged and those marginalised from political power" (2012: 16). Indeed, as González and Dawson (2018) suggest, markets are "new frontiers for gentrification processes" (p57). The Victorian-era East and West Market buildings are here an attractive and 'authentic' target for re-use and redevelopment.

Yet, the power dynamics of change here are again more nuanced than they initially appear. While the Corporation is the freeholder of the market buildings and the Market's landlord, the activity of the Market is also grounded in historical rights and privileges that date back to 1327 (Forshaw, 2015). The consequence of this is that any relocation of the Market requires UK Parliamentary approval: a Bill to facilitate this was submitted on the 28th November 2022 (City of London, 2022b). This suggests a tension between traders' rights to belong in Smithfield on the one hand, and as mobile tenants on the other, subject to the Corporation as the ultimate arbiter and beneficiary of the area's economic productivity. This dynamic was brought into focus in 2022 during the multi-year negotiations between the Smithfield Market Tenants Association and the Corporation over the Market's relocation. Market traders here invoked the 1327 Royal Charter (Oliver, 2022), arguing that it protected their rights to remain in Smithfield. Though this conflict was ultimately resolved prior to an agreement on the relocation, the charter nonetheless highlights the traders' territorialised sense of identity.

An additional layer of institutional complexity further destabilises simple binary notions of power versus powerlessness. Several market traders are also elected Members of the local ward (Farringdon Without), participating in and shaping the City's governance. Further, one

Member and market trader is also a Governor of the London Museum, while another led negotiations with the Corporation over the relocation plans. Therefore, rather than a straight-forward binary clash between the municipal power of Corporation officials and the manoeuvres of disempowered market traders, this instead suggests an intricate network of knowledge, aims, and negotiation that is played out within Smithfield's development. From the perspective of the traders, this process also recasts Pred's (1984) notion that places are always in the process of 'becoming'; instead, depending on a social actor's position relative to that process, places are equally always in the process of 'leaving'. This is a negotiated trajectory that ultimately prepares the ground for new spatial and symbolic practices in Smithfield.

CONCLUSION

The Corporation is orchestrating the culture-led development of Smithfield through multiple vehicles and strategies of social, spatial, sensory, and symbolic transformation, and in both visible and invisible ways. This is driven by the commodifying logics of neoliberal urbanism, and the need to accrue 'marks of distinction' as part of global and local competition for investment and footfall. These, I have argued, are both institutional – in the form of a museum – but also experiential, in terms of new spaces and sites of consumption. They are also part of wider landscapes of aesthetic and political control. Yet, in this chapter, I have also shown that culture-led development in Smithfield is not a linear 'strategy' (de Certeau, 1984) led by a single homogenous actor, but one that is negotiated between organisations with varying degrees of agency and, per Massey (2005), through diverse modalities of power. This lays the foundations for a theoretical framework pertinent to the transformation of a working urban district through overlapping institutional strategies and their longstanding yet shifting strategic goals, and the varied experiences and relations of multiple local social actors. It also supports a view of the London Museum as both an agent and instrument of change participating in and negotiating the redevelopment of Smithfield.

However, the *nature* of that agency is something the Museum is seeking to define. As Miles (2020) highlights, the cultural regeneration boom of the early 2000's saw culture used in a "linear way that was hamstrung by political and economic motives" (p217). In Smithfield, I

suggest, a local social rationale for culture-led development can be more meaningfully pursued. This is partly expressed in the Museum's strategic 'mission' to be a "force for good" in its new location. This reflects ambitions for a sense of social ownership, belonging, and partnership (London Museum, 2023a). Yet as Massey (2005) argues, "there can be no assumption of pre-given coherence, or of community or collective identity. Rather the throwntogetherness of place demands negotiation" (p141). To strategically embed an institution within such a diverse and emergent local identity necessarily goes beyond spatial and architectural notions to encompass strategic, programmatic, and ethical dimensions, aspects that build on existing modes of museum engagement and which I develop in my empirical chapters. Principally, this also requires a grounded, ethnographic understanding of how simultaneously relational, socio-cultural, embodied, and imagined senses of place are defined, a theoretical framework I develop in the next chapter.

Chapter 3 The Potency of Place: Developing a Theoretical ‘Sense of Place’ Framework

The impact of culture-led regeneration is clearly closely tied up to a localised sense of place.

(Miles & Paddison, 2005: 836)

“Place” is one of the trickiest words in the English language, a suitcase so overfilled one can never shut the lid.

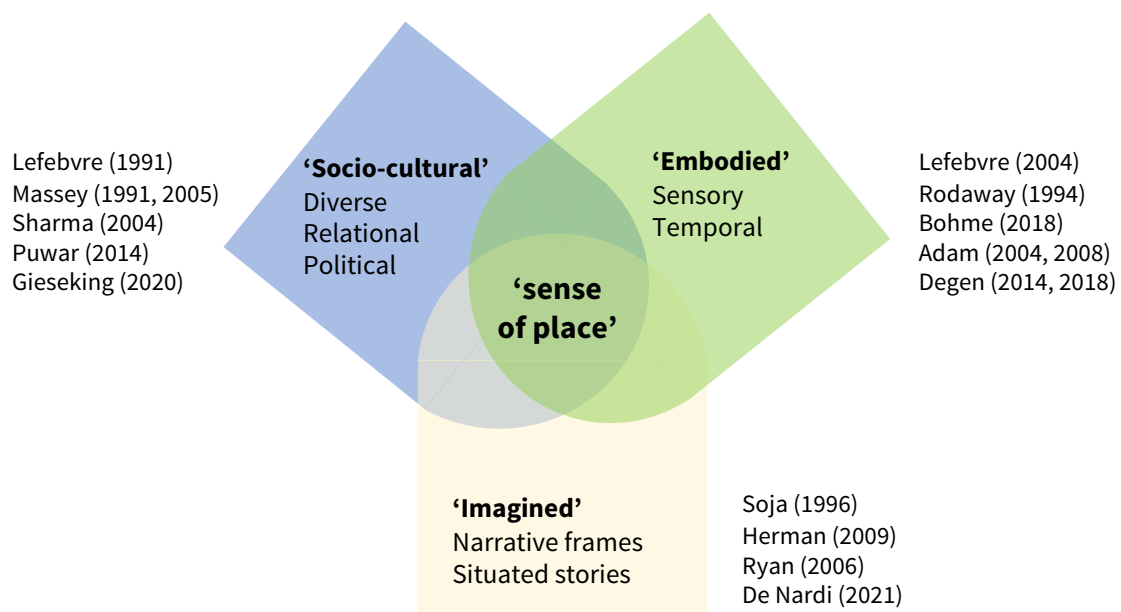
(Hayden, 1996: 15)

I established in *Chapter 2: Capitalising on Culture* that local places are affected by and invoked in multiple rationales of culture-led development and are transformed in both visible and invisible ways. This is an interaction that I examine in terms of a local area’s sense of place by asking what constitutes the sense of place of an area undergoing accelerated change? And how can this inform the programmes and practices of a relocating museum, one that is both an instrument and agent of change? In this second theory chapter I hence construct an approach to analysing senses of place that accounts for the economic and political power dynamics of market-led cultural regeneration, and which recognises change over time and the multiplicity of place. This open, diverse, and fluid understanding is fundamental to any analysis of the processes and social effects of culture-led development; it also provides a basis on which to examine how a museum approaches and engages with a new local area.

Below, I summarise key theories and findings from urban sociology, human geography, and urban studies to argue for this expanded notion, one that is simultaneously political (Massey, 2005), relational and socio-cultural (Lefebvre, 1991; Massey, 1991), embodied (Adam, 2004; Böhme, 2018; Pink, 2015) and imagined (Herman, 2009; Ryan, 2004; Soja, 1996). This understanding of a sense of place, I argue, responds to an acknowledgement of “the need to conceive of the city in a much more multi-faceted and ideologically sophisticated way” (Miles, 2020: 221) in order to understand how processes of culture-led

development affect and are affected by their local contexts. It also responds to the diverse and often incompatible conceptualisations of ‘place’ and ‘sense of place’ within and across disciplines bringing together separate approaches to place, place identity, and social experience. This assemblage reflects a ‘critical nomadism’ informed by Soja’s (1996: 82) analysis of Lefebvre’s (1991) *The Production of Space*, in which no single mode of spatial thinking is privileged over others. This theoretical sense of place framework is represented in figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: A visual overview of the theoretical ‘sense of place’ framework I have developed for this study, and their primary influences. Each of the dimensions acts simultaneously and they are mutually interrelated.



This chapter comprises three sections that each focus on a different aspect of my framework. In section 1 I argue that senses of place must acknowledge that space is socially-produced and embedded with power relations (Lefebvre, 1991), but that these are relationally diverse and uneven (Gieseeking, 2020; Massey, 1991, 1993, 2005; Puwar, 2004; Sharma, 2014). This supports an analysis that recognises the formation of subjective, diverse, and relational social senses of place.

In section 2, I focus on embodied sensory perception to emphasise the importance of sensuous experiences of movement and temporality within senses of place, and their entanglement with culture-led development processes. I highlight the usefulness of ‘sensescapes’ (Porteous, 1985, 1990; Rodaway, 1994) in understanding contextual social experiences of urban change (Degen, 2014), as well as the importance of emotion and ‘staging’ within atmospheres (Böhme, 2018), relevant to the aesthetic power dynamics of urban regeneration and place brands. I also highlight embodied temporal perception through the experience of varied ‘timescapes’ (Adam, 1998, 2004, 2008; Degen, 2018). In doing so, I argue that the recognition of embodied sensory, emotional, and – significantly – temporal aspects of urban experience are essential to an analysis of how senses of place are experienced and defined by diverse local social actors.

In section 3, I turn to narrative and imagined mediations of place, a necessary dimension for this study as it reveals both the interaction of regeneration narratives, place brands, and the places they claim to represent (Austin, 2020; Jensen, 2007; Zukin, 1995) and the role that stories and the imagination play in our relationship to place. The latter is underpinned by Soja’s (1996) concept of a simultaneously “real-and-imagined” dimension of social space. This provides a holistic framework for examining how senses of place are experienced and defined, and how a museum – as a storytelling institution – approaches its relationship with a local sense of place.

I end by drawing these aspects together, along with the power dynamics of urban change and culture-led development rationales outlined in Chapter 2, to describe my unified theoretical framework. I then foreground the major empirical themes this informs.

3.1 SOCIO-CULTURAL AND POLITICAL SENSES OF PLACE

In this section I argue that place is embedded with relationally diverse and uneven power relations. This supports an analysis that recognises the formation of multiple subjective and relational social senses of place, and the power dynamics of urban change. I begin by addressing philosophical theorisations of place in order to establish the conceptual foundations for this framework, arguing that place is a “necessary social construction”

(Cresswell, 2015: 51). I follow this with a discussion of Lefebvre's theory of socially produced space (1991) and specifically his perceived-conceived-lived triad, drawing attention to his centring of power relations within everyday spatial practices, and its conceptual expansion by Soja (1996). To redress Lefebvre's homogenisation of social actors (Purcell, 2022), I turn to Massey's concept of power geometry and the varied and relational impacts of power on different bodies (1991, 1993). I highlight more recent scholarship that develops this position within contexts related to this study (Sharma, 2014; Puwar, 2004; Gieseeking, 2020). I conclude by restating what these theories add to my theoretical framework, and their relevance to an analysis of senses of place within a culture-led development process.

3.1.1 The possibility of the social: Grounding the meaning of place

Sense of place has been examined, defined, and subdivided in multiple disciplines and contexts (Westerholt et al. 2020), yet there is no standard agreement on its definition and operation (Dameria et al, 2020: 141). For humanist geographer Yi-Fu Tuan (1974) a sense of place is an emotional attachment or 'affective bond' between people and place, a framing shared by Relph (1976) and others (see Brown et al., 2015; Counted, 2016; Scannell and Gifford, 2010). Such place attachment has been studied and codified in specific contexts, for example health (DeMiglio & Williams, 2008), rural landscapes (Puren et al., 2007), urban-regional scale (Shamai, 1991) and tourism (Dwyer et al, 2019), often introducing a hierarchy or ranking to establish degrees of attachment or spatial 'exposure' (Westerholt et al. 2020). In this study however, with its diverse and non-residential communities and multitude of interacting social, temporal, and spatial settings, I eschew a hierarchical definition or scale, emphasising instead multiple simultaneous dimensions beyond emotional attachments. Further, I concur with social theorist Allan Pred (1983), who suggests that sense of place is too often seen as "a free-floating phenomenon" that remains beyond "specific power relationships" and "social and economic constraints" (p50). I hence assert the structuring role that such dimensions play, grounded in social experience. However, I suggest that to frame a sense of place relevant to the multifarious experience and power relationships of culture-led urban development requires an approach that begins with 'place' itself, what it constitutes, and how it has been theorised.

I turn first to philosophical definitions of place. In doing so, I ground this theoretical framework within an understanding of place as the basis for human subjectivity (Casey, 1998; Malpas, 2018). This is a view that recognises humanity as embedded *within* place and that emphasises the interdependence between subjective embodied experience and spatial context. Place is therefore “not just a thing in the world but a way of understanding the world” (Cresswell, 2015: 18); and consequently it is not (purely) socially-constructed, as argued by some (see Harvey, 1996: 293), but something that exists prior to the social. As Malpas asserts “it is within the structure of place that the very possibility of the social arises” (2018: 34). This position does not deny that the experiences and meanings of place – and indeed senses of place – are the product of social constructs, but it does subvert conceptions of ‘place’ as a layer of meaning applied to pre-existing ‘space’. This, I argue, amplifies the potency of place as a field of experience and analysis, and underlines the value of centring senses of place within the discourse of culture-led development.

This is a philosophy that extends from Heidegger (1927/1962) and is also indebted to the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty (1945/2012), for whom – as Malpas (2018) suggests – human thought and experience is grounded in the body (p8): as embodied subjects we are already ‘in the world’. But what are the implications of this for senses of place? Most importantly it asserts the primacy of the body within the meanings, experiences, and identities of place – a *sense* of place that is thus principally embodied and empirical. At first, however, this seems to deny the fundamental importance of social structures. Indeed for Harvey, “place, in whatever guise, is like space and time, a social construct” (1996: 293). However, the two positions can be reconciled within an understanding of place – in its richest philosophical sense – as a “necessary social construction” (Cresswell, 2015: 51): something we have to construct in order to be human, and from where our senses of place extend.

In line with this understanding of meaning as contingent in place rather than layered on place is a framing of place as a gathering site or “assemblage” (Casey, 1998); this is a view shared by Massey (1991, 2005), who describes space “as an open ongoing production” (2005: 55), and a site of flows, interrelations, and connections. Associated with this interconnectedness is a fundamental conceptual ‘openness’ (which I explore in relation to

global flows and to politics below). Malpas concurs, suggesting that place is a fundamentally “open region”, in which “a variety of elements are brought to light through their mutual inter-relation and juxtaposition” (2018: 15). This includes political, economic, social and material flows. Therefore, in its fullest philosophical sense, place cannot be enclosed or bounded but remains always open to these flows and their ongoing connections. Yet, such a radical openness seems to limit any possibility of place identity, or indeed comparable or meaningful senses of place, presenting instead a limitless open field of connections. Rather than unlimited openness however, Malpas suggests that place should be acknowledged as “a certain bounded space or dimension”, or even “a bounded openness or opening” (2018: 26); for Malpas, this qualification bridges notions of place as a *location* and as a *locale*. He explains:

Places have an expansiveness to them such that things can appear and events take place within them, and yet they are also bounded, and so distinct from other places.

(2008: 200)

Significantly this acknowledges both the openness of place to global and local power dynamics and flows, while also allowing for a *sense of place*: the conception of a subjective and differentiated identity. I return to ‘boundaries’ as a thematic concern at the end of this chapter. While this discussion has developed important grounding principles for this research, they are also detached from the situated granularity and socio-political tensions of actual places. This is recognised by Malpas (2018), who acknowledges that he does not “attempt any real investigation of the politics or ethics of place that is common to much of the literature” (p12). These significant dimensions – indeed they provide much of the ‘meat’ of this research – are explored below in relation to Lefebvre’s (1991) theorisation of the social production of space, and to Massey’s (1991, 2005) notion of power geometries.

3.1.2 ‘An interdisciplinary endeavour’: Approaches to researching place

I have established that place is a complex concept. This complexity has been explored and applied across multiple disciplines including influential works in urban studies, see Lynch

(1960) and Jacobs (1961/2020); geography, notably Massey (1991; 2005), human geography, notably Tuan (1974, 1977), Relph (1976), Buttimer (1980) and Cresswell (1996); economic geography, notably Harvey (1996, 2012), anthropology, notably Auge (2008) and Low (2015), and sociology, notably Whyte (1980). Many of these studies are cross-disciplinary in outlook and application, reflecting the multi-dimensional capacities of place and its material, social, political, cultural, and economic entanglements. Writers have also interrogated place through specific thematic lenses, or as an “ingredient in something else” (Casey, 1998: 286), including intimate spaces (Bachelard, 1994), the mythical and the sacred (Tuan, 1977), residential areas and the home (Buttimer, 1980), the senses (Rodaway, 1994), place attachment (Manzo & Devine-Wright, 2013), and transgression (Cresswell, 1996). I refer in due course to relevant aspects of these writers’ work in the context of embodied experience (section 3.2) and narrative and imagined mediations of place (section 3.3). However, it is a discussion of the work of Lefebvre and Massey that forms the remainder of this section on the power dynamics of place, given their overarching concern with the socio-spatial effects of capitalism and its capacity to structure and determine urban experience. Nonetheless, this extensive catalogue also highlights the necessity of approaching a study of senses of place from an interdisciplinary perspective. As Cresswell comments:

Researching and writing about place, then, is clearly both an interdisciplinary endeavour and a practice that extends beyond the academy.

(2015: pXI)

I frame the concerns of this study, specifically the relationship between a culture-led development process and Smithfield’s sense of place, and the role of the London Museum, primarily from an urban sociological and human geographic perspective, grounding my empirical research in the experiences of local social actors. Yet, as I have shown in Chapter 2, the perspectives on the dynamics of urban change from within urban studies, and the disciplinary contexts of museum studies are also relevant. My research also extends ‘beyond the academy’, in the form of a strategic *blueprint* and online resource for new or relocating cultural institutions, bringing the interdisciplinary concerns and findings of this research to an audience of museum professionals, including directors, managers, planners and creative

producers (Appendix C). I now turn from establishing the groundwork of my theoretical framework as it relates to place, to consider its first primary tenet: socio-spatial power dynamics.

3.1.3 Situating power in socially-produced space

The social and political dimensions of space (if not ‘place’ per se) are underlined by Marxist philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre, whose spatial triad (1991) provides a framework for the situated analysis of power. Lefebvre’s theorisation of the social production of space – or more accurately the concept that “(social) space is a (social) product” (p27) – explicitly connects the spatial to the economic, the political, and the social by emphasising that the organisation of space reflects and reinforces societal structures and ideologies. This standpoint provides a means of recognising the social power dynamics of urban change, and their effects. Lefebvre’s perceived-conceived-lived spatial triad provides an analytical structure, framing socially-produced space in terms of spatial practice, representations of space, and representational spaces (1991: 33). For Lefebvre, ‘spatial practice’ is the “particular locations and spatial sets” (p33) of a society and how they are used and transformed through everyday activities; in Smithfield, this equates to the activity and structures of the Central Markets, for example. ‘Representations of space’ refers to “knowledge, to signs, to codes” (1991: 33) *about* space, and is the realm of “planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers” and others (p38); in Smithfield, this equates to the Corporation’s CGI visualisations of the area’s future as well as rationales for its culture-led development. Notably, Lefebvre identifies this as “the dominant space in any society” (p39), highlighting the potency of economic and regulatory dimensions over others, a dominance that I questioned in the previous chapter in relation to the temporal politics of urban change (section 2.1). Lastly, ‘representational space’ is that which is “lived through its associated images and symbols” (p39) and is the dimension of “inhabitants and users”; this equates to Smithfield’s various communities and their associated spatial imaginaries and symbolic values, from market traders to *Fabric* nightclub regulars. Lefebvre’s framing ultimately sees power as part of daily spatial practices, internalised by people in their interaction with the built environment. In my study, this helps to reveal the dynamics both within and between local social and institutional actors as part of a *political* sense of place, albeit one

simultaneously enmeshed with the embodied (see section 3.2), and the imagined (see section 3.3).

Lefebvre's theories have informed multiple studies of situated power dynamics. Don Mitchell's (1995) examination of the conflict surrounding People's Park in Berkeley, California, for example, employs Lefebvre's triad to scrutinise spatial control and subversion; Mitchell shows how the 'conceived' regulation of a public space intersects with its varied 'perceived' identities and functions, and the resultant exclusions. Additionally, Mitchell redefines 'spaces of representation' as 'spaces for representation', highlighting how public spaces serve as platforms for democratic expression through physical occupation and symbolic action. This analysis is relevant to a fieldsite that has also become a site of protest against animal slaughter (Animal Rebellion, 2021) and where the London Museum is aiming to become a "shared space in the middle of it all" (London Museum, 2023a: 6), a metaphorical and material 'town hall' to welcome the multiple perspectives of Londoners. Mitchell's application of Lefebvre's spatial triad underscores the dynamic nature of socially-produced space, and the overlapping or contested claims for place made by different actors.

Within this discussion, I also want to mention the reframing of Lefebvre's spatial triad by postmodern geographer Edward Soja, partly to foreground arguments made later in this chapter, but also to draw attention to his 'both and' mentality that I apply to this framework as a whole. In *'Thirdspace'*, Soja (1996) reframes Lefebvre's perceived-conceived-lived triad into firstspace-secondspace-thirdspace, with the exploration of thirdspace "described and inscribed in journeys to "real-and-imagined" places (p11), a premise I return to in section 3.3. Soja also underlines the radical openness of the trialectic frame itself, and its "critical and inquisitive nomadism" to allow "new possibilities and places" (p82). In other words, he appears to suggest multiple, conceptually diverse constructions for analysing place can co-exist within a framework, "as long as each remains open to the re-combinations and simultaneities of the real-and-imagined" (p65). Within this is the premise that no single mode of spatial thinking should be privileged over others. This is an approach that I have followed in devising the theoretical framework for this research, a necessary disciplinary

and conceptual 'nomadism' to fully frame the critical aspects of 'sense of place' relevant to my study.

I end this analysis of Lefebvre's spatial triad with a critique of his work that informs the next major tenet of my theoretical framework for this study: specifically, Lefebvre's homogenisation of difference between social actors, one that is apparent despite his recognition of difference across capitalist hierarchies of power. Urban studies and democracy scholar Mark Purcell (2022) draws attention to Lefebvre's (1991) framing of 'the masses' (p380), suggesting that:

In his work, inhabitants themselves are largely non-specific 'users of space'. They differ from the owners of space, but they appear largely indistinct among themselves.

(Purcell, 2022: 3054)

Such lack of distinction arguably diminishes or ignores the uneven effects of power that operate within the different dimensions of his spatial triad. It is a homogenisation that is challenged by the work of Marxist geographer Doreen Massey, whose theory of power geometry I now turn to.

3.1.4 Recognising difference and the myth of spatial neutrality

Like Lefebvre, Massey provides a Marxist framing of space that highlights the effect of embedded power structures, albeit with an emphasis on mobility. Massey (1991) argues for the fundamental openness of place to global flows and interconnections; indeed, space is "not an already-interconnected whole but an ongoing product of interconnections" (2005: 107). Such a relational sense of place, one that is connected both to other places and to changing global flows, stands in opposition to ideas of a singular, coherent place identity or distinct sense of place – one on which the place brands of cultural regeneration projects are often premised (as discussed in section 2.1). Indeed, Massey is highly critical of such conceptually 'bounded' homogenous place identities, which she associates with romantic historicisation and 'reactionary nationalisms' (1991:26). This critique also highlights the

position of power needed to create a boundary in the first place, one that informs the 'competitive localisms' (p26) of intra-urban competition including BIDs (see section 2.2). Massey goes further, stating "I certainly could not begin to, nor would I want to, define 'Kilburn' by drawing its enclosing boundaries" (1991: 27). Massey here argues against the idea of a single place identity and of geographic limits, asserting instead that places are conceptually more diverse and expansive. I diverge from this position slightly, in as much as I suggest that subjective representational and experiential identities that accompany a geographic place *can* usefully be perceptually 'bounded', and that their perceptibility is indicative of relational senses of place. This, I believe, is still broadly commensurate with Massey's framing in this context, as hers relates to the concept of 'place' rather than specifically to subjective socio-cultural 'senses of place'. Nonetheless, it is a fruitful empirical tension that I explore at the end of this chapter in relation to other conceptual boundaries, and in depth in *Chapter 5*.

The other major implication of Massey's framing of place as open and interconnected is the uneven effects of global flows on social actors. Massey argues that the ways that people are placed in relation to flows and interconnections determines their lived experience of that space. This reveals the importance of an individual's embodied socio-cultural context – their body and identity – in shaping people's senses of place. Massey relates this to 'differentiated mobility', or the uneven ability of people to 'move' within space:

Different social groups have distinct relationships to this anyway differentiated mobility: some people are more in charge of it than others; some initiate flows and movement, others don't; some are more on the receiving-end of it than others; some are effectively imprisoned by it.

(1991: 26)

Massey calls this 'power geometry': her use of the word 'geometry' emphasising that power is both relational and spatial. These often invisible forms of power condition people's agency, meaning that the same place can affect different groups in a variety of ways, for example according to race, gender, class, age, physical ability, and sexuality. Massey thereby asserts that power is not solely economic, but social and political:

It is capitalism and its developments which are argued to determine our understanding and our experience of space. But surely this is insufficient. Among the many other things which clearly influence that experience, there are, for instance, race and gender.

(1991: 24).

Massey illustrates this in terms of how women's mobility is restricted in multiple ways, "from physical violence to being ogled at or made to feel quite simply 'out of place' – not by 'capital', but by men" (1991: 24). Exactly whose body it is radically determines their experience of that place, indeed their sense of place. This may be amplified, for example by experiences of racial discrimination (Mendoza & Morén-Alegret, 2012: 770). This underscores the importance in this research of attending to diverse socio-cultural perspectives of place identity and experience, and to an analysis of how the power dynamics of urban transformation – of a culture-led development process and of a museum's place within it – are differentially experienced. I combine this with recent scholarship on intersectionality to emphasise the layered and interconnected nature of identity. It is not only that people have different experiences based on who they are, but that "power relations of race, class, and gender are not discrete and mutually exclusive entities, but rather build on each other and work together; and that, while often invisible, these intersecting power relations affect all aspects of the social world" (Collins & Bilge, 2020: 2). Not only does this imply that subjective senses of places are multiple and resist a unique definition, it also suggests the importance of revealing, understanding and respecting a variety of individuals' experiences of place, and deploying research methods that are attentive to this.

An understanding of the uneven experiences of place has subsequently been developed by sociologists and human geographers examining how diverse social actors and cultural groups are affected by normative power structures (Giesecking, 2020; Halberstam, 2005; Puwar, 2004; Sharma, 2014; Giesecking, 2020). In their study of lesbian and queer communities in New York, Jen Jack Giesecking for example combines Lefebvrian notions of the social production of space with an understanding of uneven power geometries and

intersectional lives. Gieseeking highlights the production of ‘constellations’ of LGBTQ+ spaces and groups within urban areas, or:

...how spaces are constantly produced by the way that they are consciously designed and built, bought, rented, squatted, and/or sold, and used for a range of meanings, behaviours, and experiences.

(2020: 9)

This also underscores the exclusions that can occur *within* minoritised groups, with Gieseeking focusing on the place-based networks and experiences of gay women and queer people in contrast to those of white cisgender gay men. This suggests a sensitivity to the homogenisation of experience, and again attentiveness to varied intersectionalities. Massey’s notions of how power becomes unevenly spatialised is also applied by sociologist Nirmal Puwar (2004) in her study of the effects of race and gender in social and organisational contexts, including in politics and academia. Puwar emphasises not only that place is not neutral, but that exclusions and barriers accrue over time:

Social spaces are not blank and open for any body to occupy. There is a connection between bodies and space, which is built, repeated, and contested over time.

(2004: 8)

This argument is particularly germane when considering the lack of racial and class diversity within the cultural sector (Brook et al., 2020) and within museum spaces in particular. While an evaluation of diversity and inclusion within the London Museum’s workforce is beyond the scope of this research, such disparities can also be seen as existing and longstanding aspects of social experience in Smithfield, for example in the white male dominance of the Central Markets and some cafes, as well as other more nuanced senses of welcome or alienation explored in Chapter 5. The temporal component suggested by Puwar is further examined by Sarah Sharma (2014), who applies Massey’s notion of power geometry to examine time as a form of power. Writing from a cultural sociological perspective, Sharma conceptualises these temporal negotiations and inequalities in terms of ‘power

chronography', expressed in the "micropolitics of temporal coordination" and social control (p7). This framing provides a critical perspective not only of how temporal power dynamics are experienced within a sense of place – explored through embodied perspectives, outlined below – but also of the temporal politics of urban development discussed in Chapter 2. As Raco et al. (2018) argue, a sensitivity to such relational temporalities – or indeed power chronographies – is lacking from urban studies research on the role of time within urban change (p1178). I address this through a methodological adaptation of rhythmanalysis, outlined in Chapter 4, one that examines the longer-term processes and trajectories of urban change alongside the embodied experiences of local social actors.

I end this section by stressing the particular nuance that Massey gives to the role of the political within place. For Massey, the political is a product of the multiplicity and openness of place, dimensions that combine to sustain continual change: place as always in the process of becoming – a view shared by Pred (1984) – and always heterogenous. Massey sees this change as the basis for the political, as it is oriented towards the future, and to progress:

Imagining space as always in process, as never a closed system, resonates with an increasingly vocal insistence within political discourses on the genuine openness of the future [...] Only if the future is open is there any ground for a politics which can make a difference.

(2005: 11)

This is therefore not the same recognition of the power dynamics within the social production of space (Lefebvre, 1991); it also goes beyond those including social theorist Nancy Fraser (1990) that categorise plurality in terms of "competing publics" (p61) and the public sphere as a site of discourse and struggle. Rather, Massey's is a more explicitly progressive stance, one that is open to the "genuine multiplicity of trajectories, and thus potentiality of voices" (2005: 55). This challenges a culture-led development scheme that might seek to homogenise place experience or identity, or holistically 're-code' (Miles, 2000) a landscape and its sense of place. It also presents a provocation to the London Museum as to how it can navigate a potentially progressive politics of place, or even act within it if

embracing its socially-engaged and activist potential. I discuss this tension in detail in Chapter 8.

In this section I have established the potency of place, embodiment, and social experience, and the ubiquity of relationally diverse and uneven power relations. However, missing from this frame is an awareness of the multiple modalities and nuance of embodied perception – our very ‘sensing’ of place – as well as the imagined, narrative and symbolic dimensions that further mediate how we define and experience places. I take these two aspects in turn.

3.2 EMBODIED SENSES OF PLACE

In this section I examine the fundamental contingency of the body to place, arguing that an understanding of the embodied multi-sensoriality of human experience is key to any critical framing of a ‘sense’ of place. I begin by highlighting the sensuousness of place experience, as explored in urban sociological studies, emphasising the amplification of the body as a data source (Lefebvre, 2004; Simonsen, 2005; Soja; 1996) and research on the political and socio-cultural dimensions of ‘sensespaces’ within processes of urban change (Degen, 2008, 2014). I then turn to the aesthetic philosophy of Gernot Böhme and his definition of atmospheres as the product of multisensorial mediations of an environment (2018); within this, I emphasise Böhme’s inclusion of *emotional* dimensions of atmospheres as entangled with the sensory perception (and for me with senses of place); and the ‘staged materiality’ of urban environments that are designed to affect these, relevant to aesthetic and affective brand strategies of culture-led development. I end this section by focusing on the embodied temporal experience of urban environments, and specifically the notion of ‘timescapes’ (Adam, 1998, 2004, 2008), which provides a productive frame through which to understand local social actors’ varied and competing temporalities as an aspect of Smithfield’s senses of place. Recognising the embodied sensory, temporal, and emotional aspects of urban experience (along with the imagined explored in section 3.3) is essential to an analysis of how senses of place are experienced and defined by diverse local social actors, and how they are implicated in culture-led development processes.

3.2.1 From embodied perception to sensuous geographies

The body has been a central concern within foundational approaches to place, including philosophy (Casey, 2001; de Certeau, 1984; Malpas, 2018), human geography (Lynch, 1960; Soja, 1996; Tuan, 1977), and sociology (Lefebvre, 1991; Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012; Simmel, 1973). Writing from a humanist geographical perspective, Yi-Fu Tuan (1977) emphasises place as bodily-encountered and accrued with individual meaning; he contends that the body is “the condition for experiencing the world” (p89). This view emphasises a fundamental principle of my theoretical framework for this research: that embodied perception is involved not only in the discovery but also the creation of place. Indeed, as Casey (2001) argues, the sensing body is interdependent with a landscape: it is what links “self to lived place in its sensible and perceptible features” (p405). Yet what is the nature of this sensible embodied perception? Prominent within theorisations of the relationship between the body and place across disciplines has been an emphasis on, firstly, bodily *movement* in and through space (Bærenholdt & Simonsen, 2016; de Certeau, 1984; Ingold, 2002, 2011; Lefebvre, 2004; Seamon, 1980; Tuan, 1977), and secondly, the *sensing* body, in both geography (Porteous, 1990; Rodaway, 1994; Thrift, 2004; Tuan, 1977) and sociology (Classen, 1993; Degen, 2014; Edensor, 2012; Law, 2005).

Within *movement*, writers have attended to the diverse bodily space-time routines and their “place-ballet” within a particular physical environment. Seamon (1980) gives examples of the then vibrant areas of Boston’s North End and New York’s Greenwich Village, suggesting that such an embodied dynamic “generates a strong sense of place because of its continual and regular human activity” (p159). Such notions, albeit requiring a sensitivity to exactly *whose* bodies are present as explored in section 3.1, are relevant to a fieldsite replete with the tangible working practices of a wholesale meat market among other space-time routines. In addition to the body’s capacity to ‘generate senses of place’ through movement is its ability to *sense* movement. This dual capacity is underlined in Lefebvre’s (1996, 2004) concept of rhythmanalysis, which suggests the attentive observation – through the body – to rhythms that link time to space, revealing not only power relations but spatial character through bodily movement (1996: 228). As Simonsen (2005) argues, rhythmanalysis accentuates the centrality of the body to social understanding, representing a combination

of “the sensory, the mental, and the social” (p9). It is also a research tool, one that has been applied at various scales, including the City of London (Nash, 2022), Billingsgate Fish Market (Lyon, 2016), street performance (Simpson, 2012), and domestic spaces (Preece et al., 2021). I discuss its applicability as a research methodology in Chapter 4. I also argue such a rhythmic conceptualisation of place has a broader application to the study of culture-led development, its processes, and its social effects, explored in detail in Chapter 7.

In addition to embodied movement, it is important to situate this research within theoretical approaches to the interaction between ‘senses’ and ‘place’, particularly given the inherent significance – but broad definition – of the term ‘sense’ within the expression ‘sense of place’. For Lefebvre, the complexities of social space are contingent on the sensing body:

Within the body itself, spatially considered, the successive levels constituted by the senses (from the sense of smell to sight, treated as different within a differentiated field) prefigure the layers of social space and their interconnections.

(1991: 405)

In this way the senses seem to come before the social. This position accords with the spatial – or what Casey terms ‘placial’ – philosophies of Casey (1998) and Malpas (2018) who contend that we are already ‘in the world’ as perceptual, sensing bodies before developing socially-constructed meaning. Further, in this quotation Lefebvre indicates a hierarchy of sensory ‘levels’, a categorisation which itself has been shown to be socially constructed within cultures and societies. Classen (1993) for example, highlights Western “eye-mindedness” (p7), or the privileging of sight. This emphasises that sensory meanings are not neutral but mediated by cultural-codes and social constructs (Ingold, 2002; Pallasmaa, 2005). Our multi-sensory experiences are therefore mediated by social values and associated emotions. Rancière’s (2004) concept of the ‘distribution of the sensible’ delineates this further, directly linking sensory perception to political and social structures. These are empirical and contextual. Degen succinctly describes the implications of this:

Perceptions and feelings attached to sensory experiences are filled with ideological values. Hence we can also talk of sensory ideologies which are socially constructed and therefore raced, classed and gendered.

(2014: 102)

If the body's capacity for sensory perception can be viewed as the source of knowledge about the experience and creation of place, it is a 'sense of place' that is also subjective, socio-culturally diverse, and relational, as argued in section 3.1. Attending to the differences between individual local social actors' sensory perceptions is therefore useful in revealing not just the senses they associate with a place – whether smells, sounds, sights, textures or tastes – but their deeper socio-cultural implications.

Further, in line with Tuan's humanist perspective, writers including geographer Paul Rodaway (1994) have argued that the senses are intrinsically geographical and, indeed, integral to how we define place. We can therefore think in terms of experiential sensory landscapes, or 'sensescapes', that we experience and define. Indeed, research by Porteous and others has sought to emphasise and map encounters across particular sensory modalities, including soundscapes (Porteous & Mastin, 1985) and smellscapes (Porteous, 1985), while others have investigated the holistic 'sensescapes' of specific environments, communities or practices, including migration (Low, 2013), tourist experiences (Agapito et al., 2014), and cycling (van Duppen & Spierings, 2013). Rodaway's (1994) related notion of 'sensuous geography' is worth emphasising here as it shows not only the integration of the senses in a geographic understanding and definition of place (Pink, 2015: 14), but also the cultural values associated with those senses. This idea of meaningful sensuous geographies provides a useful frame through which to analyse diverse social senses of place, as well as how they are entangled with the motivations and power dynamics of culture-led development.

3.2.2 Social sensescapes of urban change

I have introduced the notion of sensescapes, and I now turn to how this idea has been applied to analyses of urban change, processes which affect the sensory qualities of places (Degen, 2010; Low, 2015). This occurs at multiple scales, whether through large-scale

architectural interventions, material transformations to the public realm including lighting or artwork, or licensing variations affecting acoustic levels or consumption patterns. These shifting sensuous geographies have socio-cultural implications. Indeed, “such changes impact upon how particular cultural expressions and practices are ... included or excluded in city life” (Low, 2015: 296). Harvey highlights the role that urban sensescapes play in gentrification processes and associated displacements: the ‘vibrant’ sensory landscape of a neighbourhood, for example, may initially attract new entrants, who gradually displace local communities and spaces; then, as the process intensifies – or “by the time the market has done its destructive work” (Harvey, 2012: 78) – it effectively works to exclude the original sensory experiences and their associated social actors: the original sensescape has changed or is commodified. Proponents of the culture-led development of Smithfield echo aspects of this narrative, including for example lauding Smithfield’s vibrant sense of place (Culture Mile, 2018; Culture Mile BID, 2024), while at the same time contributing to its material and symbolic rearrangement – resulting, as I explore in Chapter 6, in forms of displacement.

However, processes of culture-led development also differ from the model Harvey describes, not least in their explicit aim to develop or ‘regenerate’ what is already there and thereby making an unequivocal declaration of at least some form of sensory ‘re-coding’ (Miles, 2000). The development of ‘attractive’ but aesthetically-controlled sensory landscapes has been the subject of multiple urban sociological studies, including those of Castlefield, Manchester and El Raval, Barcelona (Degen, 2003), and City Island, London (Ebbensgaard & Edensor, 2021). Indeed, the design, control, and consumption of particular sensescapes are increasingly fundamental to urban change more broadly, with Degen (2014) arguing that the sensory is a key component of the ‘new experiential landscape’ of cities. As explored in section 2.1, this is an aspect that is amplified by the affective interventions of place brands, seen in Smithfield in the activities of Culture Mile, and in the development of cultural and historical quarters elsewhere that invite particular sensory readings. Given the ideologically-loaded aspects of sensory perception set out above, changes to the sensory environment of place – a dimension of its sense of place – can never be neutral, and are implicated in tactics of commodification and control, aspects I discuss in relation to the aesthetic ‘staging’ of urban environments below. Clearly, given the multi-sensory character of urban experience, this research must attend to the sensory

perceptions that local social actors associate with Smithfield's sense of place and how they are tactically invoked.

3.2.3 Staged atmospheres and emotional senses of place

I now add to the theoretical basis for analysing social actors' sensory experiences of urban change by considering how specific sites and moments within urban change are deliberately controlled and 'staged'. Through his development of 'atmospheres' as a "theory of sensory perception" (2018: pIX), aesthetic philosopher Gernot Böhme draws attention to two additional elements of embodied-sensory place experience that are relevant to this study: the combination of sensory and *emotional* dimensions of place experience; and the production or 'staged materiality' of urban environments that are designed to affect these. This supports a fuller recognition of both how social actors 'feel' in a local area – and define emotional senses of place – and how this can be produced and controlled.

Böhme defines atmospheres as the 'aesthetic feelings of a human being mediating objective factors of the environment' (Böhme, 2018: 1); in essence, how our sensing and emotional bodies react to the materiality of an environment (or place) and generate a spatial character. This is a determinedly sensory and embodied process. Indeed, for Böhme atmospheres are "what are experienced in bodily presence in relation to persons and things or in spaces" (Böhme, 2018: 17). 'Presence' here is key, with Böhme implying that sensing of atmospheres is multisensory, and cannot be confined to the capabilities of one sense alone:

The crucial point is precisely that these qualities do not usually have to be verified haptically at all – they are atmospherically perceptible even without the concrete sense of touch.

(Böhme, 2018: 145)

This concurs with the view of multi-sensoriality and the holistic effect of multiple senses shown above (Classen, 1993; Pallasmaa, 2005; Pink, 2015; Saito, 2017), reiterating the importance of attending to the full sensory spectrum of urban experiences in the creation of

senses of place. Yet this ‘feeling’ is emotional as well as sensory, an interrelation that infuses atmospheres with affective power:

Atmospheres are experienced as an emotional effect. For this reason, the art of producing them [...] is at every moment also the exercise of power.

(Böhme, 2018: 27).

This succinctly reflects Böhme’s view of atmospheres as both perceived and produced. Using stage design as an analogy, Böhme categorises the embodied, emotional, sensory ‘feeling’ by local social actors as ‘perception aesthetics’; while the deliberate design and creation of an atmosphere and its “staged materiality” corresponds to ‘production aesthetics’ (2018: 141). I have shown in Chapter 2 and above how culture-led development processes, as instances of urban transformation, materially and symbolically re-code local areas. This then too falls into the “real social power” (2018: 23) of ‘production aesthetics’, a framing that also usefully reveals the “theatrical, not to say manipulative character of politics, commerce, of the event-society” (2018: 6). The aesthetics of changing urban areas, along with their affective place brands, are produced to deliver a desired emotional effect. This standpoint links the sensory, emotional, and the aesthetic to Massey’s notion of the politics of place:

Rooted in history and built into forms of social life, atmospheres are a means of revealing political issues in contemporary life and taking on board the consequences of its aestheticization.

(Böhme, 2018: pX)

The aesthetic decisions and material interventions made as part of cultural regeneration are not benign; they inherently engage with the politics of place through the senses, including some, excluding others, and encouraging particular forms of consumption. However, it is important to reiterate the framing I set out in the first section of this chapter, namely the diverse socio-cultural and relational dimensions of social experience. While Böhme stresses that atmospheres are not independent but produced subjectively by human interaction –

“they are nothing without a subject feeling them” (2018: 2) – he says relatively little about the diverse relationality of bodies and socio-cultural coding of the senses, and the production therefore of multiple and even contested atmospheres from the same “objective factors”. Instead, he focuses on inter-subjectivity and “cultural socialisation” as a condition for shared meanings (p30). This is one area where atmospheres, as defined by Böhme, differ from my expanded framing of senses of place, which I suggest are diverse and relational, as well as imbued with the imagined and temporal dimensions I discuss below. Nonetheless, I draw on Böhme to underscore simultaneously emotional and sensory dimensions of senses of place, their production, and consequently how processes of urban change affect the emotional qualities of places.

3.2.4 Feeling time: Situating time in place

Lastly in this section on relevant considerations of embodied perception as it relates to place, I turn to notions of time and temporality. Within these I highlight in particular Adam’s concept of ‘timescapes’ (2004) as a means of analysing social experiences of Smithfield’s varied temporalities – or the ways in which time is experienced, organised, and understood. As a spatially-contextualised and socially-constructed temporal framing, the idea of ‘timescapes’ provides a useful basis for analysing competing, socio-culturally loaded and sensuous periods of activity. Indeed, as Degen and Rose (2012) argue, most accounts of sensory urban experiencing neglect the role played by “shifting spatial and temporal practices” (p3279) in mediating sensory perception. I am keen here to highlight both this mediation, and the social structuring of time.

Here I return to foundational approaches to time and temporality to ground the ensuing discussion. Bergson (1910/2013) conceived of time as a continuous flow or “duration” (*durée*), rather than a succession of moments, onto which human consciousness layers subjective values and meanings. Though highly influential, this unbroken and linear view of time has been criticised, including by Lefebvre (2014), for its lack of attention to the role of social relations and power dynamics that are contingent with temporal experiences (see also Lyon, 2021: 20). This interrelation was explored by E. P. Thompson in his influential work *‘Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism’* (1967), in which he traces the

evolution of time in relation to working practices, from the advent of clocks and watches to the Industrial Revolution. Thompson highlights the imposition of 'time-discipline' on workers, as well as tactics of subversion and resistance. Such temporal power relations are relevant to a research fieldsite that is variously dominated by the activities of Smithfield's wholesale meat market and its richly experiential but highly-regulated periods of activity. However, Thompson's work has also been challenged, both for its disinterest in spatial variation, i.e. how specific places and cultures affect temporal constructs, and for its homogenisation of temporal experiences around work. Influenced by feminism and post-structuralism, Paul Glennie and Nigel Thrift (1996) highlight instead the multiplicity of senses of time, as well as its symbolic meanings. For them, 'time-discipline' has various dimensions, and there is a need "to examine the specificity and range of power relations which constitute (and are constituted by) practices about time" (1996: 292). Crucially, they argue that:

*Social time is no longer conceptualised as a single unitary and absolute system...
Instead, social time is seen as intrinsically manifold.*

(1996: 278)

As a result, different forms of temporal structure can be found in different places. These localised, heterogenous senses of time, I suggest, can be understood as components of a sense of place.

I turn now to the embodied perception of place, specifically to social experiences of its diverse temporalities. Hoy (2009) defines temporality as "time insofar as it manifests itself in human existence" (p. xiii). If, as sociologist Barbara Adam (2004) suggests, time is relational and heterogenous, we can therefore speak in terms of multiple subjective temporalities. These socially-constructed manifestations of time can overlap, diverge, or oppose one another. Burges and Elias (2016) identify three types of temporalities across studies of time: time as history (e.g. the relationship between past, present, and future); time as calculation (e.g. how time is measured), and time as culture (how time is mediated, embodied, placed and experienced). These categories have varying application in a study of a culture-led development process through the lens of a sense of place, including notions of

change and future trajectories, and the experience of different phases of urban restructuring (see Raco et al., 2008; Moore-Cherry & Bonnin, 2020; and my discussion of the temporal politics of urban development in section 2.1).

The notion of ‘timescapes’ therefore appears to provide a useful standpoint for this study in its combination of embodied experience, power dynamics, and contextual temporalities. Defined by Adam (2004) as a “cluster of temporal features” (p143), timescapes are a way of understanding the power dynamics of varying temporalities – including their creation, commodification and control. Adam emphasises their spatial and material situation alongside their role in social life: crucially, “context matters” (p143) for timescapes. Kitchin (2023) for example draws on Adam to frame his research into digital timescapes, arguing that digital technologies – from devices to infrastructures – are reconfiguring everyday temporalities. For Kitchin, this reveals a marked shift in our everyday experiences of time from a pre- to a post-digital era, as well as underscoring their production and use within the wider political economy, resulting in ‘temporal’ inequalities. He highlights the heterogenous potential of timescapes within this analysis:

Multiple timescapes, with differing temporal features and logics, coexist, sometimes working in concert to shape the wider temporal landscape, or vying for dominance.

(Kitchin, 2023: pX)

Applied to the context of a local area, the frame of ‘timescapes’ – their sensory affordances, and how these are experienced by local social actors – provides a means of revealing both subjective temporal senses of place and of how power affects social experiences of urban development. Building on the subjectivity of urban temporalities, Degen (2018) also draws on Adam’s notion of timescapes (2004; 2008) to explore how temporalities of planning, the environment, and everyday life interact to create unique timescapes of urban change in El Raval, Barcelona. In doing so, Degen argues for a closer engagement with the multiple, inter-dependent and divergent temporalities of urban change, as well as with urban regeneration as a long-term process. In addition to underscoring the relevance of timescapes for my research, these conclusions also inform my methodology (see Chapter 4).

In light of this, it is useful to refer back to the concept of rhythm analysis (Lefebvre, 2004) to emphasise its temporal acuity, as well as its bodily focus discussed above. For Lefebvre and Régulier, observing and ‘listening’ to rhythms and relations felt by the body can reveal “a localized time, or ... a temporalized place” (1996: 230). Such rhythms therefore link time to place through the social body (Simonsen, 2005: 8). This is a view echoed by Lyon:

Lefebvre brings the body back into theoretical and empirical research on space and time and proposes a conceptual, practical and sensory grasp of space and time together which recognises time space as produced in practice.

(2021: 11)

Indeed, by creating and reinforcing socio-spatial relationships in a specific setting, these ‘practiced time-spaces’ can be seen as constitutive of place. This suggests a theoretical and methodological approach to understanding the social, sensory, and temporal interrelations of timescapes as an aspect of place identity, and how they are *experienced* as an aspect of a sense of place.

In this section I have further developed my theoretical framework from a focus on political and socio-cultural aspects of place experience to include diverse aspects of embodied perception; and while I have shown that bodies matter to senses of place, this remains predicated on the relational and intersectional basis outlined in section 3.1. Further, this ‘bodily capacity’, as Degen and Rose suggest, is integral to the exercise and experience of power within processes of urban development:

Sensory urban experiences are felt in many and manifold ways through bodily capacities, sensations, and imaginaries, and this is a process saturated with a productive kind of power.

(2022: 143)

This *production* is the result then of ‘staged’ atmospheres, embodied sensations, and the aesthetic and spatially and sensorially-attuned tactics of urban development discussed in Chapter 2, tactics that aim to produce experiential landscapes for specific uses and

audiences. I turn next to the role of ‘imaginaries’ in this process, including stories and memories situated in place. I highlight how the imagination mediates place experience with and alongside the senses, and its use within market-led processes of urban change.

3.3 IMAGINED SENSES OF PLACE

So far in this chapter I have constructed a ‘sense of place’ framework that includes both embodied sensory and temporal dimensions and is underscored by a cross-cutting understanding of the diverse socio-cultural relationality of place and its inherent politics. I now complete this framework by arguing for the importance of narrative and the imagination to place identity and experience. This is necessary for this study as it reveals both the interaction of regeneration narratives, place brands, and the places they claim to represent (Degen & Rose, 2022; Greenberg, 2008; Harvey, 2012; Jensen, 2007; Miles, 2005) (discussed in Chapter 2), and – more fundamentally – the role that stories and the imagination play in our relationship to place (Bachelard, 1994; Casey, 1987; de Certeau, 1984; De Nardi, 2021). Within this I draw specific attention to how the imagination mediates place experience (Degen & Rose, 2012; Soja, 1996) thereby conditioning the senses of place of local social actors. Primarily informed by Soja’s (1996) concept of a simultaneously “real-and-imagined” dimension of social space – ‘thirdspace’ – I also draw on urban sociological studies of urban change and narrative theory to specify memory, history, and fictional representations within a broad and “radically open” (1996: 70) understanding of ‘the imagined’. Doing so provides a more holistic understanding of how senses of place are experienced and defined, central to my second research question: *How do social actors define an area’s sense of place?* and salient to my overarching study of how a museum – as a storytelling institution – can establish an equitable relationship with its new local area. I briefly contextualise the term narrative within foundational theories of place, before highlighting relevant aspects from the work of Soja; I then detail my definitions of ‘narratives’ and ‘stories’, their relevance to this study, and their theoretical framing within this research.

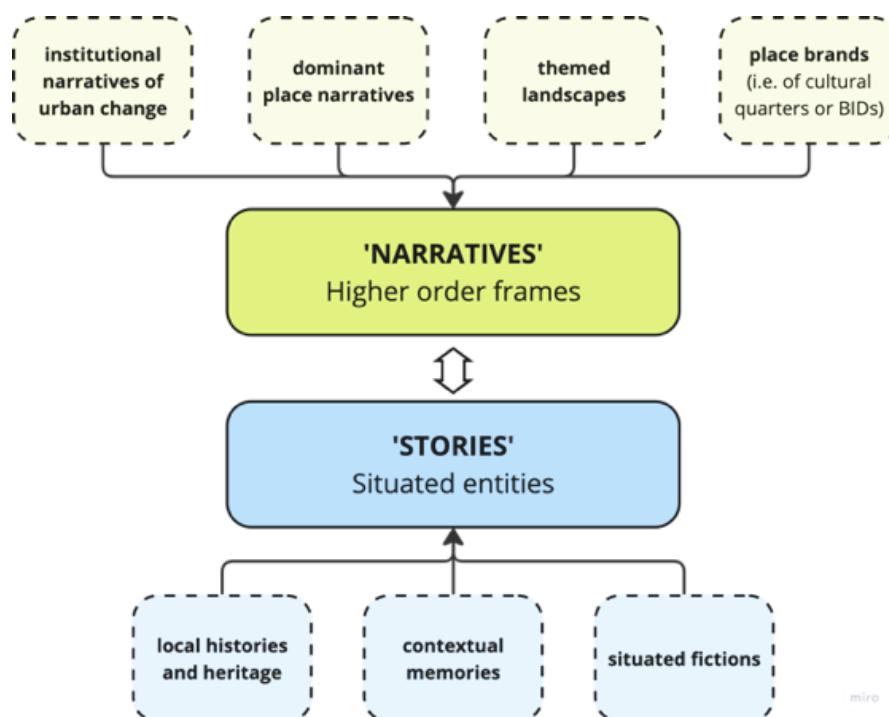
The relationship between the imagination and place has been thoroughly explored in human geography, urban sociology and beyond (Harvey, 2005; Price, 2004; Ryan et al.,

2016; Soja, 1989, 1996; Tuan, 1977), not least in the field of urban imaginaries (Degen & Ward, 2021; Greenberg, 2008; Prakash & Kruse, 2008; Zukin, 2010), however it is one that is underplayed in urban studies as a whole (Linder & Meissner, 2019). In his emphasis on the interaction of the imagination with everyday spatial experience, Soja's (1996) reframing of Lefebvre's (1991) spatial triad provides a key theoretical standpoint for this research. It provides a basis from which to analyse the role that imagination plays in how local social actors understand and define senses of place, and how municipal and institutional agents intervene in this process. Soja reframes Lefebvre's 'lived' space as 'thirdspace' – places that are simultaneously "real-and-imagined" (p11). He sets this alongside 'firstspace' – the 'real', empirically-mappable "concrete materiality of spatial forms" (p10) that coincides with Lefebvre's 'perceived' space; and 'secondspace' – the realm of subjective and imagined "ideas *about* space" [my emphasis] (p10) that coincides with Lefebvre's 'conceived' space. However, it is the notion of 'thirdspace' that is most useful for this research as it provides a conceptual opening for more radical imaginative possibilities. As Meskell-Brocken's (2020) study on the inclusion of young people in place-based discourses reveals, 'thirdspace' – in its recognition of a diversity of spatial imaginations – is a position that can support the incorporation and amplification of overlooked voices, "along with a coexistence of history, geography, development and progress, and social justice" (p252). This is akin to Massey's urge to imagine space as "a simultaneity of stories so-far" (2005: 9), an ongoing process that includes multiple imaginations and trajectories. This relates back to the relational and political nature of senses of place explored in section 3.1, and stands in opposition to the often totalising narratives of place brands that are an aspect of my study.

Further, the real-and-imagined lens of 'thirdspace' also supports the uncovering of what Soja calls the "long-hidden lifeworlds" (1996: 29) of local social actors, those aspects of the imagination that mediate and condition experience. In this research, I am interested in facets of the imagination that are in some way *tethered* to place. For me, this comprises place-based narratives, histories, memories, and mental models produced by fictional accounts in or of a place. This is an expansive set, but one I think is necessary to understand how senses of place are defined by social actors, and which reveals the interaction between local urban identity and culture-led development processes.

Narrative is a condition of social life (Barthes, 1977; Gottschall, 2013; Ricoeur, 1984; Somers, 1994). Indeed, “narrative is everywhere that human beings are” (Porter-Abbott, 2008: XV), and stories are not only a key component of urban imaginaries (Degen & Rose, 2022: 128), they also “give form to the transience of experience” (Potteiger & Purinton, 1998: 3). Narratives are therefore implicit in giving meaning to spatial experiences, or as Price (2004) suggests, to bring a place into being. However, it is important to differentiate between ‘narratives’ and ‘stories’, terms whose meaning is often conflated. I understand the former as a higher order frame (Austin, 2020), examples of which include place brands and themed landscapes; and I define the latter as accounts that are situated in and of a place, examples of which include local histories, contextual memories, and situated fictions (i.e. films and novels); these are mutually constitutive. I set out their relationship and relevant components in figure 3.2. I argue that both narratives and stories act on the imagination to mediate experience and affect senses of place. I briefly review these concepts below.

Figure 3.2: Relationship between ‘real-and-imagined’ dimensions of a sense of place.



3.3.1 Real-and-imagined place narratives

I turn first to the notion of ‘narratives’. This responds to Jensen’s (2007) call for a theoretical framework of narratives linked to notions of place in order to “understand the ways that narratives of culture are used as urban branding stories in contemporary city planning” (p212). Addressing this, I draw on the interdisciplinary design theory of Austin (2020), who builds on the foundational narrative theories of Chatman (1978) and Genette (1983), to define narratives as higher order frames. Austin argues that narratives that pertain to place and space – such as place brands and themed landscapes – can be considered wider frames for embedded or “nested” stories (p159). This is a dynamic relationship, with the stories affecting the meaning of the frame narrative, and vice versa.

In Smithfield, for example, this might be the histories of executions, religious priories, and a thousand years of market trading that support a generalised place narrative of an area that is ‘richly historic’. Such narrative frames are present in culture-led development processes within place brands that – as argued in Chapter 2 – materially affect the environment which they represent. Similar to the highly-controlled environments of theme parks that actively shape experience and reconstitute memory (Potteiger & Purington, 1998: 18; Zukin, 1995), place brands also mediate experience, the difference being that they are a palimpsest on a real-world environment. This is found in Smithfield in the work of the now defunct Culture Mile place brand, with its frame narrative of an urban cultural quarter overlaying a geography with a complex mix of various commercial sectors and residential uses. To an extent, theme parks and place brands also share the same dominance of visual culture, spatial control and, through BIDs, private management; and both are intended as a realm for consumption (Zukin, 1995). Indeed, Soja identifies a similar combination in his analysis of Orange County, with its powerful ‘California dream’ narrative (1996). Crucially for the study of senses of place, such frame narratives are experienced simultaneously through both the body *and* the imagination: the ‘real-and-imagined’. Understanding ‘narratives’ as a higher order frame is therefore a useful standpoint from which to analyse the social experiences of culture-led development and the potential discordance of place brands and development rationales with existing embedded ‘stories’ and mental models of place.

3.3.2 Real-and-imagined situated stories

I now turn to the ‘situated’ stories that are a component of social actors’ lived experience of place. Indeed, if ‘narratives’ are frames that contain ‘embedded stories’, what constitutes these ‘stories’ within the context of culture-led development? In this research I suggest a broad understanding of ‘stories’ to include memory, heritage, and fiction (i.e. films and novels). This understanding of ‘stories’ moves beyond foundational narratological definitions that specify a series of events (Porter-Abbot, 2008) or combinations of events, characters and settings (Chatman, 1978), and takes its cue from spatial narratology and narrative geography (Ryan et al., 2016) as well as critical heritage (De Nardi, 2021) to understand ‘stories’ as dimensions of situated human experience that actively mediate and condition senses of place. However, these are not arbitrary but must be localised and spatialised; hence *contextual* memories, *local* histories, and *situated* fictions, which I consider in turn below.

The relationship between collective memory and place identity is well established, particularly its role in the formation of cultural identity (Halbwachs, 1992; Nora, 1984). This relationship speaks directly to place attachment for local communities, and for wider narratives of national or local belonging. For individuals, the role of memory is no less significant – indeed, “there is no perception which is not full of memories” (Bergson, 1908/2005: 33). Relevant for this research is the understanding that individual memories have a spatial setting: they are sited *in place* through the sensing body (Bachelard, 1994; Pallasmaa, 2005). As Pallasmaa argues “an embodied memory has an essential role in the basis of remembering a space or place” (p72). He also emphasises how this is tied to sensory perception, with a specific smell, for example, allowing us to “unknowingly re-enter a space completely forgotten by the retinal memory; the nostrils awaken a forgotten image, and we are enticed to enter a vivid daydream. The nose makes the eyes remember” (p54). The notion of a ‘vivid daydream’ mediating an embodied experience for me relates directly to Soja’s ‘real-and-imagined’ thirdspace, with memory an ‘imagined’ aspect that is experienced simultaneously with the ‘real’ place.

We can therefore see the interrelation of embodiment and memories – of memories remembered or triggered *in situ* – as a further dimension of senses of place. In their research in Bedford and Milton Keynes, Degen & Rose (2012) highlight, for example, how “the experiencing of the built environment in the present is overlaid with memories of how that same environment was encountered in the past” (p3279). Through embodied sensory engagement, such memories can be said to mediate place experience, and act upon broader senses of place. This is particularly significant in a changing built environment, where the scope and rate of change is in part marked through an individual’s comparison of memory and experience. Yet, as Samuel argues, such memories are not a passive “storage system”, but “rather an active shaping force” (1994: pX). They don’t exist in the past but condition local social actors ongoing experience. This active mutability brings with it the potential for consensus or contestation with wider narratives and place brands, and the prospect of their co-option. Indeed, as Creswell (2015) notes “places do not come with some memories attached as if by nature” (p97), rather, as Harvey (1996) asserts, they are the “contested terrain of competing definitions” (p309). Asserting memory as a component of ‘real-and-imagined’ social experiences of place supports both a nuanced understanding of how local social actors define senses of place, and provides a critical lens on the febrile competition over place identity within the market-led dynamics of urban change.

Building on this, I also include local history and heritage as part of a broader understanding of ‘the imagined’, understood as a collection of stories situated in a specific place (Hayden, 1996). Indeed, in *Postmodern Geographies* Soja explicitly links memory and the historical imagination:

‘Life-stories’ have a geography too; they have milieu, immediate locales, provocative emplacements that affect thought and action. The historical imagination is never completely spaceless.

(1989: 14)

Soja here refers to an individual’s history, but I argue this extends to local histories of a locality which are equally ‘emplaced’. They are also mutable: like memory, histories are neither static nor neutral but capable of being emphasised, diminished, or retold. Harvey

(1996) states that myth, symbolic places, and collective memory are used by the powerful to reinforce their authority and “secure their power” (p306). In a heritage dense area that is being recoded for cultural consumption, this highlights the importance of attending not only to *what* histories are told in and of a place, but *who* gets to tell them, and *how* they mediate experience. Indeed, as Massey (2005) highlights, the multiplicity of space brings with it not an absence of history but a multiplicity of ‘histories’; she argues “we should, could, replace the single history with many. And this is where space comes in” (p14). Yet, as I discuss in detail in Chapter 7, even within this multiplicity dominant stories are still reproduced and counter-histories liable to commodification.

Lastly in this delineation of what constitutes ‘situated stories’ within the ‘real-and-imagined’ realm of place experience relevant to this study, I turn to fiction, and specifically how the representation of places in novels and films affects place experience. The interrelation of these media with place identity is well-established: as Cresswell (2015) suggests “novels and films (at least successful ones) often evoke a sense of place – a feeling that we the reader/viewer know what it is like to ‘be there’” (p14). In incorporating fiction, I draw attention to Herman’s (2009) theory of ‘storyworlds’ or mental models of place, and how – through Ryan’s notion of ‘ontological metalepsis’ (2004) – these actively mediate place experience.

For narratologist David Herman, storyworlds are “mental models of the situations and events being recounted” within a story (2009: 73). In essence, the world you create in your mind’s eye when you read a text or see a film. Herman argues that this goes beyond retaining a sequence of events or images to engage an individual’s imagination in the creation of imagined spaces, events, histories, and futures. Rather than simply spatial representations or ideas “about space” – as positioned within Lefebvre’s ‘perceived’ space (1991) and Soja’s ‘secondspace’ (1996: 10) – individuals in this context emotionally and viscerally inhabit a ‘storyworld’, which is “ontologically distinct” from the world of the everyday (Herman, 1997: 134). It is a space and place in its own right. For this study, this concept is applicable to stories that are situated (or felt to be situated) within Smithfield. This may seem a niche consideration, but as an area with two thousand years of history, it has had more than its fair share of representation in fiction and on film, from Ben Johnson’s

Bartholomew Fair (1614) and Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist* (1838) to Apple TV's *Slow Horses* (2022). These are representations that are also regularly invoked in local social actors' descriptions of Smithfield. Yet rather than detached from the everyday reality, these 'storyworlds' can manifest and mediate an individual's real-and-imagined experiences of a place through a process of 'ontological metalepsis' (Ryan, 2004). This phenomenon is described by narrative theorist Marie-Laure Ryan as a passage or 'switch' between fictional worlds or what she terms 'narrative levels':

Ontological metalepsis opens a passage between levels that results in their interpenetration, or mutual contamination. These levels, needless to say, must be separated by the type of boundary that I call ontological: a switch between two radically distinct worlds, such as 'the real' and 'the imaginary'.

(2004: 442)

Here then we have a way of framing the process by which individuals combine imagined models of place (storyworlds) with experiences of the 'real' place. Within this theoretical position, fictional worlds have a bearing on senses of place, as a further component of the 'real-and-imagined' (Soja, 1996). In this way stories and narratives are no mere representations of space but active in its ongoing production (Lefebvre, 1991). This also supports analysis of the place brands and marketing campaigns that are a component of culture-led development – as established in Chapter 2 and seen in Smithfield in Culture Mile, Culture Mile BID, Destination City, and the London Museum – and how these dynamically interrelate with place identity and experience.

Crucially, this aspect of my theoretical framework is mutually interrelated with the dimensions explored in the previous sections: socio-cultural relationality and the politics of place; and embodied sensory experiences and diverse situated temporalities. It therefore provides a framing that not only questions how the situated imagination relates to an individual's sense of place, but one which is also sensitive to how it is embodied, how it is politicised, how it exists in a temporal context, and how it is relational. This framework understands these aspects as all acting on one another simultaneously. So while place

narratives and situated stories play a key part in how people experience places, this framework acknowledges that this role is not neutral and shared in common, but unfolds through socio-cultural and relational power dynamics and is mediated by embodied and sensory dimensions. The contestation and diversity this produces is the empirical basis of this study.

CONCLUSION

In the preceding sections I have developed a theoretical 'sense of place' framework relevant to an analysis of an area undergoing culture-led development, and the role of a museum within this place and this process. In summary, I argue that a sense of place is a multi-faceted concept that comprises embodied experience involving sensory, emotional, and temporal dimensions, and situated imagined experiences involving affective narratives, memories, and histories. A sense of place in this framing is also fundamentally relational and socio-culturally diverse, affected by the power dynamics and politics inherent to place, and accelerated by processes of urban change. This framework provides the basis necessary to examine the multiple vehicles and strategies of social, spatial, sensory, and symbolic transformation of Smithfield that I established in Chapter 2, and calls attention to both the visible and invisible effects of culture-led development, and its negotiation between institutions with varying degrees of agency.

I present this analysis across four empirical chapters. These comprise, firstly, *Chapter 5: Boundaries*, which examines the perceptual boundaries of place identity, localised timescapes, and the boundary *between* real and imagined aspects of place experience; secondly, *Chapter 6: Rhythms*, which examines long-term and differentiated experiences of diverse temporalities of urban change; thirdly, *Chapter 7: Stories*, which examines the uneven power-geometry of local social actors as it relates to situated histories, how they are voiced, and who they affect; and lastly, *Chapter 8: Placing the Museum*, which analyses the Museum's ongoing approach to Smithfield in light of the senses of place examined and established in the preceding chapters, and its role as both an instrument and agent of change. Each chapter is structured to interrogate both tangible and intangible aspects of

urban transformation and how it is experienced, the latter discussed specifically in sections 5.3, 6.2, 7.2 and 8.2.2.

The examination of this complex landscape of urban change, economic and institutional power dynamics, and tangible and intangible social experience requires a mix of established research approaches and inventive methods. I describe this methodology in the next chapter.

Chapter 4 Methodology

The complexity of place is mirrored in the complex process of triangulation and traverse by which the topographical surveyor builds up a map of the region being surveyed. No single sighting is sufficient to gain a view of the entire region, multiple sightings are required, and every sighting overlaps, to some extent, with some other sighting.

(Malpas, 2018: 39)

Walking is itself never simply about traversing a route from one place to another: the journey itself is performative, an act of place-making and an active engagement in the environment.

(O'Neill and Hubbard, 2010: 56)

In this chapter I set out my methodology for this project, one that is primarily ethnographic and participatory, and – to extend Malpas's analogy – composed of multiple forms of 'sighting'. In the first section I outline my use of a constructivist grounded theory approach (Cresswell & Poth, 2018), and methods comprising walking-sensory ethnography and document analysis. In section 2, I detail approaches that I class as 'inventive methods' (Lury & Wakeford, 2014) which are creatively tailored to this study, namely 'boundary' walking interviews, and a combined walking tour and workshop. In section 3, I establish the value and application of an 'adapted rhythmanalysis' extending from Lefebvre (2004) and Lefebvre and Régulier (1996), one that reveals uncharted yet pertinent processes of urban change and social experience. I contextualise these methods throughout with reference to other studies and suggest their suitability to my theoretical framework and my research questions. I end by addressing the limitations of my approach.

4.1 A 'PROCESS OF TRIANGULATION': MY RESEARCH APPROACH AND POSITIONALITY

My research is grounded in a theoretical framework that understands senses of place as simultaneously socio-cultural, political, embodied, and imagined. As a result, the

experiences and lives of Smithfield's local social actors are my primary research focus, accompanied by an attentiveness to the processes of urban change that are reshaping Smithfield, and their associated institutional agents; this includes the City of London Corporation, London Museum and other organisations affected by and participating in Smithfield's redevelopment. This requires a methodological approach that is attuned to both the nuance of individual senses of place, and their interaction with a culture-led development process. This is therefore not a conventional ethnographic neighbourhood study but one that considers the multiple trajectories and ongoing 'stories-so-far' of place (Massey, 2005). As Ingold (2008) asserts, "the environment comprises not the surroundings of the organism but a zone of entanglement" (p1796). My methods reach out to uncover the nature of 'entanglement' within a sense of place.

I follow a constructivist grounded theory approach to support rich and contextually-grounded research findings. This builds on Glaser and Strauss's (1967) original proposition for grounded theory that suggests the simultaneous and iterative process of data collection and analysis, and allows the inclusion of new data and data sources as the research proceeds (Cresswell & Poth, 2018: 84). This informs my use of an incremental approach, with data from different methods sequentially informing those that follow. For example, data from walking interviews with local social actors informs notions of multiple 'real-and-imagined' heritage landscapes in Smithfield; from here, one specific context (LGBTQ+ histories) in turn informed the more focused content of a participatory walking tour and workshop held toward the end of fieldwork. Likewise, data from preliminary ethnographic observation on local timescapes informed a subsequent emphasis on museological temporalities within semi-structured interviews with institutional actors. This incremental methodology design hence supports both a broad empirical base and iteration over time, in turn enabling theoretical saturation and fuller response to my research questions.

A constructivist grounded theory approach has also been valuable in Smithfield given the shifting social and institutional contours of the site, including senior leadership turnover, the termination of Culture Mile as a place brand, the formation of Culture Mile BID, and the launch of the Corporation's tourism promotion initiative Destination City. In addition, where grounded theory favours the idea of a neutral observer (Glaser & Strauss, 1967),

constructivist grounded theory acknowledges the researcher's embodiment and "position, privileges, perspective and interactions" as fundamental to the research process (Charmaz, 2014: 13). It also reflects a broader openness to the multiple subjective realities of research participants, a social constructivist perspective that emphasises "diverse local worlds, multiple realities, and the complexities of particular worlds, views, and actions" (Cresswell & Poth, 2018: 86). For me, this is consistent with a theoretical frame that draws on Massey (2005) to assert the heterogeneity and relationality of senses of place in Smithfield.

I approach my own positionality in this research from both personal and institutional perspectives. Indeed "the question of where you stand is important because every research project, and indeed all scholarship, has its basis in the personal" (Elabor-Idemudia, 2011: 146). For me, this has meant acknowledging my class, race, gender, and sexual identity as a middle-class white cisgender gay man. This position has underscored a nuanced set of interpersonal power dynamics within participant-researcher relationships and a particular ethnographic perspective, including my presence in male-dominated spaces such as the wholesale meat market as well as the predominantly white and middle-class spaces of cultural institutions. But it has also influenced other dynamics, for example a strong awareness of my sexuality in contexts and conversations that I have at times found homophobic. Similarly, the lesser-known histories and experiences of LGBTQ+ lives in Smithfield revealed through fieldwork have also been personally relatable. However, in-line with an iterative grounded theory approach, the direction of the research has emerged from empirical data rather than being led by my positionality. For example, a focus on LGBTQ+ histories and experiences (discussed in section 7.2) builds on the area's broader non-normative practices and rhythms (discussed in section 6.2) and reflects my research interest in socially-engaged practices and social justice. As I develop in my discussion of participatory workshops (section 4.2.2 below), other relevant thematic approaches are possible including the situated histories of women, of local migrant communities, or a critical view of Smithfield's imperial entanglement, each reflecting a tension between local embeddedness and public absence. Yet I suggest the beneficial overlap here between my empirical data and personal positionality, which results in novel empirical findings and theory development. Further, in examining LGBTQ+ experiences as a focus area, I avoid appropriating the narratives of other communities. I return to this discussion in Chapter 7.

I have maintained an awareness of these various positionalities throughout both fieldwork and analysis, a reflection that has supported more fully-grounded research findings. I have also acknowledged my own ‘sensory order’, what Culhane (2017a) describes as how “our bodies, feelings, imaginations, and senses are educated and trained in particular and diverse ways” (p61), by recognising as far as possible my own conditioned responses, and how these have changed. This is noticeable, for example, in an initial aversion to the smell of raw meat that at times fills Smithfield, one which I now – like many others in this study – find imbricated with other associations within Smithfield’s sense of place.

Equally as significant is my association with the London Museum as a Collaborative Doctoral Award partner, a position that has had several implications for my research. The first of these is a responsibility to provide the Museum with research that is valuable to its future programmes and practices in Smithfield, and in its ongoing approach to the area. This key research output is manifested through a publicly-available strategic *blueprint* for equitable museum approaches to new local contexts, an online resource that is relevant to the Museum as well as museum professionals at other new or relocating cultural institutions. (This is evidenced throughout this thesis, its organising structure presented in Appendix C, and is disseminated and elaborated on placingmuseums.co.uk). Rydin (2005) lauds the value of similar practitioner-researcher collaborations in contributing to policy options and pathways. I have framed my relationship with the Museum as that of a ‘critical friend’, productively questioning its approach to its new local area. This is a stance I have made clear in interviews with Museum staff and has not prevented me from taking a strategically detached view. Perhaps more complex has been this position’s effect on participant-researcher dynamics: as a middle-class white man, for some I doubtlessly embody the often-exclusionary privilege that many associate with museums, while for others my affiliation with the London Museum has been misinterpreted as an official ‘canvassing of local opinion’. Despite the nature of my affiliation being stated in participant information sheets, it is a complex position and I have always corrected any false assumptions made by research participants when they were vocalised. As with my personal positionality, an awareness of the sensitivities prompted by my institutional connection with the Museum has also informed my analysis, resulting in a deeper critique of the relational and potent associations that social actors have with cultural institutions.

4.1.1 An ethnography for sensing place

In this study I centre ethnographic methods in order to tell rich, sensitive, and credible stories (O'Reilly, 2012). Ethnographic fieldwork has included participant observation as well as interviews and workshops. I conducted a total of 43 semi-structured interviews, 25 with local social actors recruited through community engagement, local media, and snowball sampling; and 18 with local institutional actors, recruited via relevant gatekeepers at Islington Council, the City of London Corporation, and the London Museum, and through both snowball sampling and direct outreach (see Appendix A for a list of participants). The temporal dimension of fieldwork has also been significant, influenced by an anthropological perspective that emphasises a necessarily slow tempo of participant observation (O'Reilly, 2012) and which has taken place in varying periods of intensity over 30 months between 2021-2023. This period has notably spanned the end of COVID-19 restrictions and subsequent shifts in socialising and commuting patterns, aspects of Smithfield's sense of place I return to below.

My approach to ethnography has been influenced by studies that centre walking and the senses within ethnographic practice (Augoyard, 2007; Degen, 2010; Degen & Rose, 2012; Knowles, 2023; Low, 2015; Vergunst & Ingold, 2008), as well as the theoretical literature, notably de Certeau's (1984) interest in walking as a practice of everyday life. For de Certeau, walking is to the urban system what speaking is to language, both a "rhetoric" (p100) and a space of "enunciation" (p98) that acts out place. A process of creation and spatialisation, walking thus continually transforms an environment's material constituents, a capacity that has informed my use of mobile methods. I have also been inspired by urban walking as a component of arts practice, particularly Richard Long (see also Edensor, 2010a; Ingold, 2007: 44). These have shown how walking shapes experience and conceptualisations of place for local social actors, as well as for researcher and research subjects. Indeed, as urban anthropologist Christina Moretti argues:

Walking with others can help us appreciate people's senses of place while urging us to reflect on the social relations that shape them.

(2017: 95)

Augoyard (2007) notably emphasises the interrelation of the body within urban environments through ‘daily strolls’ in his 1979 study of a new town, *l’Arlequin*, while analysis of ethnographic ‘walk-alongs’ in Milton Keynes and Bedford by Degen and Rose (2012) reveals the significant role that walking plays in mediating everyday experiences alongside perceptual memory. In their comparative study of approaches to walking ethnography in Aberdeen, Scotland, and Aalborg, Denmark, Belkouri et al. (2022) compare urban walking to an experiential ‘immersion’ within the “mobility, fluidity, and contingency” (p916) of urban life. This is in line with Massey’s (1991, 2005) insistence on the heterogeneity and relationality of space. Yet such heterogeneity means that an individual’s ‘immersion’ can only ever be partial, one instance in a wider constellation of place experience.

While my walking ethnography has been supplemented by note taking and digital photography to consolidate my grasp of the “affective, ineffable, and mundane moments in the field” (Yi’En, 2014: 211), I have also been influenced by sensory ethnographic approaches. Such methods represent the settled understanding of the multi-sensoriality of experience (Culhane, 2017a: 49; Pink, 2015: pXI), a position reflected in my theoretical framework (section 3.2). However, rather than a method of data collection, I understand sensory ethnography as a way of ‘knowing and understanding’ (Pink, 2015: 5), a view that also concurs with my study’s interest in relational, socio-culturally mediated senses of place. A particular contextual sound, for example, will have markedly different associations from person to person. In Smithfield, for example, this is evidenced in local social actors’ contested positions related to the activity and bright lights of HGVs, variously invoked as a ‘spectacle’ and a ‘nuisance’.

In my use of a predominately walking-sensory ethnography, I am also influenced by studies that have emphasised the capacity of walking to engage the imagination as well as the body, and which link both to place. Lee and Ingold’s (2006) exploration of the relationship between the practice of walking and sociality draws attention to how:

...the repeated action of putting one foot in front of the other necessitates contact with the ground and, often, a state of being attuned to the environment.

(2006: 68)

As I have argued, such an 'attunement' for me also relates to emotional and imagined states. This is a view shared by Moretti:

As an embodied, social, and imaginary practice, walking can be a way of telling, commenting on, performing, and creating both stories and places. This requires us to pay attention to imagination as it helps generate understandings, connections, and questions.

(2017: 95)

In my use of walking as an ethnographic research practice I therefore acknowledge my own 'creation' of Smithfield as a place at the same time as I have considered the 'imaginary practice' of my participants, and the broader implications of walking in the creation of socio-culturally relational, embodied, and imagined senses of place.

4.1.2 Finding rationales, rhythms, and stories in desk research

Alongside a walking-sensory ethnographic approach I apply desk research in two areas: discourse analysis and social history research. The first applies primarily to policy documents, marketing materials, and press releases but also to printed ephemera associated with current and former local institutions. I consider these to be an aspect of the 'artefacts' that Julier (2005) implicates alongside 'activities' in the production of urban designscapes (p869); within this, analysis of the policy and marketing materials from the Corporation has been important in establishing the genesis and evolution of Smithfield's culture-led development, its various rationales, and its intended audiences. These link policy to place. Indeed, as Jensen and Richardson (2004) assert, discourse analysis is inseparable from spatial analysis:

...analysis of space requires analysis of discourse if we are to understand how spaces come to be as they are, how people exist and act within spaces.

(2004: 43)

As I established in Chapter 2, for me this applies not only to how places ‘come to be’, but also to their future. While Jensen and Richardson write from an urban design studies perspective, a geographic attitude is also valuable in examining how senses of place are implicated in the policies and strategies of culture-led development. This supports identification not only of their impacts but also how such policies “draw part of their dynamics from the characteristics of specific places” (Rydin, 2005: 74), essentially how culture-led development reflects local specificity as well as transforms it. The analysis of institutional policy and strategy documents lastly highlights the aims and values of institutions involved. This is informed by studies that have explored the contested dynamics of urban change, seen in the divergent institutional aims within the Tate Modern cultural regeneration scheme in London (Dean et al., 2010) and the conflicts between elite social actors and planners in Moore Street Market, Dublin (Moore-Cherry & Bonnin, 2020). In Lefebvrian (1991) terms, such texts belong within ‘conceived’ space, the realm of planners and urbanists that dominates the everyday ‘lived’ space of its inhabitants. This however is a relationship that I have complicated in Chapter 2, arguing instead that the dynamic is more one of *negotiation* than domination.

Focused historical research from secondary sources forms the second component of desk research. This situates Smithfield within its broader socio-spatial history and triangulates its ‘embedded’ histories – both hegemonic, including its 16th century executions and the market’s Victorian heyday, and less recognised, including the rapid decline of market affiliated trades from the 1960s onwards and the role of St Bartholomew’s Hospital during the HIV-AIDS crisis in the 1980s. This is relevant to a fieldsite where situated heritage is entangled with local identity, experience, and urban regeneration narratives, an aspect that I explore in detail in Chapter 7. This desk research also informs my analysis of how the area has changed over time relative to global flows and periods of development, an approach followed by urbanism scholar Ben Campkin (2013) in his study of how notions of urban

degradation are tied to regeneration programmes. For this research, I am also interested in the 'rhythm' of urban change, a facet approached through an adaptation of rhythmanalysis (Lefebvre, 2004; Lefebvre & Régulier, 1996) that I detail in section 4.3 below.

4.2 FIELDSITE SPECIFIC: USING TAILORED 'INVENTIVE' METHODS

In this study I have devised and applied 'inventive' methods (DeLyser & Sui, 2012; Lury & Wakeford, 2014): participatory approaches that engage with "the happening of the social world" (2014: 2). Such methods parallel those used in socially-engaged museum practice in their participatory nature and subversion of conventional power dynamics (Simon, 2010). These methods comprise: 'boundary' walking interviews and a combined walking tour and workshop. These are not 'inventive' for their own sake but reflect Celia Lury and Nina Wakeford's emphatic argument that methods should be creatively tailored to their specific context. As they assert, it is "not possible to apply a method as if it were indifferent to or external to the problem it seeks to address" (2014: 2); instead methods should reach out to make a difference beyond their function. This last point highlights that methods themselves are not innocent, and are capable of creating change at various scales – from the personal to the political.

4.2.1 Boundary walking interviews

I have emphasised walking within this research as a relevant ethnographic approach given its role in understanding and even creating place (Moretti, 2017; O'Neill & Hubbard, 2020; Pink, 2008). The inclusion of walking as an aspect of participant interviews is also a well-established method, including participatory walking (Cresswell & Merriman, 2011; O'Neill & Roberts, 2020), shared walks (Lee & Ingold, 2006), and 'talking whilst walking' or go-along interviews (Anderson, 2004; Kusenbach, 2003). I share these approaches' recognition of the importance of the physical co-presence of interviewer and participant, one that generates a shared 'rhythm' of walking and sociability (Lee & Ingold 2006: 69). However, where these writers share an interest in the existing itineraries or unstructured routes of local social actors, I am more interested in situations that reveal participants' sensory and imagined engagements with place through a deliberate prompt. I am inspired by what Bazuñ and

Kwiatkowski (2022) term ‘exploratory walks’ or ‘walking tours’ (Moretti, 2008; Pink, 2008), in which a researcher is guided around a location by their research participant. These structured walks help researchers to “attune to how inhabitants imagine in and through city spaces” (Moretti, 2017: 100), essentially asking ‘how do social actors theorise the city?’. For me, this also connects subjective socio-cultural experiences of place with imagined and sensory aspects. As Moretti suggests:

Walking tours are particularly interesting for the ethnographer because they do much more than reveal a series of places, memories and relations that are simply already “there”.

(2017: 96)

For Moretti, this approach shows how people situate themselves along “discordant borders between cultures, times, and social realities” (p96), a ‘bordering’ that has proven similarly fruitful in this study. However, I tailor this approach by requesting that participants guide me along a route that, for them, best follows Smithfield’s experiential and conceptual ‘boundaries’ – essentially where they consider its edges to be. Through the unfolding conversation, changes of direction, and often vocal questioning and indecision, this guided walk implicitly conveys the outline of Smithfield’s sense of place as they understand it. This imagined ‘line’ traverses and encompasses memories, fictions, socio-cultural and relational perspectives, aesthetic judgements as well as hard material barriers and administrative thresholds. This provocation also deliberately engages with the tension between place as a ‘bounded openness’ (Malpas, 2018) and the futility of its enclosure (Massey, 1991), discussed in Chapter 3. This is a productive tension that relates directly to my research questions and their aim to understand how senses of place are defined by local social actors, and the implications for an incoming museum.

Alongside the request to walk Smithfield’s boundaries, I also provided research participants with a disposable camera and asked them to take photos of those aspects – deliberately broadly defined – which for them represented Smithfield and its ‘edges’. These images were then shared with participants after the interview. The purpose was two-fold: firstly, to create a visual record of the elements that informed social actors’ conceptual boundaries;

and secondly, to attune participants to more sensory (albeit visually-biased) aspects of Smithfield's identity and experience beyond its administrative boundaries – essentially to prompt a more imaginative and critical frame of mind. Culhane highlights the importance of this type of awareness:

When we record sounds or images, we develop a fine awareness of the sonic and visual worlds that surround us; this implies that we become more fully aware of the sounds and sights that we often take for granted.

(2017b: 8)

I am also influenced by the creative participatory approach used by Rebelo et al. (2020) in their research with residents in Carvalhal de Vermilhas, Portugal. This study explored local senses of place and identity through a hypothetical place branding exercise, one facilitated by the co-creation of a video documentary. This approach further highlights the “heuristic and collaborative potential” of visual methods (2020: 428), a useful common language through which to engage participants.

Lastly, this method also provides a useful form of sociological representation within this thesis, in which I have included images taken by research participants as well as my own. As Bell (2014) suggests “images do something other than confirm the text. They accompany but do not merely illustrate; they can exceed intentions and articulations” (p151). Their inclusion at relevant points throughout my thesis, and their tangibly different visual register as film rather than digital images, represents the distinction between local social actors' visual cues for their subjective senses of place compared to my own photos. Further, the use of analogue photography also provides a strong contrast to the ‘staged’ nature of images shared on Instagram (Degen & Rose, 2022) as well as the sleek CGIs of Smithfield's future commissioned by the Corporation, also included where relevant.

4.2.2 Participatory workshops

Participatory workshops are a form of group discussion that support focused conversations between participants and a basis for creative co-production (Shubotz, 2022). Such group

conversations also provide a safe space to share thoughts and life histories with others (Liamputtong, 2011). In this study, I expand the potential of a group discussion setting by combining it with a participatory local heritage walking tour that I devise and lead. This was held towards the end of fieldwork and, in line with an iterative and incremental grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2014; Cresswell & Poth, 2018), its design was informed by revisiting earlier data from my historical research and walking interviews. Participants were recruited through contacts maintained from walking interviews; introductions via the London Museum; social media posts; and flyers posted in relevant settings, including local community centres, and comprised: three cisgender gay men (white British, 30+; white-European, 40+; and mixed-race British, 50+); two cisgender gay women, both white (40+ and 60+); and one transgender straight woman (white, 40+).

The combined walking tour and workshop was designed to uncover the dynamic interaction between real-and-imagined situated 'stories' and social actors' senses of place. While organised walking tours have been a topic of study within tourist experiences of place (see Barber, 2019; Giddy & Hoogendoorn, 2018), and as ethnographic method (Aoki & Yoshimizu, 2015), as a participatory research method they have been underutilised. I contend that as a form of place-based storytelling they have a productive entanglement with notions of a real-and-imagined place relevant to this study; as a research method they also reinforce notions of walking as an imaginative practice that supports an active engagement with the environment (Lee & Ingold, 2006; Moretti, 2017; O'Neill & Hubbard, 2010). Organised walking tours also have the potential to reward and empower participants. As Truman & Springgay (2019) argue, walking tours in whatever form share both a focus on place and a motivation to uncover something new about its historical, political, social, or cultural context. Focusing a cohort's attention on embedded local histories at six locations over an hour also allowed time in-between stops for informal conversations, supporting a 'sociability' often absent from a formal workshop setting.

The subject of the walking tour and workshop was Smithfield's LGBTQ+ histories. This thematic choice provides a specific focus through which to probe the relationship between situated stories and Smithfield's higher-level narrative frames (see section 3.3); it also questions the relationship between individual histories and collective ones. In addition, this

approach works to interrogate the formation of dominant normative place narratives in Smithfield through its emphasis on non-normative or ‘absent’ histories. This adheres to Samuel’s view of history involving “a series of erasures, emendations and amalgamations” (1994: pX), and the need to listen to “alternative visions of reality, or moments that suggest things could have been otherwise” (Moretti, 2017: 103). Themes other than LGBTQ+ history could have been equally applicable: the history of women in Smithfield or of local migrant communities, for example, share the same tension between local embeddedness and public absence. Further, the choice of queer histories engages with an ongoing discourse within museum practice, where despite an increasing visibility, the exploration of LGBTQ+ history remains “uneven and partial” and is a challenge to some museum approaches (Sandell et. al, 2018: 3; Winchester, 2012). For me there is also a personal rationale to this thematic focus. As a gay man from London I am interested in these sites and stories’ resonance with my own life and my part in a wider LGBTQ+ social history. While I have found LGBTQ+ communities to be immensely welcoming to those beyond them, my sexuality also affords me a privileged admission to its members’ life stories and frames of reference valuable to this aspect of the research.

4.3 BEYOND RHYTHMANALYSIS

I have established my overarching research approach, positionality, and described specific methods tailored to this study. In this final section I outline an ‘adapted’ rhythmanalysis that combines Lefebvre’s (2004) foundational understanding with Massey’s framing of place as process (Massey, 1991, 2005). This is informed by recent place-based studies that have applied rhythmanalysis (Lyon, 2016; Nash, 2022; Simpson, 2008, 2012) but which underemphasise the role of the imagination, contested timescapes, and the longer-term processes of urban change. Rather than a discrete method, this is primarily a way of analysing research findings produced by the methods described above. Below I summarise rhythmanalysis before describing its necessary integration with historical and longitudinal research to expand the temporal field of view. This adapted rhythmanalysis supports a richer understanding of the differential social effects of urban change pertinent to this study. It also responds to research into the temporalities and temporal politics of urban

change discussed in Chapter 2 (see Degen, 2018; Moore-Cherry & Bonnin, 2020; Raco et al. 2008), by identifying culture-led development itself as a rhythmic process.

Rhythmanalysis provides a theoretical, methodological, and analytical frame through which to research place. Although Lefebvre offers “little in the way of methodological guidelines” (Nash, 2020: 307) his descriptions and explorations of rhythmanalysis propose it as a means of revealing embodied, sensory experiences and the social production of space (Lefebvre, 2004; Lefebvre & Régulier, 1996). Using one’s body as a tool, the study of rhythm draws attention to repetition, pattern, embodiment, and the temporal mechanics of place. Significantly for the study of a culture-led development process, in *Seen from the Window* (2004) Lefebvre applies rhythmanalysis to the movement of the “disparate movements of the crowds” (p29) he can see from his balcony on Rue Rambuteau, a view that overlooks the (then) recently completed *Centre Georges Pompidou*. As such, I assert that the study of culture-led development is embedded in the DNA of rhythmanalysis.

While rhythmanalysis has been applied in a variety of urban contexts, including in the City of London (Nash, 2022) and Billingsgate Market (Lyon, 2016), its original formulation can be criticised for a lack of attention to diverse and relational bodies, and the differential impact of power hierarchies, among other flaws (see Lyon, 2021: 15). As Sharma (2014) argues, “time, as it is constructed in terms of power, must be acknowledged as differential, relational, and tangled” (p80). More recent rhythmic analyses have highlighted these aspects, as well as rhythm’s cross-disciplinary potential:

Rhythm is a concept that moves between disciplines, focusing attention on, among other things, how our sensory worlds are mediated and organized [...] and how our experiences might escape being captured in systems of representation or efficient production, standardisation and control.

(Henriques et al., 2014: 4)

Henriques, Tainen, and Valiaho emphasise the potential for thinking-through-rhythm to highlight experiences that might otherwise be lost. For me, this is achieved through

rhythm's inherent focus on experiences over time, an approach that is enabled through longitudinal research; this allows the expansion of a rhythmanalytical research frame in both the long-term continuous present (i.e. ethnographic observation over 30 months) as well as backwards in time (i.e. archival, policy and historical research), allowing unseen or unfelt manifestations of power and process to come into view. This also corresponds with Massey's (2005) view of place itself as 'process' and supports analysis of both the rhythmic pattern of long-term urban development processes, and narrative and imagined mediations of place, for example institutional narratives. It also accords with Monstadt's (2022) assertion that periods of infrastructural change can reveal invisible and neglected temporalities; indeed, it is precisely the pattern of these temporalities, and how they are experienced, that my adapted rhythmanalysis aims to reveal.

I deploy specific methods to achieve this. Firstly, ethnographic observation from strategic vantage points to observe, annotate, and document hourly, daily, and weekly rhythms in Smithfield. Informed by Lyon's (2016) rhythmanalytical study of Billingsgate Fish Market, this includes the use of time lapse photography, an approach that she suggests reveals otherwise elusive qualities of the market. This however proved limiting in its lack of immersion within the sensescape of Smithfield's streets. Further, influenced by Lefebvre's *Seen from the Window* (2004), I also carried out a situated rhythmanalysis in Smithfield over a 24-hour period, based in an Airbnb overlooking the current active markets and the London Museum construction site, and from where I was able to take regular walks around the local area. These perspectives combine to provide rich embodied, visual, sensory and spatio-temporal data. In this 'adapted rhythmanalysis' I incorporate these with relevant analysis of the data produced by this study's other methods, described above. These comprise historical and policy research (with a particular sensitivity to patterns of urban change and the unfolding of the area's culture-led development); and analysis of walking interviews with local social actors, alert to assertions and patterns of change and temporal tension. Further, consistent with this study's use of walking as an ethnographic practice, I attend to my own embodied behaviour and the rhythms and patterns of other social actors and associated 'timescapes' (Adam, 1998, 2004, 2008) as part of my ethnographic observation. In Smithfield this includes the weekday nocturnal movement of market traders, the weekday diurnal activity of construction workers, and the weekend flows of club-goers,

along with their associated sensory qualities and socio-cultural values. Rather than Buttimer's (1980) static snapshot of place, these methods and their analysis combine to describe the ongoing rhythms of Smithfield as an aspect of its sense of place.

Lastly, rhythmanalysis also informs my analysis of the research data produced. This was conducted in nVivo using thematic analysis, for example of interview transcripts, with coding manifesting themes and patterns in the data that are rooted in the process and effects of urban change. These in part followed the taxonomy of Lefebvrian rhythmanalysis (see Lyon, 2021: 25) alongside other initial codes, with the iterative re-coding and evaluation of emerging themes in turn informing further themes and rhythmic associations, commensurate with a constructivist grounded theory approach. These reflected the "different temporal itineraries" (Sharma, 2014: 5) that constitute social experiences in Smithfield, affected by the unfolding processes and forces of urban change. Such rhythmically-sensitive thematic analysis further galvanised the "potential of rhythmanalysis for spatially, temporally and sensually attuned practices of research" (Lyon, 2021: 5), and the examination of space and time together in a changing place.

4.4 A CHANGING FIELDSITE AND METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

To study an area undergoing culture-led development is to attend to a lively set of institutional, municipal, social, and spatial dynamics. This has certainly been the case in Smithfield, with changes affecting both the scope of the research and testing the resilience of my chosen methods. Significant and unexpected shifts have included: the demise of Culture Mile as an organisation and brand and the subsequent launch of Culture Mile BID; the February 2021 cancellation of the Centre for Music, originally proposed for the Museum's former London Wall site; a two-year delay to the Museum's *Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme* of local social engagement due to COVID-19-related procedural complications; and the incremental delays to the Museum's relocation and opening in Smithfield. I do however understand these as part-and-parcel of large-scale processes of urban change. Their unfolding implications have consequently been incorporated into my research, supported by the long-term nature of the fieldwork, the mix of methods used (given my inclusion of both social and institutional voices), and my focus on senses of place

as a critical frame through which to view these dynamics. While an initial aim had been to evaluate the impact of the Museum on Smithfield's sense of place *after* its relocation, centring my focus on the wider process and the Museum's iterative progress *towards* Smithfield has been more fruitful, not least in the empirical basis it has provided for the *blueprint* and online resource.

As Massey (1991) attests to, these and other dynamics are also interrelated with global forces. I have mentioned above the lasting social effects of COVID-19 during my fieldwork; while activity in Smithfield Central Markets was mostly unaffected due to the traders' key worker status, footfall in the wider Smithfield area was widely accepted to have decreased markedly. As of September 2024, activity had certainly increased, but it is difficult to ascribe a quantitative value in terms of a post-COVID 'recovery' due to other substantive changes, not least the arrival of the Elizabeth Line. This pre- to post-COVID trajectory has also not been the focus of this research. More significant has been the psycho-social legacy of COVID-19 restrictions, effects that were still palpable in the early stages of fieldwork. This made physical proximity with some participants difficult, although this was largely mitigated by the outdoor nature of the walking interviews. This legacy also, I suggest, provided research participants with a heightened sense of the meaning of 'place' and the value (or lack) of local socio-spatial networks of all kinds given the experiences of lockdown. However, my capacity to analyse this more fully was limited by my research aims. I therefore touch on these aspects in the empirical chapters only where they are relevant to my research focus.

Other potentially limiting factors also appeared as the research progressed. The first of these was a sampling bias particularly around age, with fewer young (<24 years old) participants recruited than desirable. While I addressed other sampling biases around class and race as they emerged during fieldwork, younger people proved difficult to engage and are therefore under-represented – albeit this does reflect the lower cohorts of young people resident in the City of London compared to Greater London as a whole (ONS, 2011). I avoided a significant under-representation through direct recruitment of younger participants, including Anya, a local student, Amira, a local barista, and Ben, a member of the City's disability and access group, as a result of building long-term informal relationships

during fieldwork. A second limitation addressed during fieldwork was a lack of appropriate support for the walking tour and workshop. To address this, I engaged an experienced workshop facilitator, Jon Sleight. This valuable support was needed given the potentially traumatic nature of some of the local LGBTQ+ histories discussed, and the importance of quickly developing a safe and supportive environment among the workshop participants. This follows Darling's (2014: 204) assertion that building trust is essential for a reciprocal exchange of ideas. While this ideally develops over longer periods of ethnographic fieldwork, for participants that are new to the research it was also established – or at least encouraged – through Jon's professional facilitation.

In summary, I have deployed a range of mobile, ethnographic, and participatory methods that engage with local social and institutional actors, and the multiple discourses of a culture-led development project. Informed by my interdisciplinary theoretical framework, these work together [incrementally](#) to interrogate local social actors' senses of place: this provides an empirical basis through which to understand how a relocating museum can develop an equitable relationship with its new local area. Given the complexities of an urban sense of place in the context of a culture-led development process, no one method is sufficient: those used in this study anticipate and elicit embodied sensory and temporal perspectives, critically assess the rationales and ambitions of institutional actors over time, contextualise the production of brand and heritage atmospheres, and reveal power dynamics of place at various scales from the personal to the municipal. 'Mixing methods' in this way is not only a pragmatic research approach (Cresswell & Poth, 2018: 26), but as DeLyser and Sui (2012: 119) highlight, it also engages multiple voices. Equally important to the wider ambitions of this, and perhaps any, research project is the use of imaginative methodologies to "produce knowledge in new and different ways" (Dowling et al., 2018: 781). I provide arguments for the new knowledge I have created and its empirical basis in the chapters that follow.

Chapter 5 Boundaries: Defining a Sense of Place

Spoke to a bike courier outside Ferraris cafe. White male, mid 50s. He asked me “are you waiting for the hairdresser?”. He talked about how the ramp to the car park under Smithfield was used in James Bond. And how he had seen a TV show with Alan Cummings and Larry Lamb that had gone on walking tours of Smithfield. I asked him why couriers like him come to this cafe. “It’s cheap”, he laughs. “Proper working man’s cafe. Well...” he says, pointing at my food “...you’ll find out.” A refrigerated lorry outside the cafe is being loaded with pig carcasses. Another van passes by and the driver shouts “get out the way you ____”. The men loading the carcasses laugh, as does the driver who drives on.

Fieldnotes, 09:20am, 26/8/21

“But just recently, someone came along. And in the [church] porch where there’s a sort of inquiry desk, was asking... he said he was interested in buying somewhere near here. And he said, first of all, about the clock chiming, ‘When is the bell ringing practice? How long does it last for? How many services do they ring for?’ And I think he decided not to buy a flat. But it’s actually just a wonderful thing and I love it.”

(Linda, local resident, 60+ years old)

These two extracts highlight the varied social actors, experiences, timescapes, and imaginaries that Smithfield accommodates, and which contribute to its senses of place. Implicit in these vignettes are multiple categories of boundary: walkable boundaries of Smithfield; sensory boundaries of bells and food; temporal boundaries of the opening hairdressers, church services, and the closing market; and classed and gendered boundaries of consumption. In the context of urban development, what can such boundaries tell us about how senses of place are experienced and defined? In this chapter I explore these and other conceptual boundaries and their material, sensory, and temporal expression. In doing so, I show that local social actors define senses of place that, while linked to apparently shared indicators, are subjective, contested, and variously mediated. Indeed, the

provocation of boundary-making reveals both what is shared about place identity, but also how and why individuals mobilise these elements differently. As such, this chapter directly explores how social actors define an area's sense of place, one of my three key research questions.

This chapter also engages with instabilities around the significance of 'boundaries' to place identity and experience that I established in Chapter 3, in particular tensions between the phenomenological philosophy of Malpas (2018) in which place is a 'bounded openness', compared to Massey's (1991) assertion of the fundamental openness of place. This tension informs analysis of both what a *place* is, and how it can be *sensed* and defined. Indeed, my empirical study of Smithfield also shows that this is a productive tension in other areas, revealed in experiential boundaries of localised timescapes (Adam, 1998, 2004, 2008), and the boundaries between imagined 'storyworlds' and their situated geographies (Herman, 2009; Ryan, 2004). I explore these tangible and intangible boundaries across three sections.

In the first section I highlight how Smithfield's local social actors draw on material and sensory 'cues' to define its *sensible boundaries*, drawing specific attention to the multi-faceted meanings of bollards, architectural façades, and emblems of municipal authority. This reveals how the political is imbricated within everyday senses of place, as well as suggesting underlying socio-spatial tensions. In the second section I focus on *relational boundaries*, recognising relationality as a defining factor in subjective senses of place, explored in terms of both geographic and socio-cultural identity and experience, and relationalities of time. I suggest the latter also act as relational 'cues' to senses of place, producing belonging as well as dissonance. In the final section I detail experiences of the *boundaries between the real and imagined*, specifically those informed by memory, heritage, and situated fictions. These highlight the everyday relational mediation of place experience by social actors' imaginations, relevant to the formation of subjective senses of place and the conditioning of place identity within culture-led development. I conclude by linking these arguments to the London Museum's forthcoming relocation to Smithfield, highlighting the potential for it to re-think and establish its own conceptual boundaries.

5.1 SENSIBLE BOUNDARIES OF PLACE

Smithfield's social actors draw on aspects of its environment to define simultaneously socio-cultural, political, embodied, and imagined senses of place. In this section, I focus specifically on how environmental 'cues' are mobilised within this process, forming *sensible boundaries* of place identity and experience that encompass a sense of place within. These cues include the smell of meat, bollards, street signs, and architectural façades, detailed in turn below. I use the word 'sensible' here to mean 'perceptible by the senses', recognising Rancière's (2004) similar use of the term in his notion of the 'distribution of the sensible'. As with Rancière's framing, I also draw attention to wider socio-cultural frameworks and power dynamics within embodied sensory experiences, highlighting their role in mediating resultant senses of place. I end this section by considering larger macro-spatial tensions between different local social actors' subjective boundaries, indicating that while 'cues' are ostensibly shared, experiences of them are subjective and uneven.

5.1.1 'The smell tells you where you are': Assembling cues to define senses of place

Distinct urban features around Smithfield are used by social actors to delineate its spatial parameters, and also to define its sense of place. The use of main roads here is not unexpected, including the busy Farringdon Road to the west and Aldersgate Street to the east, and to a lesser extent Clerkenwell Road to the north and the A40 Holborn Viaduct/Newgate Street to the south (see figure 5.1) For one neurodivergent participant, Ben, the activity of Farringdon Road was a particular sensory boundary:

"Kind of like visually, sonically, there's just a lot going on. I think, yeah, I think there's a lot kind of overstimulation, a lot of things competing for your attention [...] And probably less so in Smithfield than the surrounding area."

(Ben, City of London Access Group member, 20+)

For Ben, the activity of Farringdon Road forms a *sensible boundary*, one that informs his view of Smithfield's sensescape as comparatively subdued. This and other participants'

boundary ‘edges’ are shown in a composite map of the areas they delineated during the walking interview (see figures 5.3 and 5.4). This map suggests a diffuse but finite territorial limit to Smithfield’s boundaries, in addition to a greater intensity of place-recognition around Grand Avenue, Long Lane, and the Central Markets. (See Appendix A for a selection of participants’ ‘boundary walk’ maps).

Figure 5.1: Participant images showing (clockwise from top left) Holborn Viaduct over Farringdon Road; Grand Avenue / Smithfield Market; Long Lane leading to Aldersgate Street and the Barbican Estate; and St John’s Lane leading to Clerkenwell Road



For other participants, having a visual connection to the market buildings was the determining factor in defining the extent of Smithfield’s *sensible boundaries*, particularly the stone façade of the East and West Markets. Several participants commented that they were “*in Smithfield*” as soon as they could see the market. This corresponds to Lynch’s (1960) ‘City Image’ model, in which physical objects such as ‘landmarks’ have a “high probability of evoking a strong image in any given observer” (p9). Further, these are often “visible only in

restricted localities and from certain approaches” (p48), reflected in a selection of participant images (see figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2: Participant photos showing restricted but nonetheless significant views of the Central Market buildings, from Cowcross Street (left) and Charterhouse Street (right)



This affects the area’s *sensible boundaries*, with vistas of the market buildings incorporated but nearby buildings excluded. The centrality of the market to Smithfield’s identity was articulated clearly by Phil, a London taxi driver:

“As a cabbie when people ask for Smithfield or talk about Smithfield, I think they're probably quite essentially focused on the meat market, the Central Meat Market, you know, the building is imposing. It's the centrepiece of the area.”

(Phil, taxi driver, 40+ years old)

This view was shared by other participants including Mia and Daniel, who rather than just associating the market buildings with a wider Smithfield identity, instead defined Smithfield as the market buildings:

“I would see it like, literally, just the market. ... It feels quite contained to me, what is and isn't Smithfield.”

(Mia, Islington council employee, 30+ years old)

“The market sits in a more general area which is designated as such, but certainly for me, I don’t think of it in those terms. I think of Smithfield rather specifically as the market itself.”

(Daniel, local resident, 60+ years old)

Such ‘imageability’ (Lynch, 1960) however underplays the multi-sensorial nature of embodied experience (Classen, 1993; Pallasmaa, 2005; Pink, 2015); indeed, in the case of the market, smell is often cited as a major indicator of Smithfield’s identity, a ‘cue’ that is also only perceptible “in restricted localities” (Lynch, 1960: 48). Daniel stresses this, commenting *“this is very much the heart of the place. I mean, just by the smell, once you get inside, the smell tells you where you are.”* For Daniel, the embodied experience of the market’s meat smell is a simultaneous cue to inform his definition of Smithfield’s sense of place. There is also a significant temporal dimension to market activity for Mia, underscoring the link between spatial practice and local identity:

“It almost for me as if Smithfield doesn’t exist until a certain hour in the morning.”

(Mia, Islington council employee, 30+ years old)

In this framing, the market activity is a discrete *timescape* (Adam, 2004, 2008) of activity, a “cluster of temporal features” (2004: 143) the boundaries of which both produce and enclose Smithfield.

However, the centrality of the market to Smithfield’s *sensible boundaries* was not the case for all, with several participants avoiding the buildings altogether. Indeed, for Henry, a local resident, only the route between the market buildings – Grand Avenue – was within Smithfield’s ‘boundary’, rather than the structures themselves (figure 5.5). This highlights the relationality of architectural and other sensory values; and in line with Massey (1991, 2005), Puwar (2004) and Sharma (2014), it also indicates that broader structures of meaning condition subjective place identity and experience. While I consider specific relationalities in light of Massey’s (1991) ‘power geometry’ in section 5.2 below, relevant here in terms of a ‘sensible’ outline of Smithfield’s sense of place is that, although environmental cues are

shared, their meanings are slippery and contested. This is even more evident in experiences of Smithfield's micro-spatial features, which I turn to next.

Figure 5.3: Map of local area layered with multiple participants' individual conceptual boundaries of Smithfield.

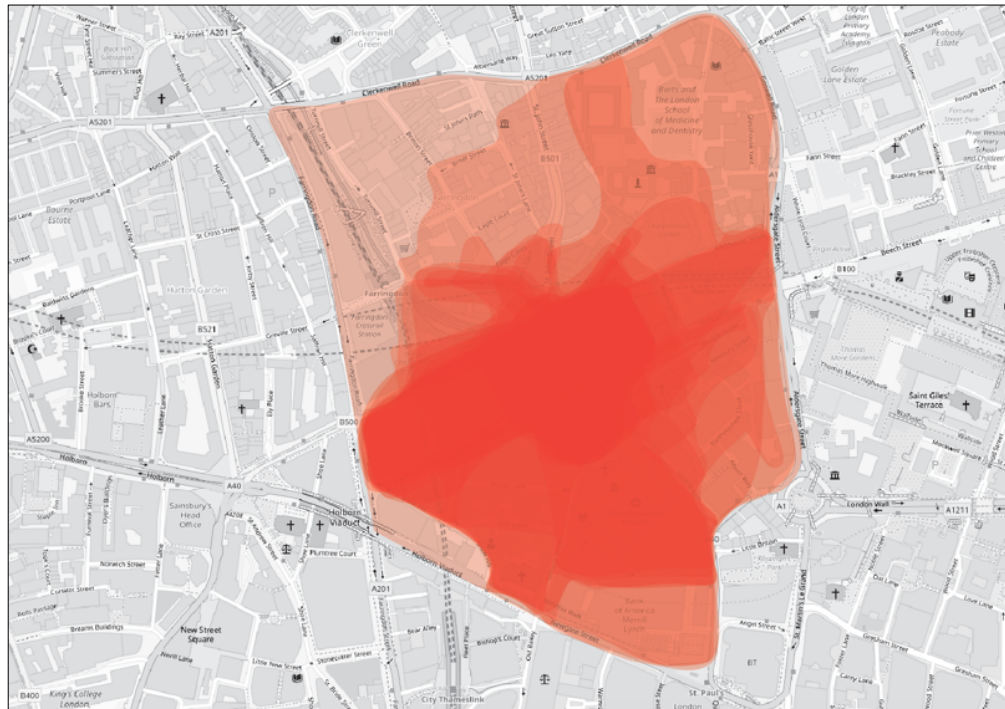


Figure 5.4: As above, with Ward and Borough level boundaries overlaid.

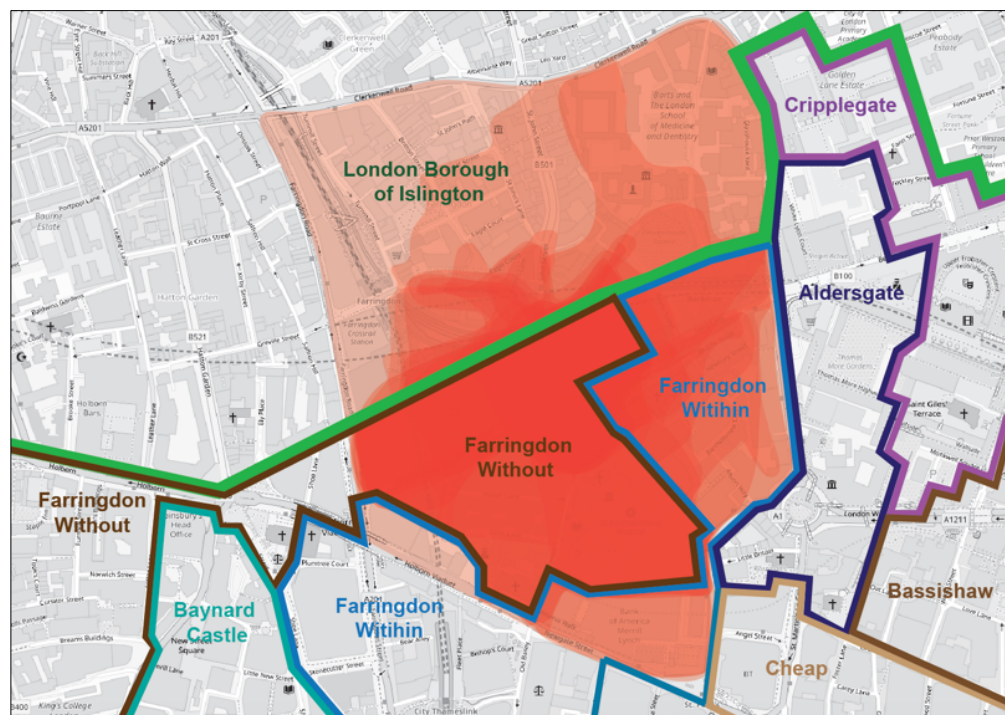
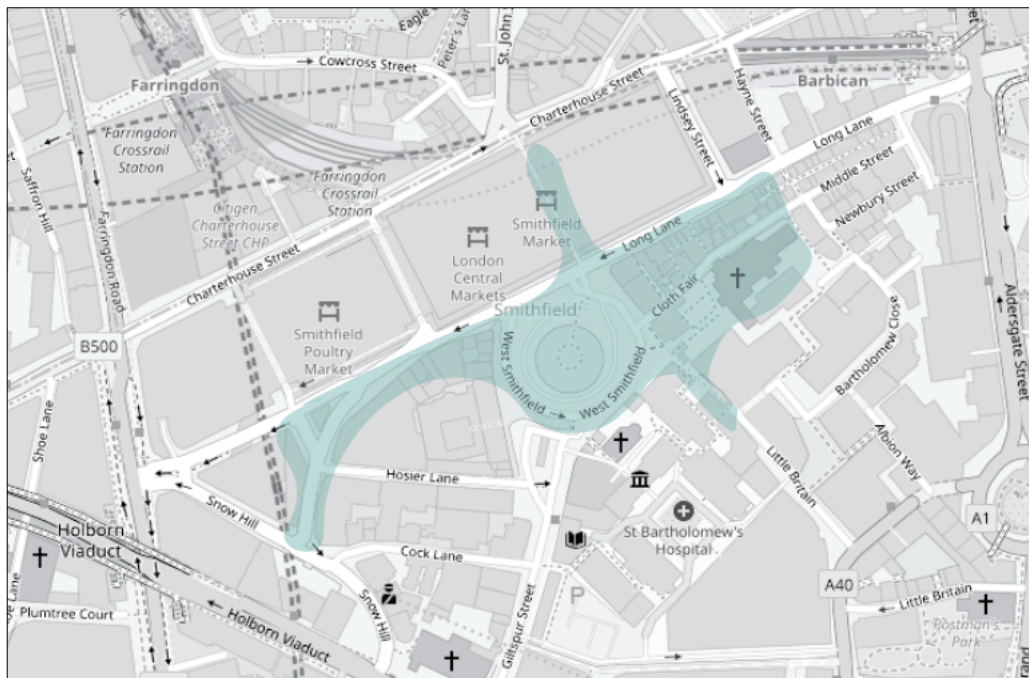


Figure 5.5: Smithfield's 'sensible boundaries' indicated by Henry (local resident, 70+)



Smithfield's walls, fences, railings, gates, and bollards are recurring subjects in participant photos and indicate a shared visual language of boundaries (see figure 5.6). All types of barrier, their repeated appearance in photos that respond to a provocation to capture participants' 'boundaries' is not surprising. Nonetheless, it is important to reflect on both the embodied experiences of these barriers and their association with the City of London Corporation. Urban planner and academic Peter Marcuse notably examines the physical, social and symbolic power of walls: "Walls are boundaries, but they are more than boundaries. Boundaries also suggest divisions in society, or among societies, lines between groups and peoples. But walls are a particular kind of boundary" (Marcuse, 1996: 31). For Marcuse, these are a simultaneously physical and symbolic manifestation of inequality, power, and privilege. But rather than walls, I choose here to focus specifically on another type of boundary: bollards. Fieldwork revealed these to be a rich source of interpretative conflict in Smithfield.

Figure 5.6: Participant photos featuring bollards outside Farringdon Station (top left) and Charterhouse (top right); and walls on Middle Street (bottom left) and gates at the Holy Sepulchre Church, Snow Hill.



As intentionally immovable, disruptive yet permeable structures that are prevalent in the local streetscape, bollards provide an example of what museum professional Nina Simon (2010) calls ‘social objects’: artefacts that lend themselves naturally to social experiences. Unsurprisingly, research participants drew these markers into their bounded senses of place:

“I would consider that Smithfield. To where the bollards are. Yeah, where they've defined it.”

(Keith, former local resident, 50+ years old)

“...the City are always wanting to mark its boundary, you know, in some of the newer areas you've got the bollards ... they've just gone, like, wildly over the top. There's like hundreds of it. Yeah. So it's like a real statement. This is the City of London.”

(Phil, taxi driver, 40+ years old)

In both examples, participants associate the bollards with the power of the Corporation (the “they”) and recognise that the bollards act to define a boundary, despite their essential permeability. However, in many cases bollards are not administrative boundary markers; found throughout the fieldsite, they combine multiple spatial and symbolic functions: proclaiming the Corporation’s territory in some cases, but also preventing vehicle traffic, serving as anti-terrorism barriers, and as a heritage ‘prop’. Those outside the medieval Charterhouse, for example, were installed by architects John Seely and Paul Paget in the 1950s and have been described locally as “set dressing” (Ross, 2021) relocated from elsewhere to produce an atmosphere of authenticity (see figure 5.6). As such, they conform to Böhme’s (2018) notion of ‘staged materiality’: a material ‘cue’ designed to produce a spatial character.

The potential to misappropriate or infer an administrative boundary from a material cue was common among participants, highlighting the dissonance between simultaneously socio-cultural, political, embodied and imagined senses of place and administrative territories. This ‘blurriness’ was epitomised in a street sign for Charterhouse Street, near the corner with Lindsey Street. Clare, a retired historian and Barbican resident, indicated that the sign had had its Corporation crest taped over as, technically, that building was in the London Borough of Islington (figure 5.7).



Figure 5.7: Participant photos of a Corporation street sign with white tape placed over the City of London crest (left), compared to visible crest (below)



The contested nature of this street sign in many ways acts as a metaphor for the indeterminacy of administrative boundaries in Smithfield not only to newcomers but also longer-term social actors:

“And I’m not sure whether this is in the same local authority district as ours. When I was delivering leaflets for Farringdon Within we didn’t come this far. But this, this might be Islington as well... I’m not quite sure.”

(Linda, local resident, 60+ years old)

Why is this important? At first sight these administrative boundaries appear to have little impact on everyday experiences and subjective senses of place, with most participants’ *sensible boundaries* of place transgressing at least one local authority or ward boundary (see figure 5.1). This echoes Buttimer’s (1980: 168) contention of the “lack of fit” between civic planning and the social character of local areas. In Lefebvrian terms, this can be seen as a socio-spatial dissonance between the ‘lived’ space of inhabitants and users (Lefebvre, 1991) versus the ‘conceived’ space of planners and administrators.

However, although seemingly abstract, the latter is also the place for the practices of social and political power (Lefebvre, 1991). This does have consequences, from both an everyday experiential level – for example those aspects controlled by the Corporation’s strategic policies of urban change outlined in Chapter 2 – as well as at the level of social equity in public services, including health, education, and policing. Indeed, “this is the dominant space in any society” (Lefebvre, 1991: 39). This spans mundane aspects including the threat of a parking ticket when stopping in Smithfield (“*You are always running that risk*” – Phil, taxi driver) to more consequential and relational dimensions including alleged racial discrimination by the City of London Police (Dugan, 2022; White, 2022), and the availability of health services determined by local Clinical Commissioning Groups. Indeed, one participant, a local GP, commented:

“Some of the services that are commissioned are only commissioned by one borough or another... Some services will only cover City patients, some only cover Islington patients, things like... more of the sort of social stuff [...] Things like social support, and if they need help with benefits and claiming and that sort of thing.”

(Jade, local GP, 35+ years old)

Whether you live on one side of a local authority’s administrative boundary therefore matters. This is felt as an aspect of everyday embodied experience particularly through acts of apparent transgression, evident in the experience of Tyler, a local unhoused person. Tyler describes how he has received a Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO) by the City of London Police:

“Basically they gave me a CBO for begging on the street when I’m homeless and sleeping rough. They classed it as anti-social behaviour which again I think is a load of... But it is what it is. I got a five-year ASBO for the whole of the City of London not to enter EC1, EC2, EC3, and EC4, WC1 and E1 post code.”

(Tyler, local unhoused person, 30+)

In our interview Tyler was only comfortable walking with me along Cowcross Street and St John Street, both in the London Borough of Islington, and on the 'Islington side' of Charterhouse Street (figure 5.8). This was despite the area on the other side of the road, for him, also being within his conceptual boundary of Smithfield:

"It still feels the same but it's... I don't know how to explain it. I just feel that I'm going to have to walk on this side of the road but I can't walk on that side of the road because of a postcode and a logo."

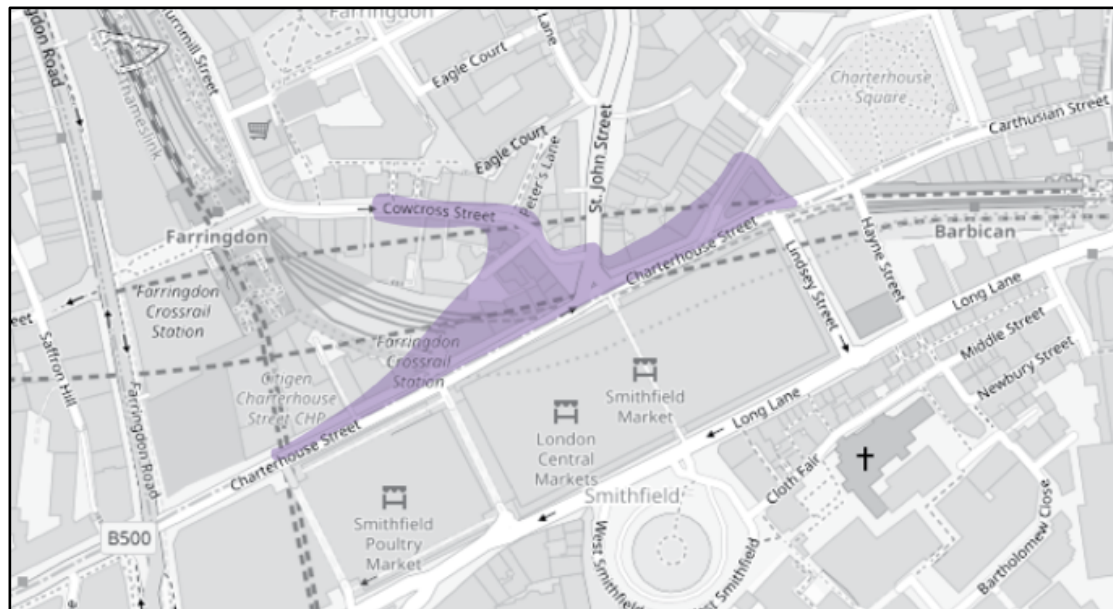
(Tyler, local unhoused person, 30+)

Here, the Corporation 'logo' on a street sign is again significant, and while there are no physical barriers, the "lines between groups and peoples" (Marcuse, 1996: 31) are nonetheless palpable. Also relevant here are anecdotal but unconfirmed accounts of unhoused people being dispersed by BID-managed security patrols in the neighbouring Boroughs of Islington and Camden. This approach is recognised in BIDs elsewhere (Anderson & Arms, 2022), in practices that displace "the visible presence of houseless bodies from their boundaries" (p4). Such displacements can be understood in terms of institutional attempts to conform to the "aesthetic attributes" of what a "'world class' city is" (Campkin, 2013: 166), bringing potentially transgressive social practices into the purview of a place brand's territorial control. While this is an extreme manifestation of such practices, and not to my knowledge evidenced within my fieldsite, it nonetheless highlights the extent to which the drawing of 'conceived' (Lefebvre, 1991) boundaries impacts the 'lived' experience of some and not others. It also confirms the 'political' as a relational aspect of embodied and imagined senses of place, here not just symbolised but sensorially-reinforced by "*a logo*".

I have shown discrete examples of the myriad environmental cues – whether smells, traffic, bollards or street signs – that are drawn on but also drawn together by local social actors to inform *sensible* place boundaries. These cues are not purely material boundary markers, but reflective of simultaneously socio-cultural, political, embodied and imagined experiences of the places within them. I now turn to larger scale environmental cues, specifically

architectural features, aspects that combine with other indicators to produce areas of socio-spatial tension between social actors.

Figure 5.8: Smithfield’s ‘sensible boundaries’ indicated by Tyler. The legal restrictions placed on Tyler are evident in the diagonal line along Charterhouse Street, indicating a palpable socio-spatial boundary with the City of London to the south.



5.1.2 ‘I don’t think we’re in Smithfield now’: Sensory façades and holistic aesthetics

Participants regularly invoked architectural elements to define their conceptual boundaries of Smithfield, both in terms of physical massing but also more symbolic details. In doing so, they revealed diverse socio-cultural aesthetic values within the sensuous geographies of urban change (Degen, 2010; Degen, 2014; Low, 2015). Although Smithfield is partially regulated by three conservation areas (‘Smithfield’ and ‘Charterhouse Square’ in the City of London, and ‘Charterhouse Square -CA9’ in the London Borough of Islington), the area still contains a mix of architectural styles and periods, ranging from the 17th century to new buildings and construction sites. The area’s relatively low-rise and pre-Modern architecture, for example, was often described as “beautiful” in contrast to the “ugly” Cowcross Street, with one participant commenting “I think it’s partly the signage that is so unattractive” (Linda, local resident, 60+ years old). This also highlights a commercial versus residential

distinction that several older residents had of Cowcross St compared to the wider Smithfield area, indicative of cultural value systems that denigrate commercial high streets. In addition, the brutalist concrete architecture of the Barbican Estate, whose towers are clearly visible along Long Lane and elsewhere, is invoked as a definitive ‘boundary’ edge for many, in contrast to Smithfield’s mix of pre-and post 20th century buildings, its “mish-mash of different styles” (Lucas, tour guide & former police officer, 60+). Indeed, this aesthetic distinction was made in addition to comments about the physical boundary of Aldersgate Street (between Smithfield and the Barbican) challenging attempts by Culture Mile and Culture Mile BID to develop a coherent cultural and experiential identity that encompasses both areas (see figure 2.1).

Likewise, the recent ‘Kaleidoscope’ office development by Helical Plc opposite the Central Market on Lindsey Street provided an aesthetic distinction that also complicated participants’ attempts to define a ‘sensible’ boundary for Smithfield (see figure 5.9).

Figure 5.9: Participant image of Kaleidoscope building (left) currently UK headquarters of social media platform TikTok, opposite the East Market building (right).



This recently completed 88,500 sq ft commercial office building is seen as “corporate” and at odds with rest of Smithfield, despite the application of bright ceramic fins to its façade that match the colour scheme of the Central Market. This architectural dissonance acted as a sensory barrier to the streets behind, which one participant noted were now “cut off” from Smithfield. Another related it to market traders, saying *“Yeah, it's too modern. It's too, you know, corporate. You won't see any men with blood on their smocks coming out of that building”* (Keith, former local resident, 50+ years old). Here Keith frames the practices of the market traders and their sensory markers (*“bloody smocks”*) as a determinant of local identity – with the appearance of the new development unable to fit into this frame.

The Barts Square mixed residential and commercial development by Helical Ltd, completed in 2021, represents a more sensorially-attuned attempt to conform to local aesthetic paradigms. Its design scheme retains ancient walking routes (Bartholomew Passage and Middlesex Passage), and several of its buildings are clad in pale brick slips, suggesting a hand-built rather than mechanised construction process (figure 5.10).



Figure 5.10: Participant photo of the brick façade of the Levett Building (left) part of the Barts Square development.

Indeed, Samuel (1994) notes that while bricklaying was historically regarded “as one of the lowlier of the building crafts”, by the 1990s it had become “proof of authenticity” (p119). Yet here this authenticity is mass-fabricated in panels that span a repeated grid of windows and balconies across several storeys; for some local social actors, this fails to produce a coherent atmosphere. Anya, a local resident, finds it compares poorly to Golden Lane Estate where she lives, also invoking its aural qualities, commenting “*yeah, it’s a lot quieter. Probably mostly not in a good way*” (Anya, local resident, 25+). While some including Fr. Marcus Walker were ambivalent (“*I think as modern architecture goes, it’s not the worst I’ve seen*”), other local social actors also found the development disconnected from Smithfield’s broader sense of place:

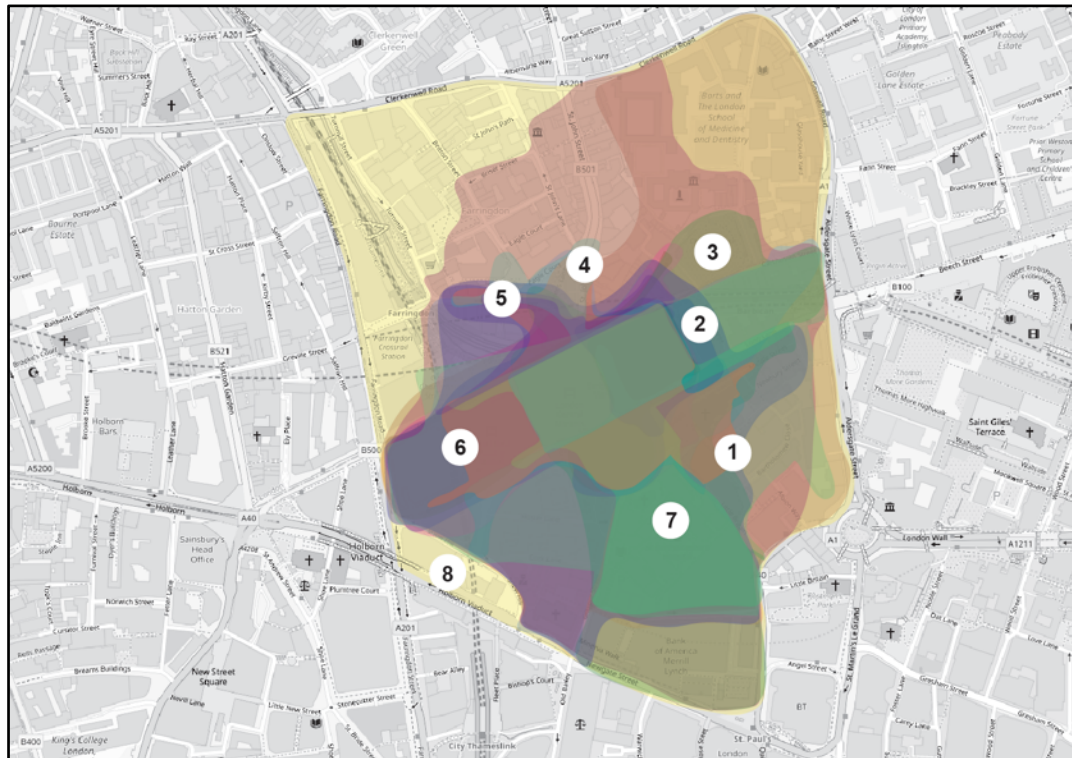
“No, I don’t think we’re in Smithfield now. I don’t think people around here would necessarily see themselves in Smithfield. I think there’s an issue of where they would see themselves.”

(Henry, local resident, 70+ years old)

While this appears to support a conclusion that any change or novelty within a local area is necessarily disruptive of a sense of place, this was not a consistent finding across interviews, with a mix of participants including both ‘Kaleidoscope’ and Barts Square within their *sensible boundaries*. Phil for example described the latter as “*a really sympathetic development*” adding, “*it can be done.*” Conversely, others excluded the longstanding General Market and Poultry Market buildings. These and other areas of socio-spatial tension are visible in figure 5.11, where the different ‘boundaries’ of each participant are indicated in contrasting colours.

This colour-coding reveals where participants agree and disagree about which areas to include in Smithfield’s spatial boundaries. This reflects participants’ attempts to enclose a holistic sense of place, and the challenges of consensus. As I have shown above, these are embodied spatial decisions, but also choices that are mediated by socio-cultural values, aesthetic codes, and political effects.

Figure 5.11: Participants’ individual conceptual boundaries overlain, with each a different colour, indicating areas of socio-spatial tension and diverging senses of place.



Along with the examples of Barts Square (1) and Kaleidoscope (2) discussed above, these also include disagreement over the inclusion or exclusion of Charterhouse Square (3) and St John Street (4), both with a historic ‘atmosphere’ broadly the same as the rest of Smithfield for some. Cowcross Street (5), where retail premises are more prominent than the rest of Smithfield, was also a point of contention: included by some because of its “lively” nature which several thought linked it to Smithfield’s social and gastronomic activity, but excluded by others as cut off from a visual connection to the market. Conversely, the General Market and Poultry Market (6) were left out by some participants, despite the strong association between market activity and Smithfield’s identity by others, and indeed the London Museum’s own identification of these buildings with the area’s character. St Bartholomew’s Hospital (7) was likewise beyond Smithfield’s *sensible boundaries* for some, seen as a self-contained ‘place’ with a separate atmosphere and smell (“clean, antiseptic”), while others intrinsically linked it to Smithfield’s history and everyday rhythms. Almost universally excluded were the construction sites along Snow Hill (8) and the western end of

Charterhouse Street (now the JJ Mack building). These sites were rendered essentially invisible, nullified by the sensory effects of both construction (through noise and vehicle movement) and of development hoardings (as a sensory barrier).

While these instances of socio-spatial tension are interesting in and of themselves, together they underscore how shared environmental cues can be variously interpreted by local social actors, and unevenly drawn on when attempting to define a holistic sense of place. These material and sensory indicators are therefore not experienced as inert: indeed, the values of some – such as bollards and street signs – reinforce affective structures of local political and economic power. This process is of course partly in response to my method's direct prompt to participants to consider the area's boundaries; but rather than generating this connection, I argue the 'boundary walks' revealed it. The result of this is hence not a singular spatially 'bounded' sense of place, but individual subjective senses of place: constellations of cues and values that overlap and diverge among social actors in myriad ways. While I return to the implications for the London Museum at the end of this chapter, it is important here to highlight that the Museum is also an agent within this potential field of connections, one with its own 'constellation' of cues and associated values and meanings. However, as an institution and agent of change, its own conceptual boundaries will have an impact on others. Part of the process of negotiation outlined in Chapter 2 will be in defining and asserting its own hierarchy of meanings and values separate where possible from other overlapping institutional frames, one that will likely have its own areas of socio-spatial tension.

So far in this chapter I have shown how local social actors draw on aspects of Smithfield's sensory and material environment to define their simultaneously socio-cultural, political, and embodied senses of place. While this in part recognises that "place cannot be reduced to mere location within physical space" (Malpas, 2018: 33), several aspects of urban experience are missing from this 'sensible' approach. These comprise a deeper interrogation of socio-cultural relationality as a mediating factor; and the effects of situated memories and representations. These are addressed in this chapter's remaining two sections.

5.2 RELATIONAL BOUNDARIES OF PLACE

In this section I develop further the idea that social actors' experiences of environmental cues are used to define a sense of place, emphasising the importance of relationality in giving them meaning and in revealing embedded power hierarchies and socio-cultural values. In the first instance, I build on the spatial emphasis of section 5.1 to focus on geographic relationality, in terms of how an experientially 'bounded' sense of place is defined in part by comparison to neighbouring areas. I then explore how relational identity affects different bodies and groups unevenly in Smithfield, understood as an expression of Massey's 'power geometry' (1991). I consider this from the perspective of gender and class. I end by considering relational perspectives of different *timescapes* (Adam, 2004, 2008), specifically the queue to enter *Fabric*. These reveal unstable faultlines of belonging and identity in Smithfield, questioning whether diverse relational senses of place can interrelate.

5.2.1 "It just feels different": Comparing senses of place

I turn first to the idea that an area's sense of place is defined partly in relation to the senses of place of neighbouring areas. As Cresswell (2015) suggests, "any consideration of the unique collection of parts that makes up a place has to take into account the relations between that place and what lies beyond it" (p54). Such a geographic relationality was an unexpected outcome of the walking interview, a method that I had intended to focus on the 'collection of parts' within Smithfield, rather than those outside it. However, the act of comparing and contrasting neighbouring areas' identities, especially at points where participants were unsure of their conceptual boundary for Smithfield, supported a rich discussion and specificity. This was amplified by the in-situ nature of the interviews, allowing comparison of material and sensory characteristics:

"I start thinking that whole region is just Holborn [pointing down West Smithfield], I feel like it just has a completely different identity from this world. It just feels different. I don't exactly know how, I think maybe because there's the big highway,

that sort of gives you that impression. Like it's a much more busier, a much more commercial area. Whereas over here, it still feels a bit more historical or artsy."

(Nisha, local business owner, 35+ years old)

"That's another historic area [Clerkenwell], I think of a slightly different... a different sense of place, a different period of its history."

(Linda, local resident, 60+ years old)

Participants here give neighbouring areas characteristics in relation to Smithfield, and vice versa, determined by types of activity, historical periods, and transport infrastructure. This positionality was not only subjective, but also suggests experience of both Smithfield and of the area being drawn into comparison. This double relationality – of person and place – was stated clearly by both Phil and Mia:

"But that's the trouble see. So you'd stand on the Holborn side and say yes Holborn viaduct but you stand on this side and say Smithfield... [hesitation]. I see that as Smithfield."

(Phil, taxi driver, 40+ years old)

"I'm seeing it from a bit more the Clerkenwell side of things. That's where I spend more time. But for me, it feels just very much design and creative agencies. It feels very, like new young digital world."

(Mia, Islington council employee, 30+ years old).

Such relationality towards an area's identity is here 'felt' across multiple aspects of place, whether industry clusters for Mia or embodied spatial connections for Phil. This is representative of the multiplicity of place (Massey, 2005) and its potential conceptual ambiguity. Relevant here is the challenge this poses for place brands, particularly those

focused on intra-urban competition which must amplify ‘marks of distinction’ (Harvey, 2012) with neighbouring areas and reduce internal heterogeneity. Regarding the latter, Culture Mile for example aimed to ensure “creativity is consistently embedded throughout the area” (Culture Mile, 2023), suggesting a flattening out of perceived inconsistencies.

Relational spatial comparisons such as those made by Nisha, Phil, Mia and others serve to accentuate an understanding of Smithfield’s sense of place. But while “every place opens out into other places” (Malpas, 2018: 74), their definition “does not have to be through simple counterposition to the outside” (Massey, 1991: 29). For Massey, such definition is a product of connections and flows rather than contrasts. For local social actors however, it appears to be a combination of counterposition *and* connection, a simultaneous amplification and transgression of a place’s bounded identity. This geographic emphasis is however complicated by socio-cultural relationalities. I turn now to consider these, looking specifically at gender and class.

5.2.2 “Visibly different looking”: relational boundaries of gender and class

An individual’s identity and lived experience affects how they are positioned within global flows and interconnections, a ‘power geometry’ (Massey, 1991) that produces varied spatial relations and experiences. Such positionality is moreover subject to the local effects of dominant power structures (Puwar, 2004; Sharma, 2014), frameworks that condition an individual’s embodied experience in and of place. In Smithfield, such effects are particularly notable in terms of gender. Here, as in the City of London as a whole (Nash, 2020; Knowles, 2023) men predominate, whether as market traders, buyers, construction workers, taxi drivers or as customers in pubs, restaurants, and bars. This predominance is visually amplified by clothing, in the form of white coats for the market traders, hi-vis for the construction workers, and licensed driver badges for taxi drivers. Such workwear can also be stereotyped as signifiers of working-class and masculine identity. Rather than challenging existing gender and class dynamics in Smithfield, the recent increase in male construction workers as a result of its redevelopment can therefore be seen to operate within a pre-existing male ‘working-class’ social context. This is notable in terms of how these groups all use Smithfield’s traditional ‘third places’ (Oldenburg, 1999): its pubs and 24-hour cafes.

These are experienced as inclusive social spaces for these groups but less so for others. Indeed, there were few archetypal female-oriented spaces in Smithfield until the opening of two nail bars on Long Lane, *Details* (opened in 2021) and *Luxe Nails & Beauty* (opened in 2024). The owner of *Details* situates her business in terms of gender:

“This is a very male dominated street, though. Just, you know, all the business owners. I think we're the only female business owners on the street.”

(Nisha, local business owner, 35+ years old)

However, it is the male-dominated make-up of the Market that I focus on here. Asked whether she had ever been into the Market, Amira, a barista in a coffee shop on Long Lane, comments:

“Me personally, I have not. It may be because I’m quite, you know, visibly different looking.”

(Amira, local coffee shop employee, 20+)

In her response, Amira draws attention to her own ‘difference’ from those in the Market, whether a difference of gender or ethnicity or both. Indeed, intersectional identities are subject to intersecting power relations (Collins & Bilge, 2020), amplifying their effects. While Amira does not make it explicit, her ‘visible difference’ implies a reluctance to enter the Market, although equally she may have had no need or interest in doing so. Keith, a gay man in his 50s, was more explicit in his reluctance:

“I found the whole place completely intimidating... there's no way I would have interacted with any of those men as I just would have been scared they'd be rude to me.”

(Keith, former local resident, 50+ years old)

Indeed, on separate occasions I also overheard homophobic remarks from market traders, taxi drivers and other groups at *Ferraris*, which made me similarly wary. Further, a female

participant Christine noted her gender made her invisible, commenting that *“being female... made a huge difference. You were not a buyer, so you were ignored.”* However, rather than a barrier to entry, this invisibility granted her increased access to the male-dominated spaces of the Market and nearby pubs: *“I felt like a bit of a witness. Like I was witnessing this thing. I could be invisible.”* Participants here speak in embodied-affective terms, whether being made *“invisible”* or *“scared”* by male dominance. In contrast, male participants only noticed this gender disparity when prompted:

“I mean, particularly the market is very male dominated almost completely. But had it stood out to me? No, not really. It didn't really stand out.”

(Phil, taxi driver, 40+ years old)

This highlights the relational effects of gendered environments, spaces that inform a sense of transgression or invisibility for some, and indifference or even belonging for others. As Puwar (2004) suggests, this is indicative of the effects of gendered, and also racialised, power dynamics:

Some bodies are deemed as having the right to belong, while others are marked out as trespassers, who are, in accordance with how both spaces and bodies are imagined (politically, historically, and conceptually), circumscribed as being ‘out of place’.

(2004: 8)

While women *are* present in the Market’s labour force, particularly administrative roles and as customers, my ethnographic observation suggests they are a significant minority. Here a sense of Smithfield’s boundaries is again relevant. While not ‘sensible’ in terms of the area’s material and sensory cues, they are nonetheless felt relationally by local social actors, palpable to some and not others, and informing a generalised male-dominated sense of place.

Another conceptually-bounded 'right to belong' in Smithfield is class-based positionality. Indeed, for some, Smithfield's working-class identity is a key aspect of its sense of place, whether associated with its active spatial practices or situated heritage:

"I don't know the socio economic, cultural background of the guys who work here but I won't be surprised if the whole lot [are] mainly white men, white working-class men. I wouldn't be surprised at all."

(Keith, former local resident, 50+ years old)

"...but there's something about the market I suppose that kind of connotes working-class history and culture."

(Ben, City of London Access Group member, 20+)

These examples represent an inferred or 'sensed' perception based on participants' relational positions to social and symbolic 'cues' respectively. As Savage (2015) notes in his introduction to the *Great British Class Survey*, "people in Britain are aware of, interested in and also upset about class" (p6). It is this latter reaction that perhaps reveals why few participants discussed class explicitly; this also applied to informal conversations with market traders, who instead related the Market's class identity to adjacent topics of family connection, long-standing employment ("*I first started working at the market at 8 years old*"), and a sense of loss: "*things have changed*" (fieldnotes, 8/4/22). I discuss these dynamics in terms of Smithfield's rhythmic constitution in the next chapter. In addition, aspects of class are also found in the wider social discourse on the Market's relocation, and invoked in terms of gentrification and its associated displacements. This was articulated by Mia:

"I think it's one of the most polarized spots in London, I think it feels really extreme. It's a really extreme case of something that's happening all around London."

(Mia, Islington council employee, 30+ years old)

Mia describes the local effects of urban change in stark terms. Indeed, markets globally have become “new frontiers for gentrification processes” (González & Dawson, 2018: 57). In Smithfield, the Market’s relocation and wider socio-spatial changes are entangled with the white working-class imaginaries of those observing as much as those affected by the area’s transformation.

However, given the multiplicity of place identity and experience, and the nuance of municipal and capitalist dynamics discussed in Chapter 2, it is important to challenge the homogeneity of apparently unitary groups and consider intersectional aspects of economic precarity, power, and the febrile ‘boundaries’ between apparent classes. In line with this, Savage (2015: 19) notes that views about what denotes class and how to analyse it are contested. His research suggests that long-established British class distinctions are no longer relevant, emphasising instead distributions of economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital as clearer determinants of social stratification. These inform a redistribution into seven identifiable groups: elite, established middle class, technical middle class, new affluent workers, traditional working class, emerging service workers, and the precariat. The buyers, traders, railmen, managers, packers and sanitation workers of Smithfield do not uniformly fit into these or conventional class distinctions but are rather a heterogeneous group that spans multiple categorisations. Indeed, a range of stereotypical emblems of middle-class identity are shared by market traders, revealed over informal conversations, including having attended public school, high-end car ownership, and cultural capital – the latter, for example, by dint of being a ‘Smithfield man’ rather than working in a similar role elsewhere.

The exception to this heterogeneity, crucially, is the absence of the ‘elite’ group within the Market ecosystem. As Savage (2015) notes, ‘elites’ are partly the product of the extreme remuneration found in The City (p65), and – in terms of high cultural and social capital – especially concentrated in the Barbican (p311). They also, he argues, “have the power to transform and colonize new urban spaces both physically and socially” (p274). Rather than (just) the displacement of a traditional working-class identity in Smithfield, the area’s transformation as an adjunct of the City of London’s financial services sector can instead be

framed as the strategic expansion of elite space into an extant heterogenous field of multiple class positionalities.

The actualisation of this process, as I have argued in Chapter 2, is in practice more *negotiated* and, as I go on to establish in Chapter 6, also entangled with notions of *alterity*, *community*, and longer-term socio-spatial *rhythms*. This view also risks diminishing cultural identities and imaginaries associated with working class identity as it is traditionally constructed, and the social and economic challenges faced by workers in Smithfield and elsewhere. In terms of boundaries, it also elides the ‘sensible’ and relational boundaries within non-elite groups, particularly the “major preoccupation” of the “boundary between the middle and working class” (Savage, 2015: 30). In Smithfield, this boundary is not articulated specifically in terms of class, but through a diversity of social practices and landscapes of consumption that encourage “us to think that everything is available to everybody” (Miles, 2021: 33). This was implied by a retired local resident, Linda, who suggested *“it’s part of the atmosphere really that there are a lot of people enjoying themselves doing different things that I don’t want to do but... it’s nice.”* The pleasurable social mix here suggests sociologist Louis Wirth’s analogy of urban life as a “mosaic of social worlds” (1938: 15), implying the difference of its composite social parts while also stressing their hard edges. Linda adds:

“I think that’s something that’s quite important about this area that you’ve had such a mixture of sophisticated places like Club Gascon here, which is beautiful, quite expensive. And then ordinary little cafes as well.”

(Linda, local resident, 60+ years old)

This ‘mix’ is found even within the ‘ordinary little cafes’. For Henry (local resident, 70+) these are somewhere he can *“pop in for a breakfast”*, but which are a *“different kind of a place [...] it’s got a different feel to it”*. This compares to the experience of Connor, a local unhoused person, who goes there *“if I’ve got enough money in my pocket and I need a cup of coffee”*. Such are the real economic boundaries (and financial thresholds) that are obscured within atmospheres that privilege affluence. These relational perspectives of

Smithfield's cafes is indicative of its social mix more broadly, and of the varied senses of place that such shared cues produce. For Harvey, this 'mingling' is characteristic of urban spaces:

The city is the site where people of all sorts and classes mingle, however reluctantly and agonistically, to produce a common if perpetually changing and transitory life.

(2012: 67)

This view is useful for two reasons. Firstly, it draws attention to the fact that in Smithfield there is a social mix, but a noticeable lack of mixing (or 'mingling' in Harvey's terms); there is more a co-presence and spatial proximity of diverse groups and practices; secondly, that this is 'perpetually changing' and 'transitory' draws attention to Smithfield's overlapping and competing timescapes, and the temporal boundaries between them, a facet that I address below. However, despite a lack of 'mixing' in Smithfield, Massey suggests its social actors are still 'in relation' to one another:

The very acknowledgement of our constitutive interrelatedness implies a spatiality; and that in turn implies that the nature of that spatiality should be a crucial avenue of enquiry.

(2005: 189)

For me, this crucial avenue of enquiry is therefore an enquiry into the nature of *place*. Further, the 'constitutive interrelatedness' of social actors occurs within places that are variously sensed as being both externally *and* internally bounded, with uneven power geometries creating relational thresholds, whether in terms of gender and class, or sexuality, race or age. Experiences of these are palpable and multiple, but nonetheless accommodated within a broader sense of place. I consider the implications of such differentiation for the conceptual embeddedness of the Museum within Smithfield in this chapter's conclusion. I end this section's focus on relational boundaries by analysing social actors' experiences of localised timescapes, and the resultant senses of dissonance and belonging.

5.2.3 “It's just day and night”: Experiencing temporal boundaries

Experiences at the boundaries of Smithfield's *timescapes* – contextualised “cluster(s) of temporal features” (Adam, 2004: 143) – reveal the role of temporal cues in defining senses of place. These are encountered relationally, again producing divergent responses, whether participation, spectatorship, or negotiation. This is seen in participant experiences of the queue to enter *Fabric* night club. This is one of many distinct timescapes indicated by participants, underscoring Smithfield's multiple temporal identities. These include the area's after-work scene, its late night gastronomic and music clusters, its peaceful weekend inertia, its commuting patterns, and its market activity. This suggests an idea of place that is bounded temporally as well as ‘sensibly’. Such temporal delineation was articulated by Phil when I asked where specifically he would take a customer if asked to drive them to Smithfield:

“If it's night-time you know, it's gonna be on Charterhouse Street where the night venues are, restaurants and then the nightclub. And then during the day I think you would assume the market or this area [West Smithfield] where we're standing”.

(Phil, taxi driver, 40+ years old)

These locations are on opposite sides of the Central Market buildings and are not visible from one another; they are essentially separate locations or indeed timescapes with different spatial expressions. This illustrates the unstable temporal nature of place identity, composed of constantly shifting interactions. These are not experienced by social actors as static but as a “temporary constellation” (Massey, 2005: 141): in one location at one time, and in another location at another time. Research participants in Smithfield also revealed the importance of understanding relationships and meanings given to these constellations, recognising that they are not neutrally experienced. Indeed, Smithfield's 24-hour and weekly rhythms provide an aesthetic experience that for some is deeply tied to its sense of place.

The queue to enter *Fabric* provides a clear example of relational positions on and around the boundaries of a specific timescape. *Fabric* is a multi-roomed dance music venue on Charterhouse Street with a capacity of 1,500. It operates in a non-normative pattern of activity between 11pm-6am on Friday and Saturday nights, and 8pm-4am on Sunday night and into Monday morning. Its queue can extend along Charterhouse Street and down Cowcross Street, both manifesting and extending the spatio-temporal boundaries of the club. The following experiences are representative of this extension and the varied meanings it carries:

“For me... going into Fabric [it is] the queues to go into the place, which for me was the experience more than anything.”

(Paulo, local office worker, 35+)

“And if you walk up here quite late in the evening, not so long ago, we got to about here and there was a huge queue, and we almost joined it, then we realise it's a queue for Fabric, right the way down here, and they have security people all the way along. Sometimes early in the morning, you might come past and find that, you know, you're just setting off somewhere for the day, and other people are still falling out of the nightclub.”

(Linda, local resident, 60+ years old)

For Linda, the activity of the queue is diametrically opposed to her own spatio-temporal practices, while for Paulo it is the essence of the club experience. Yet whether inside or outside the timescape of club activity, the queue is a ‘cue’ that informs wider time-bound impressions of Smithfield’s senses of place, whether at the weekend, *“late in the evening”*, or *“early in the morning”*. As a manifestation of the wider timescape of club activity, it also abuts those of other timescapes, including the Market and Smithfield’s culinary sector, part of the “intrinsically manifold” nature of social time (Glennie & Thrift, 1996: 278). Dave, a local restaurant owner, notes that when his restaurant first opened, people from the *Fabric* queue would use his restaurant’s toilet:

“And we used to tolerate that in the beginning, but then they would, you know, do other unpleasant things down there. So that wasn't very welcome.”

(Dave, local restaurant owner, 40+ years old)

This represents a clash of different social and commercial timescapes and needs. But rather than oppositional, these are related components of Smithfield's senses of place, points in the constellation that are both spatial and temporal.

In this section I have shown that Smithfield's conceptual boundaries extend beyond the purely 'sensible' to encompass both subtle and powerful socio-cultural boundaries, for example class and gender and timescapes of spatio-temporal practice. Crucially, relational experiences of these condition place identity, a facet I explore in greater detail in the next chapter. However, a third – and simultaneous – aspect of place identity further mediates local experiences and the formation of senses of place, *imagined* dimensions that I now turn to. Though less visible, these are no less palpable.

5.3 BOUNDARIES BETWEEN THE REAL AND IMAGINED

In this final section, I look specifically at the role of imagination in social actors' senses of place. In doing so I draw on Soja's (1996) concept of 'thirdspace' and Ryan's (2004) theory of metalepsis to first frame and then contextualise situated real-and-imagined experiences in Smithfield. Extending from my theoretical framework (see Chapter 3), I argue that a sense of place is intimately connected to embodied experiences of not only the simultaneously “real-and-imagined” (Soja, 1996), but also the *boundary between* these two dimensions, in terms of memory, and the narrative storyworlds of history and fiction. This emphasis joins the sensible and relational aspects of place experience discussed above. For Soja, such 'spatial thinking' is inherently multiple:

No one mode of spatial thinking is inherently privileged or intrinsically “better” than the others as long as each remains open to the re-combinations and simultaneities of the “real-and-imagined”.

(Soja, 1996: 65)

Termed ‘thirdspace’, Soja’s reframing of Lefebvre’s (1991) ‘lived’ space as a simultaneously ‘real-and-imagined’ dimension of experience provides a conceptual opening for radical imaginative possibilities within everyday life. But what is the situated experience of such simultaneity? And how does it affect the process of defining a sense of place for local social actors? Ryan (2004) suggests a process of ‘ontological metalepsis’ occurs, a passage between the real world and the imagined that colours both. Although Ryan’s theory is defined in terms of narratology and applicable to fictional accounts, I suggest it is also relevant to individual memory, bringing remembered worlds into a situated present. This adheres to a settled understanding of the role of memory in individual perception (see Bergson, 1908/2005; Halbwachs, 1992) and its embodiment (see Bachelard, 1994; Pallasmaa, 2005). I begin this section by looking at situated memories, before discussing the spatial imaginations of history and heritage, and fictional representations.

5.3.1 “I’m a ghost”: Situated memories and imagined boundaries

That individuals experience place simultaneously through the sensing body and through memories is well established (Bachelard, 1994; Pallasmaa, 2005; De Nardi, 2021). This has been explored and developed in urban contexts (see Dobson, 2011; Falanga, 2022) with Degen & Rose (2012) also highlighting that embodied sensory encounters are in part mediated by previous visits to the same or similar locations. My participants confirmed this mediating role, with memories triggered and recounted as we walked. These ranged from the pranks played while apprenticed as a butcher in the 1960s (Jim, 80+ years old) to collecting Amazon deliveries from self-service lockers in Tesco during the pandemic (Any, local resident, 25+). These memories conditioned participants’ walking pace and their emotions, as well as informing their conceptual boundaries of Smithfield. As Soja suggests, “life-stories have a geography too; they have milieu, immediate locales, provocative

emplacements that affect thoughts and action” (1989: 14). Such ‘provocations’ were sporadic and uneven: thick for some, and minimal for others, but equally affective.

Those local social actors with ‘thicker’ attachments to Smithfield but who now visit infrequently experience its sense of place as an assemblage of past memories and present changes. Indeed, when interviewing these participants, I was surprised by how difficult it was for them to dissociate the immediate experience of the walk from emotions associated with memories. Indeed, past experiences were seemingly physically re-experienced in situ. For Ryan (2004) this indicates the transgression of a ‘boundary’ between two worlds, “‘the real’ and ‘the imaginary’”, resulting in their interpenetration (p442). Christine vocalises this experience:

“I was surprised at how much I could remember, that being back in the space was key to this for me.”

(Christine, former market visitor, 50+ years old)

Christine and others’ experiences are also an example of what Dobson (2011) terms ‘double exposure’, or “walking simultaneously in a present-past” (p108), akin perhaps to walking along a boundary between the two. In Smithfield, the contrasts *within* this ‘present-past simultaneity’ are exacerbated by processes of urban change, as well as affective imaginaries of the area’s future trajectory, a *planning rhythm* I explore in detail in the next chapter. While the built environment acts as a trigger to site-specific memories and reflections, also evident was the spatial imprecision of some situated memories, with participants’ recollections triggered by proxy sensory cues rather than specific ones. This was the case for Jim and Brian:

“This is world famous ... if you’re a Smithfield man [gestures to a pub frontage]. The name is wrong. So, the Fox and Anchor. That’s because the... Oh no, wait, sorry. Sorry. Sorry. ... [gestures to a different pub]. This is the one, sorry. The Fox and Anchor.”

(Jim, former local employee, 80+ years old)

“Beppes Café ... I wonder if that was where [references earlier anecdote] ... I mean I can't remember which café. I think it was over to the right on Long Lane. I'm pretty sure it was. I'm sure in a few years' time I'll say it was in Beppes.”

(Brian, local tour guide, 50+ years old)

In this way, the material cues of the built environment can be ‘blurry’ as well as precise, suggesting that places can accommodate a range of memories and associated emotions, but these might be detached from discrete locations. This supports more generalised ‘atmospheres’, akin to Böhme’s (2018) notion of ‘spatial character’ produced “in bodily presence in relation to persons and things or in spaces” (p17). This underscores the importance of multiple aspects of place in triggering memories and stories beyond a single material cue.

Starting the walking interview in a location chosen by each participant had the effect of foregrounding memory and past experiences. Participants mentioned how places “*used to be*” or when they “*used to come here*”. Social eating and drinking spaces triggered more narrative accounts of Smithfield and specific anecdotes than elsewhere (i.e. “I came here with...”) combining to form clusters of multiple participants’ everyday memories; these were however discrete rather than collective. These memories are in part nostalgic, an emotional resonance seen by Colin (2021) as a “creative affective force” (p1245) that informs individuals’ relationships with their social and physical environment. However, the romanticism and distancing implied by the term ‘nostalgia’ were limited in Smithfield; instead, participants exhibited both more visceral responses and a clarity about processes of change. This was expressed clearly by Jim, who recounted a visit to the *Cock Tavern*. Originally a pub for market traders on East Poultry Avenue, the venue then became a cocktail bar, *Oriole*, and is now closed as part of the site’s adaptive re-use by the London Museum. Jim recounts seeing his former market employer’s ‘fascia board’, or shop sign, on the pub’s wall:

“The Cock Tavern by the way, I took my wife, oh, 10 years ago and I said, ‘Oh my god, look on the wall.’ She said, ‘What do you mean?’ On the walls they had the fascia boards of the old shops and there was mine, ‘36 Shop’. I said, ‘I’m dead. I’m a ghost.’”

(Jim, former local employee, 80+ years old)

The presence of this material artefact caused Jim to see his own bodily presence as an anachronism. Instead of nostalgia, this is an account of ontological metalepsis (Ryan, 2004) a conduit between past and present that powerfully mediates Jim’s experience of the pub, making him feel like *“a ghost”*, a dis-embodied presence. This experience echoes de Certeau’s notion of places as ‘haunted’ by potential spirits:

There is no place that is not haunted by many different spirits hidden there in the silence, spirits one can “invoke” or not.

(1984: 108)

For Jim, the sign in the pub prompted a memory of his former shop, a ‘hidden spirit’ waiting to be invoked. In recounting this again to me ten years later, outside the pub’s current shuttered incarnation, there is an additional invocation of both memories, a layering of multiple recollections and temporalities. Also implicit here in the present experience is Jim’s relationality to processes of urban development that have further distanced him from the past. But while the spatial context of his memories has been doubly displaced – by market-led and municipal forces – they still remain a part of his wider sense of place. As Samuel suggests, memory is here *“an active shaping force”* (1994: pX). This is joined by equally powerful imaginative forces of history and heritage, and of fictional accounts. Aspects I now analyse in turn.

5.3.2 “It’s almost euphoric”: Sensing history in Smithfield

History and heritage are prominent aspects of Smithfield’s real-and-imagined landscape. In Chapter 7 I focus on how specific situated histories are constructed and encountered by local social actors as part of affective storyscapes. Within this chapter’s emphasis on

experiential ‘boundaries’ however, I evidence two dominant aspects of history as a feature of social actors’ senses of place: firstly, socio-spatial experiences of the area’s generalised history; and secondly, their affective conditioning of individual senses of place.

A generalised “*sense of history*” (Linda, local resident, 60+ years old) is a predominant and widely shared aspect of Smithfield’s identity, referenced by nearly every participant regardless of age or socioeconomic status, albeit in vague terms, for example “*there’s 2,000 years of history here*”, “*It’s...an area with at least 1,000 years of history*”, and “*I think there’s something like 800 years’ history*”. This layering of symbolic meaning onto physical space, or the “imaginative engagement with stony materiality” (Edensor, 2012: 447) is an aspect of Lefebvre’s (1991) ‘lived space’, which “overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects” (p 39). Soja goes further, relating this specifically to the imagination as a starting point, arguing that “the historical imagination is never completely spaceless” (Soja, 1989: 14). Further, rather than Lefebvre’s ‘overlay’, it is for Soja a simultaneity – a constant and non-hierarchical imbrication. This is evident for me in the constant interplay of present, past, and future expressed by research participants.

This generalised sense of history falls into three main time periods and associated sensory experiences: early medieval London, associated with the worn appearance of historic buildings including St Bartholomew the Great and St John’s Gate; the Tudor period, associated with alleyways between Long Lane and Cloth Fair and the Martyrs Memorial on West Smithfield; and the Victorian era, associated with Grand Avenue, the Rookery Hotel, and the visibility and smell of meat at market opening and closing. This is a sense of “Dickensian London” also highlighted in Swenson’s (2021) research on contested sensory memories in Smithfield. Notably Smithfield’s 20th century histories are referred to less, an absence I return to in Chapter 7. Participants evoked these three periods and sensations during our walking interviews:

“And it really was a time when there were just one priory abutting another priory. And then some meadows going down to the Fleet River. That was it. And you can picture it in a way.”

(Linda, local resident, 60+ years old)

"I mean... this whole area, just feels so Victorian, and this market feels like you can imagine some huge Victorian market happening, you can see how that would feel. You can see bodies piling through."

(Mia, Islington council employee, 30+ years old)

"I've done walks like Roman walks, medieval walks, Tudor walks, modern walks, Dickens walks in these areas, it's almost a bit like you've got ghosts coming out of the ground."

(Brian, local tour guide, 50+ years old)

Notable within these quotes is the role of different cues, whether embodied sensory perception of the built environment ("*this market feels like*", "*coming out of the ground*") combined with imagined visions ("*ghosts*", "*bodies piling through*", "*you can picture it*"). Similarly to individual memories described above, these cues appear to summon an imagined past and conflate it with the present. However, different here is that these worlds are *shared* rather than individual, and the product of wider historical narratives.

Here, I draw on Herman's (2009) notion of 'storyworlds', which he defines as mentally-configured worlds developed through storytelling practices. Although theorised in terms of literary fiction, the tenets equally apply to non-fiction sources, whether "*some books that you read*" (Linda, local resident) word of mouth, or indeed through memorials or public interpretation. In line with the simultaneity of the real-and-imagined (Soja, 1996), storyworlds are not experienced sequentially, but as an imagined space or mental model (Herman, 2009: 72). In this framing, Smithfield's histories become a series of storyworlds that are ostensibly shared but unevenly configured by local social actors – determined by combinations, for example, of prior cultural exposure or 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1977), public interpretation, and encounters with environmental 'cues' that prompt the historical imagination. Again, Ryan's (2004) framing of a 'metaleptic' passage between real and imaginary worlds (p442) is relevant here in revealing the experiential mechanics of this process. As such, it suggests how senses of place are in part defined by local histories, with an imagined historical storyworld – for some – mediating the experience of the real place.

Further, these historical periods are brought into the present in a way that is “vivid”, and that is *seen* and *felt*, mediating experience in a way that is emotionally affective. Nisha and Joanne describes this effect:

“So it’s really, really imposing or it’s really, it’s almost like a euphoric feeling when you think of all these things that have happened here.”

(Nisha, local business owner, 35+ years old)

“It’s like really dark there, it’s actually kind of eerie, it’s cool. [...] It’s where this hotel [the Rookery] because it’s so old, it’s kind of eerie.”

(Joanne, local unhoused person, 30+)

This mediation of the historic past on the present was also noticeable when taking a group of undergraduate students from a range of backgrounds around Smithfield. My description of an area where we were standing as the likely site of public executions caused one student to visibly shiver and move away. Perhaps this can be seen as an uncomfortable proximity to the boundary between the real and imagined, a moment of ontological metalepsis (Ryan, 2004) that produces a strong and sudden sense of place.

5.3.3 “You kind of get that feeling”: Dissolving real and fictional boundaries

Lastly, I turn to fictional representation, a third striking aspect of social actors’ real-and-imagined experiences in Smithfield alongside memory and history. During the walking interviews, participants regularly cited fictional stories in tandem with situated histories and memories. Cresswell (2015) highlights how novels and films “often evoke a sense of place – a feeling that we the reader/viewer know what it is like to ‘be there’” (p14); I argue that this also works in reverse: being ‘there’ can also evoke a ‘feeling’ of the novel or film. Various participants’ touchpoints from fiction included the *Shardlake* series of books by C. J. Sansom, *Bartholomew Fair* by Ben Johnson, and Sherlock Holmes’ first meeting with Dr John Watson in St Bartholomew’s Hospital, featured in *A Study in Scarlet* by Sir Arthur Conan

Doyle. But by far the most common were references to the work of Charles Dickens, including *Night Walks*, *Great Expectations* and *Oliver Twist*. Smithfield's narrative entanglement with Dickens' work has been noted by previous Smithfield studies (see Swenson, 2021; Degen & Ward, 2021; Forshaw, 2015). Indeed, three local social actors – Jim, a former meat trade journalist, Lucas, a tour guide and former police officer, and Henry, a local resident – all quoted verbatim from the same passage from *Oliver Twist*, highlighting its value as a shared touchpoint among a cohort of older men:

It was market-morning. The ground was covered, nearly ankle-deep, with filth and mire; a thick steam, perpetually rising from the reeking bodies of the cattle, and mingling with the fog, which seemed to rest upon the chimney-tops, hung heavily above.

(Dickens, 1837-9/2000: 135)

As Swenson claims, this particular quote has (so far) “played its part in invoking and ... defending the area's tradition of sensory exuberance against commercial regeneration.” (2021: para 8.4). Its description has become totemic of a particular vision of Smithfield's market heyday that many are resistant to lose touch with; indeed it is one emphasised by the Corporation and the Museum's own accounts of Smithfield's past. Beyond this however, this description also works to spatialise Dickens' fiction, bringing it to life through mental models in a way that actively mediates everyday experiences of Smithfield and thus senses of place. Mia articulates this clearly:

“I read Charles Dickens's Night Walking about this area. And it's... you can sort of have all these images of people bustling through and him walking around as an insomniac absorbing it all and you kind of get that feeling around here still.”

(Mia, Islington council employee, 30+ years old)

Here participants emphasise different aspects of the presence of stories within everyday experiences, a ‘real-and-imagined’ interplay between what is tangible and what is conceptual (Soja, 1996: 11). For Mia, images from Dickens's series of night-time essays

prompt her to make contemporary comparisons and “*get that feeling*” when in Smithfield. Thus, rather than merely describing or evoking place at a specific moment in time, stories and their descriptions have a legacy in readers’ mental models that continues to mediate their place experience alongside other material and sensory cues. This also suggests the potential value of situated stories of all kinds as *experiential* “marks of distinction” (Harvey, 2012: 103), a facet I discuss in detail in Chapter 7.

Cinematic fiction is also prevalent in Smithfield given its popularity as a filming location, producing a further representational imbrication in which sites are recognised for their appearance within on-screen narratives, in addition to other heritage or functional values. Unlike the literary narratives discussed above, such representations are cited by both older and younger local social actors, and those from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. On-screen locations mentioned included *Lock Stock & Two Smoking Barrels*, *Sherlock*, *Skyfall*, *Poirot*, *Slow Horses*, and *Four Weddings & A Funeral* (see figures 5.12 and 5.13). These locations represent a range of narrative settings that are intended to convey specific atmospheres and time periods, for example medieval, romantic, or dilapidated urban. One local resident suggested that the protagonist of *Slow Horses*, filmed on locations in Aldersgate Street and Long Lane, was portrayed as living in a ‘run-down’ neighbourhood, commenting “*I think the point was that he lives in this bit of a rough-and-ready area.*” (Anya, local resident, 25+). Of particular relevance here is how the boundary between the real and imagined dissolves *in situ*. This is illustrated in an anecdote about St Bartholomew the Great church which featured in *Four Weddings and A Funeral*:

“And the verger was telling me that one time he’d been inside the church and there was an American lady who was laid on the ground in front of the altar. And he thought she had collapsed. And [laughter] he went to her and said to her, ‘Madam, are you alright?’, and she said, ‘Oh, no. I’m perfectly alright.’ She said, ‘I just want to lie in the same place where Duckface refused to marry him and punched him in the face.’”

(Lucas, market tour guide and former police officer, 60+)

In this anecdote we can see the layering of a fictional representation with a real-world setting. The difference between these two is however conflated. For the 'American lady' the altar is also metaleptic, an element from the world of the film that has transgressed the narrative boundary into the real world. Thus, rather than a hierarchical layering of real and fictional, they are experienced simultaneously, mediating and even disrupting how individuals define a sense of place.

Figure 5.12: Smithfield's on-screen representation: 'Smithfield 24hr Cafe' in Apple TV's *Slow Horses* (2022, produced by See-Saw Films). This was filmed in a vacant restaurant unit on Long Lane dressed in the aesthetic of the real *Smithfield Cafe* a few doors up the road.



Figure 5.13: Smithfield's on-screen representation: The entrance to MI6 headquarters in *Skyfall* (2012, dir. Sam Mendes, produced by Eon productions), re-purposing the spiral ramp entrance to Smithfield Market's subterranean car park.



While these examples show the affective power of such real-and-imagined simultaneity, Böhme's (2018) theory of atmospheres also alerts us to their production, and the mechanisms of filming that interact with senses of place in a contrasting but equally revealing way. Amira, a Long Lane coffee shop employee, notes for example the activity at St Bartholomew the Great, commenting, "*the church is so popular. There's filming there nearly every week.*" Likewise a market trader was shocked that his regular breakfast cafe had been 'dressed' for filming *Slow Horses* ("*That's my caff! They turned it into a Chinese restaurant*" fieldnotes, 2/9/22). The popularity of Smithfield as a filming location can be seen as an analogy of wider processes at play: an area with diverse and appealing architectural styles, perceived as vacant and available, that is curated and dressed to produce a specific atmosphere. The similarities with the area's wider development are clear. An early morning encounter with a production team draws further attention to the economic, institutional, and material processes involved in building a narrative representation:

In Rising Sun Court a group of five people are discussing a film shoot. "There's no way we could do a night-time shot." A woman is taking reference photos. One has an American accent; another Danish? "We'd have to get road licences." "The royal coach, that goes there... do the same day as the cloisters." "I'd have to close that road. We'd have to ask what the City would say. I'd have to put in the paperwork now."

(Fieldnotes, 07:07am, 1/7/22)

The mechanics of the filming processes revealed here highlight the artifice of the final product. The narratives portrayed on film and TV are produced through real-world negotiations and tactics, including local municipal hierarchies. Encounters with or disruptions caused by these processes in-situ inevitably inform place experience and the formation of senses of place in their own right. Yet, as I have shown, the final narrative products remain deeply affective despite their artifice.

In this section I have built on the preceding analysis of sensible and relational 'boundaries' to argue for the equal importance of the boundary between the real-and-imagined, and the role of memory, history, and fictional representation therein in mediating senses of place. Understood in part as affective 'metaleptic' experiences, I have shown that these powerfully affect everyday experiences, triggered by both specific environmental cues and 'blurry' atmospheres of de Certeau's 'hidden spirits'. Yet these are far from disembodied, affecting local social actors' emotions and experiences in ways both subtle and vivid, a vital aspect in understanding how senses of place are defined in Smithfield.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have analysed local social actors' senses of place as manifested through an exploration of Smithfield's conceptual boundaries: boundaries that are felt through the senses, that are understood relationally, and that are experienced *in situ* through the imagination. This chapter has also revealed the relevance and interlinked capacities of my theoretical framework, showing how socio-cultural, political, embodied, and imagined aspects of place experience are simultaneous and mutually imbricated. For example,

elements of Smithfield's Victorian past are *imagined* through Dickens, but also *socio-culturally* attuned to a specific cohort, and *embodied* through experiences of market buildings. Likewise, Charterhouse Street is a *political* and *embodied* boundary, but also a *sensory* field of Market activity. This is an understanding of a sense of place that is potentially non-hierarchical and dynamic, and open to multiple voices within the multiplicity of place (Massey, 2005). My point, however, is not only that multiple senses of place are felt and possible, but that processes of urban development deliberately structure some of these to predominate.

This is a structuring guided by the imperatives of globalised capitalism that seek to maximise the value and productivity of urban land. This is felt in the area's material and aesthetic re-coding, suggested by the closure of familiar pubs, by the appearance of construction hoardings, or in the textural qualities of new developments. Analysis of Smithfield's conceptual boundaries therefore grounds an understanding of the uneven effects of these forces on senses of place, with particular elements valued and amplified, and others downplayed or removed. Existing 'boundaries' and socio-spatial tensions are leveraged to accommodate and invite some people in, and to exclude others. Related but distinct *political* forces are also at play, felt in administrative control of what is permitted and what is constrained. This is felt in the everyday but, as I discuss in the next chapter, also occurs and accrues rhythmically over longer time periods. It is also not a clear-cut process of domination and subjugation, but one that is negotiated between institutional agents and social actors, whether the Market, Ward-level politics, residents, or local business owners; and one that is negotiated with the 'sensible' and intangible dimensions of Smithfield itself.

I conclude by suggesting how these arguments inform equitable museum approaches to a new local area, a key concern of this research. Firstly, rather than a single or static sense of place, this analysis demonstrates the importance of a nuanced understanding of local identity, one that embeds multiplicity, relationality, and the politics of place alongside more established atmospheric and spatial connotations. This in turn demands that museums acknowledge their own *institutional* understanding of an area's sense of place, and its structuring effects; and, at the same time, the local perspectives, histories, and experiences that lie beyond this. Secondly, to recognise that a museum itself has relational boundaries;

these are historically exclusionary, for example in the sector's predominately white, middle-class, and educated workforce, and high exhibition costs. As discussed in Chapter 2, these are also bound up with funding programmes, governance structures, and institutional legacies. A rethinking and in some cases the mitigation of a museum's own boundaries – sensible, relational, and imagined – can provide a basis for a more negotiated and open relationship with a local context.

Crucial to this is the paradigm of time, felt in how urban transformation unfolds and reaches from the past into the future, in the multiple placements and displacements of local identity, and in the tactics used by cultural institutions as they approach a new local area. I explore these and other rhythms of culture-led development in the next chapter.

Chapter 6 Rhythms: Producing a Sense of Place

“I think probably Smithfield and that Farringdon area is quite tainted with the commuting because of the train station and all the construction. And I think the issue with Smithfield Market is all of the trucks that are coming in the mornings.”

(Anya, local resident, 20+ years old)

A woman enters La Forchetta and orders a takeaway coffee and a pastry. The man behind the counter recognises her and says, “Monday again, it comes round quick.” She sits down while the coffee is made and says that she won’t be coming in much longer. “We’re moving offices to Fleet Street. I don’t want to go though, I like it here. It’s lively. Fleet Street is boring.”

Fieldnotes, 8:26am, 20/2/23

Smithfield is known for its varied timescapes, particularly its market activity, its nightlife, and its flows of office workers. However, as the above extracts illustrate, different local social actors have varied experiences of these rhythms, with some seeing Smithfield as “*tainted*” by commuting and construction, while others appreciate its “*lively*” 24-hour nature and overlapping rhythms of activity. Rhythms can be understood as constitutive aspects of an area’s sense of place and their study is an established field of urban sociological and geographic enquiry (see Degen, 2010; Edensor, 2010a, 2010b; Lyon, 2016; Nash, 2022; Simpson, 2008, 2012). An understanding of Smithfield’s rhythms – of various scales and categories – and who and what they affect is, I argue, central to any attempt to examine its senses of place, specifically how they are defined by local social actors, and how they are implicated in processes of culture-led development – two of my three key research questions.

In Chapter 5 I established the sensed, relational, and imagined boundaries of Smithfield and their varied experiential and material indicators. In this chapter I change perspective to concentrate on the rhythms and processes of urban change as they unfold over time,

applying an adapted rhythm analytical approach relevant to an analysis of culture-led development, as outlined in Chapter 4. This combines Lefebvre's (2004) bodily emphasis with Massey's (1991, 2005) framing of the longer-term processes and trajectories of place. As patterns, cycles, and processes, I thereby consider rhythms in the long-term continuous present (i.e. ethnographic observation over more than two years), backwards in time (i.e. archival, policy and historical research), and forwards into the speculative future of plans and imaginaries (through 'real-and-imagined' experiences and intuitional artefacts). This, I argue, demonstrates that centrality of time to subjective senses of place. It also allows otherwise invisible manifestations of power and process to come into view within the ebb and flow of culture-led development in Smithfield. These, then, are not only the everyday rhythms of capitalist society, but the effects of increasingly complex strategies of urban regeneration felt in and through changing senses of place.

In this chapter I describe two distinct rhythmic categories, each with their own affective characteristics, temporal orientations, and relational effects. I define the first category, *planning rhythms*, as manifestations of market-led urban planning processes over time. I show how these affect senses of place through uncertainty, displacement, and instrumentalisation. I define the second category, *queer rhythms*, as patterns and periods of activity that subvert heteronormative sociobiological and capitalist rhythms. I argue that these manifest in senses and spaces of community and alterity which disrupt normative conceptions of place. These two categories do not combine to describe a holistic picture of Smithfield's rhythms, indeed other rhythmic categories are present, including its ceremonial rhythms (linked to the politics of the Corporation, royal patronage, and the performativity of City livery companies), and its working rhythms (including commuting flows, and the market's haulage, transactional, and cleaning cycles). However, I choose to focus on these two categories in depth as they relate directly to my research emphasis on a process of culture-led development, the negotiation of municipal and institutional power, and social experiences of urban change. Unlike other rhythmic categories, these are notably intensified, accelerated, and revealed within Smithfield's regeneration.

While they are framed below as discrete categories for the sake of analysis, these two rhythmic categories are nonetheless entangled experientially through the body, senses, and

imagination, a tension I return to in the conclusion. Here I also relate these arguments to the programmes and practices of a museum approaching a new local context, suggesting a set of long-term and slow *temporal practices* to grow institutional engagement and embeddedness over time.

6.1 PLANNING RHYTHMS

I define *planning rhythms* as the manifestations of market-led urban planning processes that occur over time and are sensed, embodied, and imagined by Smithfield's local social and institutional actors. These, I argue, produce three distinct effects: uncertainty, imaginative displacement, and the instrumentalisation of senses of place. Experienced relationally, at different scales, and ebbing and flowing in intensity, these effects nonetheless work together to control temporal frames and affect the production and experience of Smithfield's sense of place. As examples of what Monstadt (2022) calls "claims for the future" (p71), these rhythms can also be understood as expressions of power. In addition to spatialised power, this is a 'temporal power' that as Sharma argues, "is more subtly and quietly asserted" (2014: 10); I argue that these are concurrent and linked. I begin this section by contextualising *planning rhythms*, before describing how their effects manifest in Smithfield.

6.1.1 Planning rhythms and the production of uncertainty

The experience of living and working under prospective but unfinished urban development schemes is one of persistent uncertainty, an uncertainty that is felt both physically and emotionally (Degen, 2018; Lees & Hubbard 2020, 2022). Construction activity in Smithfield for example is seen, heard, and felt through rhythmic drilling and hammering, the regimented movement of construction vehicles, and the mechanical vibrations from machinery. These rhythms are experienced as part of Smithfield's everyday environment as well as moments of intense disruption:

"I remember the desks used to shake when they were doing all the drilling and they did massive like excavation, you'd be sitting there in the desks and your computer screen would just be like vibrating, and the same thing is happening on the other side now with that other constant drilling and construction noise."

(Jade, local GP, 35+ years old)

"They're constantly demolishing buildings and rebuilding. And of course, it's... it's noise, huge amount of disruption."

(Linda, local resident, 60+ years old)

Both Jade and Linda express the *"constant"* nature of these disruptions, a seemingly endless process that is a tangible expression of urban redevelopment: they can *feel* that change is happening as a distinct rhythm amidst the chaos or *"throwntogetherness"* of place (Massey, 2005: 140). This is similar to Degen's *"suspended temporalities"*, experienced by long-term residents of a Barcelona neighbourhood undergoing regeneration, and characterised by *"waiting"* and *"unfulfilled expectations"* (2018: 1085). In Smithfield too there is waiting, felt in the body but also in relation to discrete construction projects. Before the completion of the new Elizabeth Line station in May 2022, for example, Smithfield residents and workers were cynical about the station ever opening, the result of several delays to the official schedule. Retail owners and workers were particularly aware, commenting *"apparently it's March – this time it's for real"* (fieldnotes, 7/3/22), *"Crossrail... if it's ever going to open"* (fieldnotes, 8/3/22), and *"well, yes, certainly [the Elizabeth Line has] been delayed for a long time. And it is something that did cause quite a lot of concern ... to residents."* (Linda, local resident, 60+ years old). Even after the station opened, four years later than originally planned, a sense of doubt remained:

"We were waiting and waiting, we thought it was gonna be busy but, pppft. I serve the same people. Just the same people as before. Maybe it will change."

(Conversation with barista, Long Lane, fieldnotes, 26/7/22)

Not only is Smithfield experiencing change, the nature of that change seems always to be deferred. The planned relocation of the Market is particularly latent in conversations about the area's future as well as being entangled with other development plans. A conversation with the landlord of a pub frequented by market traders illustrates this entanglement:

He called it an area "in progress" but now it is coming back to life. Although TikTok still haven't moved in. "Originally it was meant to be at the start of the year then it was delayed, and delayed again. And now of course the market may be moving out." He thinks that it makes sense for it to be somewhere else in terms of access for vehicles, but he says he doesn't want the market traders to overhear him, because obviously for them it is very sad. "Because they have worked here for generations and generations and they are upset".

(Conversation with pub landlord, fieldnotes 7/4/22)

For each of the Elizabeth Line, Central Markets, and London Museum projects, the initial timelines have been extended well beyond their original length. Indeed, one senior market trader can trace the threat of market relocation back to the 1950s:

"The governments were looking to move Smithfield since before I was born. So there's reports, countless reports in the 50s 60s 70s, most of them in my office, about what they'll do about the Smithfield problem."

(Mark, senior market trader, 60+)

This view is shared by another interviewee, Beth, who works as part of the market traders' association. Even though an agreement on the relocation has been reached between the Corporation and market traders, she still retains some ambivalence: *"If it doesn't happen now, maybe it never will"* (Beth, market administrator, 60+).

The rhythmic constancy yet unpredictability of long-term urban development schemes such as those experienced in Smithfield means that local social actors are unable to anticipate

the ‘crescendo’ or completion of the project according to publicly articulated timelines. This prolonged uncertainty has embodied and material consequences, not least in the increased costs of construction as a result of inflation and supply-chain pressures. A member of the London Museum relocation team suggested that Prime Minister Liz Truss’s ‘mini-budget’ of September 2022 had increased costs by 20 per cent “overnight”. Another implication of this prolongation and its associated uncertainty is the deferral or lack of building maintenance, or even neglect, by the Corporation:

“In Smithfield Market, yes, there's been historical neglect in my view by the City, partly because they have always considered [it] to be a short-term project.”

(Mark, senior market trader, 60+)

Indeed, the alleged lack of attention to a corroding rebar roof support on East Poultry Avenue resulted in its collapse in August 2020, with one interviewee commenting “*they were lucky it happened on a Saturday morning*” (Beth, market administrator, 60+). The future focus of *planning rhythms* can here be seen in terms of a resistance by those in power – in this case the Corporation, the Market’s landlords – to invest in what already exists, arguably a passive form of revanchism (Smith, 1996) disguised within the natural entropy of building degradation. This also reflects the ‘temporal uncertainty’ imposed by municipal actors, one that Harms (2013) suggests is a form of social control. From Mark’s perspective, the market was wrongfully considered “*a short-term*” project. Indeed, it has become a “*problem*” that has persisted over several decades.

Planning rhythms therefore produce uncertainty as an aspect of Smithfield’s senses of place through experiences of disruption, anticipation, and delay. Yet these experiences are determinedly relational, flowing with varying intensities depending on an individual’s employment or institutional affiliation. This is seen, for example, in the pub landlord’s personal excitement at the area’s future transformation, presumably as his pub may benefit from increased trade, but his awareness of market traders being “*sad*” and “*upset*”. For others there is ambivalence, with Amira commenting that “*I don't mind it changing, but that's because I have no connection*” (Amira, local coffee shop employee, 20+). Amira’s

relationship to Smithfield is one of self-expressed detachment and thus the area's changes are, for her, inconsequential.

Further relational disparity is evident between institutional actors and those affected by institutional activity. Indeed, senior or relevant individuals at the London Museum and Central Markets have access to knowledge of the best practice planning frameworks, such as the RIBA Plan of Work, that condition *planning rhythms* and make sense of them. Thus, institutional actors have an awareness of what the phases are and how they are unfolding that is invisible to local social actors, an inequality that produces uncertainty. Anecdotally, there is also yet another more elite (and less visible) institutional level, that of the 'closed door' deals between officials, contractors and funders. In addition, the involvement of the Freemasons was also mentioned by several institutional interviewees (including two elected Corporation officials) raising the prospect of a further layer of power determining *planning rhythms* and their effects.

This difference between experiences of *planning rhythms* can perhaps be understood in terms of "relational temporalities" (Raco et al., 2018: 1178) or the ways in which time is experienced, produced, and contested through social relationships and power dynamics. I suggest, however, that this term doesn't account for the cumulative effects of such temporalities *in place*, and the processes and patterns that manifest over time and which structure experience. Thus, I argue it is important to think in terms of *relational rhythms*, emphasising both subjective experiences of time *and* differentiated perceptions of trajectory and progress – including the examples of anticipation, delay, disruption, and uncertainty expressed above. As Smithfield is reshaped through *planning rhythms*, this uncertainty is experienced by some as an aspect of its sense of place, conditioned by *relational rhythms*, or how they are positioned within the power geometry (Massey, 1991) of urban development over time. I now build on this capacity of *planning rhythms* to relationally condition senses of place in terms of how varied potential futures are curtailed and displaced.

6.1.2 Planning rhythms and imaginative displacement

Planning rhythms manifest a trajectory towards an imagined future, one determined by the needs of globalised capitalism. While this may be experienced in terms of uncertainty, it is nonetheless entwined with an imaginative consensus around what that medium-to-long term future is, maintained over time through local municipal and institutional agents as well as social actors, and particularly relevant in an area undergoing culture-led development. This results in the absence or denial of alternative trajectories and futures among those affected, including the area's future consumers and those displaced by them. I call this effect *imaginative displacement*, a term that I contextualise and evidence below.

As a vision of the future, plans are not just a moment in time but a temporal projection of a desired sense of place with steps and proscribed processes along the way (Degen & Ward, 2021), a rhythm that extends forwards from the present. As Myers and Kitsuse suggest, plans are a projection of an alternative or preferred future:

Plans can be constructed to avoid undesirable futures, to make desired forecasts come true, or to create new, more desirable futures.

(2000: 223)

More than a mere design scheme, developer and local authority plans have an affective power that can make what is aimed for “come true”, persuading local and global audiences to invest (emotionally and financially) in a temporal end point and the achievement of a particular set of priorities. This is seen in the Corporation's promotion of Culture Mile at MIPIM (an international real-estate investment conference held in Cannes) in 2019 and planned for 2020 before pandemic-related disruption, and the presence of a team from Culture Mile BID at the 2024 edition (ING Media, 2024). This is an aspect of the ‘global catwalk’ (Degen, 2003): urban environments competing not just on what they *are* but on what they *will become*. Despite its changing parameters, the international audience for Smithfield's prospective cultural transformation still remains. As Anderson (2010) asserts, these appealing futures are “a set of possible (rather than palpable) ‘as if’ geographies”

(p785) made present through an imaginative consensus and manifested through marketing and branding activity.

Displacement is often linked to gentrification processes, and traditionally understood as the movement of residential communities (Lees et al., 2008) although as discussed in Chapter 2 it has more recently been considered in terms of non-residential displacement (Shaw & Hagemans, 2015) and socio-cultural or emotional forms (Butcher & Dickens, 2016; Curran, 2018; Lees & Hubbard, 2020, 2022). I expand on this to see urban planning as metaphorically displacing alternative imaginaries: once set in motion, top-down market-led planning processes and their rhythmic expression can be said to curtail or displace other possible futures.

For example, the *decision* to build an Elizabeth Line station on Long Lane established a speculative future for Smithfield as well-connected and accessible. This in turn increased property and land values and desirability, underpinning investment in new residential developments (in Barts Square and Aldersgate Street), and in refurbished and new commercial office developments (in Lindsey Street and Charterhouse Street). Before even being achieved, this plan displaced other future place imaginaries, not least any potential to maintain the status quo.

The prospective relocation of the London Museum is also closely enmeshed with Elizabeth Line-oriented developments as a beneficiary of increased visitor volumes. This is framed in the Museum's relocation project objectives in terms of "maximising the potential of [...] Farringdon Crossrail Interchange" (Malcolm Reading Consultants, 2016). But the Museum itself is a corresponding component of *cultural* infrastructure, one that also amplifies the area's investment credentials. This is made explicit in the Smithfield streetscape, where large-scale graphics (figure 6.1) promoting the recently-completed JJ Mack office development on Charterhouse Street state 'OPPOSITE THE NEW MUSEUM OF LONDON', despite this being at least three years away (fieldnotes, 5/1/23).

Figure 6.1: Image of graphics in the JJ Mack commercial office development on Charterhouse Street and Farringdon Road. (Taken 20/2/23)



Developments are in this way concatenated with other imagined futures. This relationship between prospective infrastructure (both cultural and transport) and attractiveness to investors was underscored by a conversation with an estate agent based on Long Lane. When asked who was buying residential property in Smithfield, city workers or international investors, he replied: *"Bit of both... Barts Square is mainly overseas investors, so it's mostly tenants there. People have known that the Elizabeth Line is coming"* (fieldnotes 26/7/22). Although speculative, plans themselves have contemporary ramifications, including rent increases, business closures, and relocations. The ongoing relocation of traders and market services from the Poultry Market and the forced closure of the Oriole Bar (beneath the market) in December 2022 are examples of this, with the site being prepared for the London Museum's arrival.

Some people are better positioned to navigate the displace effects of *planning rhythms* than others. Property investors, freeholders, landlords (and to some extent businesses

owners) will benefit from the eventual uplift in the area's value and activity, part of networks that profit from the "commodity form" of urban areas (Harvey, 2006: 233). This imposes a pattern on those less powerful, for example residential and commercial tenants and local workers. While there are many examples of commercial tenants forced to close because of rising rents, one interviewee was aware and even resigned to this rhythm, saying *"they don't want to give anyone, like, a 15-year lease"* (Billy, local business owner, 25+ years old), a statement which suggests an awareness by landlords of a likely future uplift in potential rents. Despite this, Billy has leased a former sandwich shop and converted it into a single room gallery:

"And so we can move in, but then effectively, like, we're waiting until we move out again... I don't think any of us, like, feel crap about that. Because we know... we're almost like, so aware of the cycle."

(Billy, local business owner, 25+ years old)

While the fact that the business in question is a contemporary art gallery says much about the socio-cultural changes in Smithfield, in this context it also highlights the owner's acceptance that its presence will be short-term before being forced to move on: a *"cycle"* that is dictated by the effects of *planning rhythms*.

The affective-displacive power of urban planning as urban imaginary is also seen clearly in the use of visualisations, established in Chapter 2. As Degen and Ward (2021) suggest, "for future landscapes to be communicated effectively they need to be *visualised* convincingly" (p113). The authors describe such visualisations as "digital foundations" that promote future urban imaginaries long before a redevelopment takes place (p132). In rhythmic terms they can also be understood as a vital beat in establishing the strength and staying power of the planning rhythm. The use of computer-generated images (CGIs) of the future Smithfield redevelopments by the Corporation, Culture Mile, and the London Museum have been discussed in detail particularly in relation to social media, branding campaigns, and placemaking strategies (Degen & Rose, 2022; Degen & Ward, 2021). In addition to these contexts, it is important to understand how and where these images recur and reappear

over time, their persuasive power leveraged by third parties rather than those who designed or commissioned them.

This is seen in Smithfield as part of formal and informal marketing material around the sale of residential and commercial units. The estate agent on Long Lane confirmed this practice, describing how he shows CGIs depicting the future pedestrianisation of Smithfield to investors who are thinking of buying in the area (figure 6.2). He demonstrated this to me, finding a folder of the images on his computer and scrolling through them (fieldnotes, 27/7/22). As the images have now entered the digital public domain, their affective power can be harnessed for individual or commercial financial gain. The particular qualities of the sense of place conjured in the visuals (clean, animated, landscaped, and well-lit) also then become self-reinforcing, with investor expectations of a (certain type) of future aesthetic, uses, and consumer socio-cultural demographics determining who they market their properties to, and how (Degen et al., 2017).

Figure 6.2: Two CGIs of the Hawkins\Brown scheme for Smithfield Public Realm. View looking west on Long Lane, with the Central Markets on the right and Smithfield Rotunda Gardens on the left. Image © Hawkins\Brown, 2020





Further evidence of the power of CGIs to reach towards an imagined future can be seen in Grand Avenue, a public route between the East and West Market buildings. Here visualisations of the failed 2004 redevelopment of the General Market and environs, designed by Kohn Pedersen Fox (KPF) and commissioned by Thornfield Properties, are still on prominent display (figure 6.3). Several images of the scheme, which would have resulted in the demolition of the General Market building, are integrated into interpretation about the wider market and its history, a narrative tactic I discuss in the next chapter. Noting the technical challenges of building commercial office space over an active railway, the interpretation panels also celebrate the co-existence of the (then) future scheme with the active market, something that will no longer be the case in the current masterplan. Significantly the CGIs are accompanied by images of several market traders, and the words:

Yesterday, we were here
 Today, this is where we are
 Tomorrow, this is where we will be

(Public interpretation panel, Grand Avenue, fieldnotes, 24/2/22)

The presence of these images of an alternative future are notable both for the confusion they cause from passers-by (*"is this what's happening to the market?"*, fieldnotes, 29/6/22), and for the alternative sense of place they represent. This is a Smithfield of glass-and-steel corporate architecture side-by-side with an ongoing market presence, and roads empty of pedestrians. The contrast to the Hawkins\Brown CGIs – busy with young people, cyclists, and punctuated by trees – is striking. Artefacts such as these show the different senses of place that are processed by developers and planners in order to appeal to different audiences. As such they are not just a vision of the future but are implicated in a specific reading of the present.

Figure 6.3: Interpretation panel on Grand Avenue showing CGIs of the proposed 2004 General Market development alongside photos of market traders. (Taken 28/4/22)



The notion of imaginative displacement is particularly pertinent (although not exclusive) to processes of culture-led development, and relevant to my first research question, 'how is a sense of place implicated in processes of culture-led development?'. This is because the

invocation of culture within urban regeneration schemes, for many, connotes public benefit and a desirable imagined future.² Nonetheless, that imagined future and its reification through *planning rhythms* appears to deny the potential for alternatives, and even scrutiny. Today, the Corporation articulates a future for Smithfield that is dominated by culture. Until that is realised, it produces uncertainty, as argued above. As an expression of power over time, it also forces out alternative future place imaginaries. I examine how this is purposively linked to aesthetic values of a sense of place in the following section.

6.1.3 Planning rhythms and the instrumentalisation of a sense of place

Each of the characteristics of *planning rhythms* examined in this section affects or even seeks to impose particular temporal frames. This is evident when *planning rhythms* concern heritage and history, and how a sense of place both informs and is materially included in speculative plans. As discussed above, it is a particular and partial sense of place that is often projected into the future to achieve a specific socio-economic vision and consumer landscape. As such this can be understood as the instrumentalisation of a sense of place.

To illustrate this, I turn again to plans for the redevelopment of Smithfield's public realm, and specifically the scheme's proposed re-use of stone setts originally laid in the 1860s. The aims of the Corporation's redesign of Smithfield's public realm are to "celebrate the history of the area; increase planting, greening and sustainable measures; design a 'Healthy Streets' approach to transport and movement, which prioritises people over vehicles; provide facilities for cultural activity to take place; and to support local communities and businesses" (City of London, 2020). The Hawkins\Brown designs show a range of interventions that support these aims, including a new public garden, performance areas, and informal seating (Hawkins\Brown, 2019).

² One only has to look at the Centre for Music originally planned for the former Museum of London site at London Wall. It was only when this scheme was cancelled and replaced by plans for a commercial development that a local activist group (Barbican Quarter Action) was formed to object to the site's demolition.

Within this, the Corporation also proposes the salvage and re-use of “historical setts” that were identified during site research, expressed as part of the project’s “circular economy and environmental objectives” (Tavin, 2019: 3). This can be seen on the one hand as sustainable local material re-use and on the other as the ersatz historicization or “staged authenticity” (Miles, 2021: 45) of Smithfield (although these are not mutually exclusive). The use of setts in urban regeneration schemes is not new, with Samuel (1994) highlighting their use in the ‘prettification’ of Portobello Road market in the 1980s, “returning previously run-down streets to what Kensington Council [...] fondly refers to as ‘Victorian grandeur’” (p73). The setts can also be seen to participate in multiple aspects and tempos of *planning rhythms*, not least in their involvement in proscribed planning processes and the formal rhythm of Corporation committee meetings, approvals, and ultimately actualisation.

As part of its approach to the public realm redevelopment, the Corporation commissioned a report into the “intrinsic significance of elements of the public realm” (Alan Baxter Associates, 2022: 5), comparable to the Heritage Statement required as part of development proposals subject to planning permission or listed building consent. Its purpose was to identify and evaluate the material fabric of Smithfield’s public realm in terms of its heritage significance, in particular its street surfaces. Usually applied to buildings alone, the *Smithfield Public Realm Statement of Significance* is considered a first in public realm design practice (Tavin, 2019). The report’s stated aim is to enable “owners and designers to develop proposals that safeguard, respect and where possible enhance the character and cultural values of the site” (Alan Baxter Associates, 2022: 39). What is not articulated is who decides what the “character and cultural values” of the site are, and how these are evaluated. Indeed, the concern is not around preserving what is already present in terms of a holistic ‘character’ or extant sense of place, for example the existing tarmac and market road markings, but in a particular understanding of what this character should be. This was expressed succinctly by one of the report’s authors:

“There’s a whole public realm exercise going on which is about a new design, but the question is how can you do that that kind of respects the heritage?”

(Bruce, local architect and report author, 40+)

The tension is here framed as between the interventions on the one hand and the existing heritage assets on the other, and not with less tangible or contemporary aspects of Smithfield's identity and experience. The report details the discovery of sections of original granite setts, particularly on Charterhouse Street through a process of ground penetrating radar. These were then excavated (see figure 6.4) and put into storage.

Figure 6.4: Granite setts uncovered on Charterhouse Street prior to their extraction.

(Photo taken 11/3/22)



As excavated objects, the setts can be understood in a museological sense as materials or artefacts worthy of retrieval and preservation. Quarried from 300-million-year-old igneous rock, granite setts also exist on a different temporal scale that encompasses geological rhythms and deep time. As matter, the seemingly obdurate materiality of stone still vibrates, yet “eschews direct capture within visually or aurally bound systems of detection” (Henriques, 2014: 18). This property is highlighted by Edensor in his exploration of stone building façades in Manchester, noting that these “vital properties” are found even “at the sub-atomic level where atoms display no stability but continual emergence, a lack of fidelity

to any relationalities and a volatile behaviour that nevertheless may provide the illusion of momentary steadiness” (Edensor, 2012, 449). This apparent solidity has an aesthetic appeal, not just as a hand-hewn object, but as a representation of a specific historical period. Indeed, as Harvey (2012) notes, business magnate Carlos Slim had the downtown streets of Mexico City “re-cobbled to suit the tourist gaze” (p23). Smithfield’s setts should then be understood not (just) as a sustainable material choice and instance of adaptive re-use but as a deliberate aesthetic one. One local social actor highlighted the tension between material aesthetics over practicality:

“Well, I think the trend is they did it in Covent Garden, they did it in other streets in the City of London. I think the idea is, is to go back to when the streets were cobbled and give it a bit more character again, which is great if you're going to limit this sort of traffic that uses it. But as soon as you get quite heavy lorries driving over it, the reason we change to tarmac in the first place is because that, you know, they can't take the weight and they start becoming uneven. And [in] literally a relatively short space of time it goes from being attractive and characteristic to being very unattractive and dirty looking. Look at it.”

(Phil, taxi driver, 40+ years old)

Phil associates the setts with being “*attractive*” and “*characteristic*” while also criticising their practicality for heavier vehicles, indicating the broken stone blocks found in the road surface at the western end of Cowcross Street. While the practicality of the re-laid setts may not be a concern in a pedestrianised scheme, their ability to communicate “*character*” is intrinsic to it. This is then both a material ‘cue’ to the relational formation of senses of place, and also an indicator of the future absence of HGVs from Smithfield’s streets.

The setts should also be considered as part of a pre-existing infrastructure within Smithfield, one that is arguably being repurposed and incorporated. Monstadt (2022) draws attention to the hybrid nature of infrastructural development, arguing that “at no time has only the latest technology been used; rather, infrastructures of a time always represent a panorama of old and new, which do not necessarily merge but coexist” (p 71). This is echoed by Edensor:

Thus, a stone in a building is forever in formation, shedding its previous incarnations as it becomes repositioned and resituated within a host of changing co-constituents and agencies.

(Edensor, 2012: 449)

Yet the proposed scheme for Long Lane can be seen not as coexistence, but a deliberate return to the infrastructure of the past – to its *actual* materiality – in order to create a specific historic aesthetic. Within the unfolding rhythm of culture-led development this can be understood as the processing of a specific sense of place in order to create a desired and affective aesthetic ‘designscape’ (Julier, 2005). Indeed, despite their long presence in (or under) Smithfield’s streets, the processing of Smithfield’s setts obscures a particular type of urban change that privileges certain temporalities (Victorian London), desired consumers, and associated aesthetics, and (re)creates the distinctive feel of an apparently uncomplicated imagined past. By transplanting a historic infrastructure into the present, an unnatural rhythm is being created that artificially links the present to the past, one whose material obduracy is also intended to displace other futures and reinforce a static identity, a “claim to authenticity based on notions of unchanging identity” of the kind Massey warns (2005: 10). This can be seen as a historicization of Smithfield, fetishising the past and reconditioning the present. In this way, a particular socio-cultural sense of place – that of the (global) elite or established middle class (Savage, 2015) described in Chapter 5 – is instrumentalised to subtly but enduringly further institutional aims for a historically, socially, and culturally homogenous district.

I have shown in this section how *planning rhythms* relate to the long-term real and imagined material (re)structuring of Smithfield and associated effects of uncertainty, imaginative displacement, and the instrumentalisation of a sense of place. These are largely top-down and market-led processes, albeit negotiated relationally by local social and institutional actors. In the following section I discuss a second rhythmic category, *queer rhythms*. These operate alongside and interact with *planning rhythms*, but at the same time further challenge the empowered-disempowered binary and reveal otherwise invisible practices and processes of community and alterity and their implication in conditioning a sense of place.

6.2 QUEER RHYTHMS

In this section I propose a definition of *queer rhythms*, before illustrating their presence in the wider Smithfield area, both historically and today. In using the term 'queer' I combine LGBTQ+ associated socio-spatial patterns and practices with others that are more broadly non-normative. I argue that *queer rhythms* manifest in ephemeral, embodied, and imagined experiences and processes that contribute to senses of place through the emplaced production of community and alterity. I begin by situating the term *queer rhythms* within queer theory.

The intersection of queer lives and temporality has been an ongoing thread in queer studies over the last twenty years, exploring how LGBTQ+ lives challenge normative conceptions of time, space, and embodiment (see Edelman, 2004; Freeman, 2010; Giesecking, 2020; Halberstam, 2005; Munoz, 2019). Halberstam (2005) defines queer time and space against the "foundational exclusion" of "sexuality as a category for analysis" (p5) by postmodern geographers including Edward Soja and David Harvey. For Halberstam, a queer analysis of space and time reveals the non-normative temporal experiences and unconventional (social) spatial production by queer individuals, as well as their exclusion. A queering of time and space, Halberstam suggests, offers the "potential to open up new life narratives and alternative relations" (2005: 2). Like Massey's (1991) power-geometry and Sharma's (2014) related notion of power-chronography, Halberstam's queer time and place provides a means of revealing the uneven and relational effects of power on different bodies. Building on this, I propose that *queer rhythms* are patterns of repetition and variation that structure social and spatial life (Lefebvre, 2004) but which also subvert heteronormative sociobiological and capitalist rhythms. This modifies the queering of time by adding a rhythmical emphasis on process, repetition, and patterns that become visible *over time*.

Halberstam's perspective on queerness as a non-exclusive term beyond LGBTQ+ identities also informs my definition of *queer rhythms*. According to Halberstam (2005), queerness can result from "strange temporalities, imaginative life schedules, and eccentric economic practices" (p1). Understood as "a mode of life" rather than a "sexual act" (Foucault, 1996: 309), the queer label can productively extend beyond LGBTQ+ lives and histories to examine

non-normative spatial and temporal practices. However, it is essential not to erase LGBTQ+ lives within a wider definition of queerness, and I have consequently rooted *queer rhythms* in LGBTQ+ experiences, stories, and histories in Smithfield. It is also important to acknowledge my own positionality as a white cisgender gay man when drawing on queer theory. While critical of the "claims made on the universal" by white cisgender straight male theorists (Halberstam, 2005: 4), I am also aware of the dominance of the white cisgender gay male perspective within queer representation, leading to the exclusion of queer women, queer people of colour, and transgender lives. As such, in making claims for *queer rhythms*, I acknowledge the potential for sub-cultural exclusion and unequal power relations even within non-normative subjects.

Having proposed a definition for *queer rhythms*, I now illustrate their expression in Smithfield, as embodied experience and processes that both create a spatio-temporal sense of community, and are experienced as a state of alterity and powerlessness, each with implications for senses of place.

6.2.1 Queer rhythms and senses of community

Smithfield has a long history as a site of queer spaces and practices. This includes 18th century male brothels, known as 'molly houses' (Ackroyd, 2018: 123) including the Royal Oak on Giltspur Street, and the raucous non-normative behaviour of Bartholomew Fair, finally suppressed after seven centuries in 1855 (Forshaw, 2015: 66). Smithfield's location outside the City walls and thus beyond its laws and prohibitions accounts to some extent for this historic spatial and socio-cultural marginality. Since then, *queer rhythms* have continued to manifest sporadically but repeatedly in Smithfield, resulting in senses of community that sit outside spatio-temporal norms (Bastian, 2013). These are found in the former London Lesbian and Gay Centre (LLGC), in Trade club night, in *Fabric*, and in the experiences of Market traders and taxi drivers. In this section on senses of community, I focus on the LLGC and *Fabric* as illustrations of rhythmic spatial practice, re-use, and identity formation.

The LLGC opened in 1984 in a former poultry-packing warehouse on Cowcross Street, paid for and re-fitted by the Greater London Council. It was one of the first such centres in England. Campaigners for the centre set out their aims in 1982:

A central community-based centre run by lesbians and gay men, providing a relaxed alternative to the commercial “scene”, which often excludes women, older and younger people, and those without much money.

(GLC Gay Working Party, 1982)

Like the community it aimed to support, the centre’s location can also be understood as marginalised, and is entangled with the logics of urban development. Located on Cowcross Street, the site was central but inexpensive to purchase, or in the words of a local LGBTQ+ tour guide *“it was chosen because it was cheap”* (fieldnotes, October 2022); further, as Campkin (2023) writes *“cheap conversions of ex-industrial space were more feasible in the 1980s”* (p32). Its previous function as a poultry packing centre links it materially to Smithfield Market. It was also sited outside other queer local communities of the time:

“You had to make a special trip. There were no bars, no restaurants. It was a very, very, very odd location. Now that I think more about it... it was a very odd location for a gay centre to be. It should have been in Soho, or Islington, or even Brixton.”

(Keith, former local resident, 50+ years old)

Smithfield was still known as a working district when the centre was established, however market activity had passed its high-water mark affecting the viability of ancillary trades that had co-located there (Forshaw, 2015). At the time the LLGC was *“the biggest single project any public body had financed for the lesbian and gay community”* (Hastings, 2016). The centre provided space for other LGBTQ+ organisations, including Gays the Word bookshop, the Older Lesbian Network, and the People's Multiracial Group (Islington’s Pride, 2021), part of a *“powerful co-location of services”* (Campkin, 2023: 45). For many it provided a welcome alternative to gay and lesbian bars and an entry point to London’s queer community.

Financial mismanagement and political infighting however were also a feature (Hastings, 2016). Nonetheless, the LLGC did provide a space of identification and activity for diverse queer groups:

Formed at a time when the community was battling AIDS and extreme homophobia, the centre became an important site of identification and social life. It was a space of activism, education, publication, archiving, debate, performance, artistic production, dancing, mourning, exercise, sex and much more.

(Campkin, 2022: 150)

For some LLGC visitors it provided a space to actualise what may have been suppressed, part of the rhythm of coming out. A gay Irish man in his 50s, in an informal conversation, told me of his first visit to the LLGC having moved to London from Cork in his 20s. *"I didn't know how to behave. I remember hiding behind a piano while everyone else was singing. I clutched onto my beer and the piano for what felt like hours, but eventually I relaxed enough to join in"* (fieldnotes, 16/12/22). Others appreciated the novelty of its inclusivity:

"It's a place I really think... it's a great place to have. Because it wasn't a gay bar. And it was, you know, open to everybody."

(Keith, former local resident, 50+ years old)

"I made a few friends there I still know today. It wasn't exactly the centre of my gay world but it was different and it played a part."

(Fieldnotes, 50+ lesbian former LLGC visitor)

However, while it was appreciated by many, its atmosphere felt cold to others: *"it was just a soulless space... You were walking into an office space"* (Keith). Indeed, the centre has since been criticised for its lack of racial and sub-cultural diversity. This emphasises the relationality even of supposedly inclusive community spaces, which may have played a

formative role in some people's lives but about which others were ambivalent, or even deliberately excluded from.

In terms of processes, the sequence of the LLGC's manifestation is rhythmically significant: the process of a campaigning group actualising its aims; the translation of financial capital (in this instance government funding) into space; this in turn providing free space-time (outside conventional demands of rent) for third-party activist groups to meet and networks to form; and their subsequent evolution into other campaigns and spaces. In essence, the conversion of capital into a locus for ongoing community production, an equation that has parallels with the £432m investment in the London Museum and its potential long-term local social effects. The LLGC can also be seen to embody the rhythms of community and culture formation through repetition over time, or as Campkin (2023) describes, "opportunities for ... affirmative everyday contact and conversation within and across different social groups" (p38). This corresponds to Judith Butler's (1993) suggestion that social forms are created through acts of repetition: perhaps the recurrence enabled by spaces such as the LLGC allows new social forms to materialise, a multiplicity that is part of the capacity of 'place'. Indeed, as Cresswell summarises, "the work of Seamon, Pred, Thrift, Certeau, and others shows us how place is constituted through reiterative social practice, how place is made and remade on a daily basis" (2015: 70). Further, what identifies this 'reiterative social practice' as a *queer rhythm* is not just its focus on non-heteronormative and marginalised communities, but its non-commercial, co-operative operational structure, and – ultimately – its attendant precarity in the face of political and financial forces. This is relevant to Smithfield's cultural regeneration not merely as a historically co-located site, but as an experiment in adaptive re-use providing a shared place for heterogenous groups across diverse space-times.

A few minutes' walk from the LLGC and overlapping in time for two years, *Trade* was the UK's first legal after-hours gay club night. First held in 1990, it ran for 12 years on Sunday mornings at Turnmills nightclub on Clerkenwell Road on the edge of Smithfield, opening at 3am and closing its doors several hours later; it was advertised as "the original all-night bender" (Islington Council, 2019). From its inception it was, like the LLGC, intended as a safe space away from "prejudice and abusive behaviour" (Attitude, 2017), and attracted both

gay men and lesbians. Its main musical genres, house and techno music, were also associated with drug use, particularly ecstasy (Islington Council, 2019). Its popularity also supported a number of gay and lesbian bars in the wider Smithfield area, becoming part of the rhythm of visiting *Trade*, including Jacomos on Cowcross Street, and French Kiss on Carthusian Street (Islington's Pride, 2021). Henry remembers his first time at *Trade*:

"It was late, very very late. It would have been 4 in the morning type stuff ... I used to go out a lot very late and sleep during my lunch times."

(Henry, former *Trade* customer, 50+)

Trade can be understood as an expression of a queer timescape: it occurred late at night/early in the morning, outside even conventional nightclub hours. As an event that recurred over several years, it can also be understood as a rhythm, creating its own 'scene' and queer community of regulars through marketing, door policies, and dress codes. In this sense the rhythm of attendance created a community that was multiply-marginalised: temporally, socio-culturally, and spatially.

Both the LLGC and Turnmills can also be seen as part of gentrification rhythms. However, the conversion of empty or redundant buildings in neglected areas into more desirable sites is not gentrification in itself, but part of a process that is intensified by capitalist logics, ultimately displacing the actors that began the process (Harvey, 2012). Giesecking goes further, emphasising that gentrification and urban change more broadly can lead to both the displacement of LGBTQ+ people and the erasure of their histories and identities from local areas:

Lesbians and queers often lack the political and economic power to leave a physical, public legacy or pass on their knowledge.

(Giesecking, 2020: 43)

Spatially, this mirrors the narrative in Smithfield: the former Turnmills building was demolished in 2011, with ‘Turnmill’ a six-storey office and showroom development constructed on the site in 2015; the LLGC was converted into offices and a bar in 1992 after operational funding was withdrawn by the Conservative government. In 2021, Islington Council installed a plaque outside the building commemorating its former use, illustrating perhaps the recent recognition of the importance of marking LGBTQ+ heritage, a theme which I return to in the next chapter. Market-led *planning rhythms* can nonetheless be seen here to have superseded *queer rhythms*, materially restructuring space, and emphasising the often-ephemeral nature of queer communities. This is not necessarily a binary or symbiotic relationship; indeed, other rhythms are experienced in Smithfield as part of the “genuine multiplicity of trajectories” of place (Massey, 2005: 55). Nonetheless the consequences of their interactions are palpable.

The queering of heteronormative sociobiological rhythms continues today in Smithfield at *Fabric* night club. Although not an exclusively LGBTQ+ venue, *Fabric* nonetheless attracts diverse audiences – across race and gender as well as sexuality – and non-discrimination is advertised and policed inside. *Fabric* is one of several late-night music venues in the area, a ‘scene’ that is for some integral to Smithfield’s sense of place. Indeed, the operating patterns of *Fabric* are outside normative weekly circadian rhythms, taking place both late at night, often over a number of days, and into the working week on Monday mornings. *Fabric* has also historically been known for its customers’ drug use: in 2016 the club was forced to close when Islington Council revoked its licence after two drug-related deaths. This was reinstated after five months on the condition of increased surveillance and security, and the club subsequently re-opened. However, informal conversations suggest ongoing drug use by its patrons:

I start talking to a young woman from Russia. She has been to Fabric a few times before, and she doesn’t come to the area for any reason other than Fabric. She says she is on E. I ask her if she took it before coming out or while she was here. She says she took it before coming out. I ask her how many people she thinks are on drugs here. “Everyone here has taken drugs. Everyone.”

(Fieldnotes, 27/8/22)

The use of recreational drugs including ecstasy and MDMA has been highlighted as a means to encounter queer temporality (Munoz, 2019; Halberstam, 2007), a subversion of and challenge to 'straight time'. In this context, nights at *Fabric* – like those at *Trade* – can be seen as a non-normative space-time in which people can doubly embrace, through drug use, alternate temporalities. This practice is particularly evident when the rhythms of the working city abut those of the club, discussed in Chapter 5 in terms of overlapping temporalities, and also seen for example in a group of people 'doing balloons' (nitrous oxide) outside the club at 3am on a Monday as railmen unload meat carcasses on the opposite side of Charterhouse Street (fieldnotes 3am, 19/2/23). The life schedules, or rhythms, of these two groups of local actors are at odds, although both can be framed as *queer*, or beyond normative rhythms. They come together spatially at moments like these, but each group is nonetheless unaffected by the other, existing across the boundary of co-present but distinct timescapes. This was reinforced in conversations with *Fabric* customers (*"I've never noticed the market before. I wouldn't even think of it being here."* Fieldnotes, 27/8/22), as well other groups including local workers and residents:

"It's nightlife, but it's underground. And it really doesn't impact on any residents at all."

(Linda, local resident, 60+ years old)

"I mean, I come to work and I see like... balloon things on the street, like round here, when they haven't tidied it up. Yeah in the mornings if you come in early, you know, along this road, like by the curbs and stuff, but I guess more outside, like down Fabric way."

(Jade, local GP, 35+ years old)

The "*balloon things*" (steel nitrous oxide canisters) are one of the few material cues of a different rhythmic pattern of use in Smithfield seen by its normative social actors, outside the experiences of the queue discussed in Chapter 5. This relational perspective suggests the invisibility or ephemerality of this community to others. It also reinforces Halberstam's notion of "strange temporalities, imaginative life schedules" (2005:1) as a potential basis for

community creation. *Fabric* as a 'scene' and dance music as a community are engaged and produced exactly through such strange temporalities in Smithfield.

Lastly in this section on the community-building characteristics of *queer rhythms* I turn to Smithfield's taxi drivers. Black cabs are a feature of Smithfield's rhythmical landscape (see figure 6.5). They are visible in motion on its streets, as with much of central London, but are particularly noticeable in Smithfield when static, parked in temporary clusters outside the area's cafes. Their appearance is driven by entangled economic, social, and biological needs, which manifest in *queer rhythms*. Sharma describes taxi drivers as being "out of time", working with and across the rhythms of other people and processes:

The taxi driver straddles multiple temporalities, such as the tempos of the travellers they must transport, the slow traffic, the changing cityscape between night and day, the ticking of the clock, and the running meter.

(2014: 20)

In Smithfield, the taxi drivers can be seen to create their own temporality, one that is rhythmic in its repetition over the working week, although irregular in that it is subject to passenger frequency and their destinations – the needs of others. Through ethnographic observation of *Ferraris* café a pattern of use emerges, with cabbies parking along the kerb (usually two or three at a time), entering the café, ordering ("*two bacon sandwiches, one with tomatoes, and a white tea one sugar*", fieldnotes 20/2/23), using the toilets, collecting their order, and returning to the cab. This is evident early in the morning for those that have worked a night shift, and in the early evening. The extended or arrhythmic opening hours of Smithfield's cafes, enabled by the custom of market traders from 11pm to 7am, combine with the area's spatial affordances – places to park and pause on Long Lane – to produce waves of socio-spatial activity throughout the day. One taxi driver describes Smithfield as a "*thriving economy*" of taxi drivers and cafes (Phil, taxi driver, 40+ years old). This rhythm is acknowledged by Smithfield's social actors, who note the presence of "black cabs", "taxi drivers" or "cabbies" outside its late-night cafes:

"Yeah, and you will go 2:00, 3:00 in the morning and they make these chips and all this sort of stuff. There's always queues of black cabs."

(Sergio, local homeless centre manager, 40+)

This has a socio-spatial impact in terms of temporary or rhythmic communities, for example the tables outside *Ferraris*, which act as an informal and arrhythmic meeting point for cabbies:

"And then it's... it's quite a social place. So I mean, as you imagine, the topic of conversation is largely around what sort of work they'd had. But you talk about everything. Yeah. So it's quite an interesting place to get all the different views of different people."

(Phil, taxi driver, 40+ years old)

As a regular visitor to *Ferraris* during fieldwork, I have noted its function as a social meeting place for cabbies at different times of the day and night, as well as for motorcycle couriers and Dyna Rod van drivers, whose bright pink vans can be seen on weekdays between 8am and 9pm parked on West Smithfield. Conversations are usually brief and laced with friendly insults ("You got it then, you did it?" [referring to The Knowledge] "yeah, about 20 f_____ years ago!", fieldnotes 28/7/22). These clusters and interactions of different working communities relate to Oldenburg's (1999) concept of the 'third place', accessible and informal gathering places that are distinct from the first place (home) and the second place (work), and which foster social connections. However, defined by a self-selecting group, these can also be exclusive and exclusionary spaces. Indeed, few women are part of the temporary communities that cluster at *Ferraris*, and I have also heard homophobic comments exchanged between cabbies.³

³ The latter clearly puts this group in tension with LGBTQ+ identities, despite my framing them as a product of *queer rhythms*. This emphasises the radical potential of reclaiming the word 'queer', for some a homophobic slur in itself, and its positive application here to categorise individuals whose rhythmic patterns share characteristics with LGBTQ+ subjects, while at the same time personally rejecting their homophobia.

Figure 6.5: Taxis temporarily parked outside *Ferraris*, West Smithfield. (Taken 20/2/23)



While third places are generally understood as fixed gathering spaces, the former space-times of *Trade* and the LLGC, today's club nights at *Fabric*, and the communities of *Ferraris* all share a rhythmic pattern of appearance that is spatio-temporally non-normative. This arrangement is conditioned by economic, political, and socio-cultural forces, allowing only certain spaces and times to develop into space-times of community gathering and identification. But, significantly, they are experienced as *recurrent* space-times of self-identification (and exclusion), actively occupied by sub-cultures and communities of interest. These can be understood as tangible expressions of *queer rhythms* that emerge in Smithfield. Further, subjective experiences of these overlap with individual senses of place, produced through a temporal, spatial, and social association with place-based yet ephemeral communities. This conforms again to notions of community-time and reiterative social practice (Butler, 1993; Cresswell, 2015). Cabbies and others therefore appreciate and associate Smithfield with the elements of place that enable them to meet and self-identify. However, unexplored in the preceding analysis is how these communities are structured by unequal power dynamics, a subject I now turn to.

6.2.2 Queer rhythms and senses of alterity

Smithfield's *queer rhythms* are expressed in spatio-temporally differentiated practices whose arrhythmia fosters marginalisation and a sense of temporal alterity. Although marginalisation is often the result of discrimination, I choose the term alterity to imply the potential for a deliberate or active decision to move out of the mainstream. Experiences of the working rhythms of the wholesale meat market and associated activity in Smithfield illustrate this alterity.

The activity of Smithfield's Central Markets is coordinated by the Corporation under its "*Working Manual*" (Beth, market administrator, 60+) and is also affected by the traffic controls of the Greater London Authority (GLA). The Market's trading hours are midnight to 7am, but in practice the majority of traders and vehicles have departed by 6am: "*They're out by 6 o'clock in the morning, trying to miss the Congestion Charge, they want to get out of here as soon as they can*" (Mark, senior market trader, 60+). Indeed, the significant impact of the Congestion Charge on social interaction after working hours was reiterated by other traders. Some smaller vehicles remain to pick up or load purchases made earlier in the morning, and traffic enforcement of loading bays doesn't begin until 10am. From around 8am, the Corporation waste collection teams begin the mechanical and manual collection of the Market's rubbish, followed by street hygiene teams that pressure wash the pavements. This runs like clockwork, according to one interviewee, adding "*custom and practice. Everyone's been doing it so long it just happens*" (Beth, market administrator, 60+). Although composed of different bodies, machines, organisations, and processes, these harmonious or 'eurhythmic' flows of activity (Lefebvre, 2004) interact constructively. They also support and avoid the day-time working practices of the City, deliberately offset from its rhythms.

The legal controls of the Corporation and the GLA thus affect the movement and everyday lives of those that work in the Market, and those that support its activity either through services (i.e. cafes and HGV drivers) or through ancillary roles (i.e. buyers and those working in waste collection). One interviewee stated that for most market workers, being ready to start a shift at midnight means "*getting out of bed at 10:30pm to get to a tube, and then*

getting home at 8 or 9 [am]” (Mark, senior market trader, 60+). Such “strange temporalities” (Halberstam, 2005) are also seen, for example, in the early opening times of the *Fox & Anchor* pub on Charterhouse Street (7am, Monday-Friday), the last remaining of what used to be several pubs with extended licences. A barman described how market traders are still regular customers, particularly on Friday mornings, although “*yesterday [Wednesday] we had two boys come in at seven in the morning for one drink, and stayed until five. One of them had today off but the other was meant to be working*” (Fieldnotes 7/4/22). The non-normative working hours can be seen here to condition socialising. Various informal conversations also suggested that romantic relationships can be difficult to form and sustain given these temporal constraints. This is a challenge for night workers’ relationships across sectors (Shariatmadari, 2023). One former market trader suggested that workers used to be given time off in order to find a girlfriend or wife. While not confirming this, a current market trader Mark joked, “*I think it's probably fantastic, fantastic for people's relationships to be working at Smithfield Market!*”. He also suggested that the working rhythms make “*entry level recruitment very difficult*”. Unlike the examples discussed in section 6.2.1 above, the *queer rhythms* of market activity here appear to be an unwelcome form of temporal marginalisation and at one remove from heteronormative sociobiological rhythms.

Yet despite this, the rhythms of market activity still have community-building effects, a community that is notably classed and gendered. They are also entangled with uneven power dynamics in the face of market-led forces of urban change, and the displacement effects of *planning rhythms* as established in section 6.1.2, resulting in a sense of powerlessness. These aspects were captured in an informal conversation with Rick early one Friday morning at the *Fox & Anchor*. “*I finished at 4 [am]. I've been waiting for the pub to open*”, he said as we started chatting. Rick works as a rail man: his job is to transfer carcasses from HGVs at the market’s perimeter along rails suspended in the ceiling to the various traders’ back-of-house areas. He lives near Dagenham and has been commuting by public transport since the introduction of the ULEZ by Transport for London in April 2019. Several of his male family members have worked at the Market, including his uncle, his cousin, and his father (“*my dad was up for 37 years*”). He is disappointed by the prospect of the Market’s relocation and stated several practical and commercial objections as well as

more emotional ones, commenting *“it’s not just a building. It’s not just the land. It goes deep.”* He also resents the Corporation’s approach to relocating the Market, saying *“they can’t just steamroller us”* (fieldnotes, 2/9/22). This sense of powerlessness is perhaps related to both a deep connection with place established through generations of working rhythms, and the inability to continue this or pass it on, a denial of inheritance. Halberstam includes inheritance as a facet of normative sociobiological rhythms:

The time of inheritance refers to an overview of generational time within which values, wealth, goods and morals are passed through family ties from one generation to the next. It also connects the family to the historical past of the nation, and glances ahead to connect the family to the future of both familial and national stability.

(2005: 5)

For Miles (2021) it is also tied to notions of ‘the good life’, certain measurements of life in a capitalist society that “we are collectively obliged to aspire to” (p17), such as marriage, having children, and leaving a financial legacy. The idea of a more socio-spatial inheritance is challenged in Smithfield however because of plans to relocate the market: the familial connection to an emplaced history cannot be passed on. This amounts to a further queering of heteronormative rhythms, beyond working hours. Mark also associates his time at Smithfield with his father:

“My father first came to Smithfield in 1954. I’d come to help him in his business as a kid ... on a Saturday morning, when I was six or seven. It was a day out, it was a treat and I’d come in and we’d sit in the office and then we go off to watch Millwall play football on a Saturday.”

(Mark, senior market trader, 60+)

Children, mostly boys (although I did see one girl), are occasionally present in Smithfield during school holidays, accompanying what appear to be their fathers or male family members, indicating perhaps a continued desire to continue family ties with the business

and the site. While the Market's planned relocation to Dagenham Dock is now said to be understood pragmatically by most traders (Beth, market administrator, 60+), and given the less visible conduits of power between the Market, the Museum, and the Corporation described in Chapter 2, the "power imbalance" (Mark, senior market trader, 60+) between the market traders and the Corporation during the negotiations about the site's future has nonetheless been felt.

As with *Fabric* and Smithfield's other queer rhythmic manifestations, the experience of the market is relational, with those 'inside' habituated to its working practices, sometimes generationally. This is reinforced by the form and function of the Market and its surrounding streetscape within the timescape of its hours of operations; indeed, it is 'normative' for them. Those beyond its rhythms however describe it in terms of surprise, exclusion, and disruption:

"It feels like Isengard or something, there's this whole busy hive of activity in the middle of the night there, that's not expected... it's not even for you."

(Mia, Islington council employee, 30+ years old)

"You've gotta watch out because they've got the... What do you call it, they've got, you know, all these fork lifters and stuff like that, and vans and so on. So you've gotta, you've gotta be very mindful, you know."

(Evan, Islington outreach officer, 30+)

Seen from the outside, there is for Mia an almost mythical, unknowable quality to the market activity, while Evan's description of his occasional morning cycling commute through Grand Avenue indicates the physical clash of Smithfield's *queer rhythms* and his own conventional working pattern. At one extreme, one group of local social actors – residents – require physical protection from the intrusion of these rhythms:

“And the police came because I think some people called the police about the noise of this lorry. And someone in fact, it's one of our neighbours who owns a house opposite there as well. He was standing there saying “Don't touch my building”. And someone who phoned the police had said, “there's someone in mortal danger”. Oh gosh, because they came... I think armed police.”

(Linda, local resident, 60+ years old)

This anecdote of an HGV entering a residential car park at night illustrates the heightened, potentially violent dissonance between normative and *queer rhythms*, as the residential group invokes police protection from the intrusion. There is little recognition of the non-normative rhythms of the Market as everyday working practices. Indeed, the *queer rhythms* of market activity, just like that of the queue to get into *Fabric*, is seen by outsiders in terms of a spectacle, introducing further uneven power dynamics between the observer and the observed. This is highlighted by Billy:

“I would love to do a show where like, like, curatorially, it was only open in those hours [market hours]. It's just like, not very practical. Or engaging with them in some way. But like, again, like they're at work. Like ... if they were trying to offer me meat while I was at work, I'd be like, you know, go away.”

(Billy, local business owner, 25+ years old)

Billy here identifies a crucial aspect of these queer rhythmical subjects: they are “at work”. Indeed, these are the often-invisible working rhythms that – to varying degrees – support and enable others’ everyday normative life rhythms. Sharma highlights that this arrangement is deliberate:

The cultivation of differential temporal regimes is not an autonomous practice, free from modes of production and institutions of modern power. Rather it is conditioned and disciplined by this power.

(2014: 80)

Thus queer *working* rhythms can be seen as an act of temporal marginalisation, a disciplined alterity. Far from a subversion of capitalist rhythms, they are an extension of them. Yet, there is nonetheless a tension between a forced marginalisation and the sense of solidarity and pride such exclusion creates, and the people it attracts, again complicating the idea of dominant forces versus powerless subjects. This alterity is amplified through place, with Smithfield becoming a rhythmic territory for the production and performance of social identities. Munoz describes this as ‘making worlds’:

We have been cast out of straight time’s rhythm, and we have made worlds in our temporal and spatial configurations.

(2019: 182).

These then are senses of place and spaces of community and alterity which contest normative conceptions of urban identity and experience.

The social actors I have described in this section share many of the characteristics of what Halberstam terms “queer subjects”, termed such due to:

...the ways they live (deliberately, accidentally, or out of necessity) during the hours when others sleep and in the spaces (physical, metaphysical, and economic) that others have abandoned, and in terms of the ways they might work in the domains that other people assign to privacy and family.

(2005: 10)

This has important implications for my research questions. Firstly, it underlines not only the importance of relationality in social perceptions of space and time, it cements the need to think in terms of a plurality of *senses* of place, conditioned by economic and socio-cultural power structures. For queer subjects, these condition (“deliberately, accidentally, or out of necessity”) their “physical, metaphysical, and economic” engagement with place. For me, these are further differentiated by history, memory, and community, and are applicable to other socio-cultural contexts and other subjects. Secondly, understanding aspects of Smithfield’s senses of place as rhythmically *queer* is to make visible the particular

concentration and heightened entangling of spatio-temporal non-normativity experienced in the area. From warehouses and cold stores to the emergence of sub-cultural communities; and from late night cafes and early morning pubs to the associated rhythms of their employees and customers. Acknowledging such entanglement is fundamental to defining any sense of place, but is one that is acute in Smithfield. Thirdly, it draws attention to the interaction of *queer* and *planning rhythms*. *Planning rhythms*, as I have argued, are ultimately expressions of market-led forces felt in and through place over time; *queer rhythms* manifest in alternative time-spaces, whether spatially and temporally segregated underground or outside of mainstream working hours. Nonetheless, the spaces and practices of *queer rhythms* in Smithfield have, or may soon be, overtaken by the capitalist logics of urban development united around a dominant, if not consistent, vision for Smithfield's sense of place. Such is the commodifying logic of neoliberal urbanism that appears to solicit alternative and distinctive communities, trades, and histories but only in as much as they contribute to wider sites of consumption and representational value. By framing Smithfield's transformation in terms of the tension between *planning rhythms* and *queer rhythms* we can see an area that is being processed from a place of alterity and historic marginality to one that, with its sanitised, connected, commercialised future and international cultural credentials, is being drawn into a globalised financial rhythm, with attendant aesthetics and exclusions.

CONCLUSION

My adapted rhythmanalysis of Smithfield has revealed the centrality of time, accrued experience, and rhythm to how senses of place are defined by local social actors. While multiple rhythms are present in Smithfield, I have focused on those that reveal the situated dynamics of municipal and institutional power and the social experience of urban change over time. I defined two rhythmic categories: *planning rhythms* and *queer rhythms*. The former are the effects of top-down, but negotiated, market-led urban development processes. The latter produce senses and spaces of alterity, at odds with but ultimately conditioned by *planning rhythms*. Though dominated, *queer rhythms* reveal the potential for deliberate and affirmative non-normativity, and hence – for some – time-spaces beyond

capitalist consumption. This is a friction that is implicit in Smithfield's culture-led development.

Here, I build on the arguments of Chapter 5, specifically how social actors experience and define senses of place, one of my key research questions. I argue that not only are senses of place the product of social actors' relational mobilisation of 'sensible' and intangible cues, but that these are *relationally rhythmical*, conditioned by differentiated experiences of rhythmic processes in Smithfield over time. These relational positions are the result of socio-cultural hierarchies and the structural inequalities of capitalism. And although lived social space is "radically open" (Soja, 1996: 70), this doesn't prohibit the sharing of rhythmic experiences and identities – for example among market traders, taxi drivers, or former LLGC users: shared *relational rhythms* that are accommodated in the broader set of relations within place.

What does this tell us about how a museum can develop an equitable relationship with a new local area, one whose transformation is in part by driven by its own relocation? Culture-led development is a spatial strategy with temporal effects. As such, institutions at the heart of culture-led development schemes already engage *rhythmically* in their new local context, for example as unwilling or instrumentalised agents of displacement ('imaginative' or otherwise). Yet, as agents of change approaching and operating *within* a changing locality, they also have the capacity to affect positive transformation over time, and through alternative processes and patterns of activity. For example, by creating and sustaining 'reiterative social practice' not least through the provision of space; by participating in and supporting alterity through a temporal diversity of programming; and by propagating ongoing community-based cultural production rather than static or commercially-led consumption. I describe these approaches as *temporal practices*, contributing to my *blueprint* for equitable museum approaches to new local contexts (see Appendix C).

The arguments of this chapter also pertain to my first research question, revealing how a sense of place is doubly implicated in a processes of culture-led development, both informing and transformed by it. I make an explicit connection between Massey's (1991;

2005) framing of 'place as process' and the exploration of what these processes actually are, their economic and municipal power relations, and the correlation between experiences over time and the conditioning of a sense of place. I argue for the importance of socio-cultural and imagined associations herein, linking the material renewal of urban space with the instrumentalising (or indeed '*processing*') of a particular sense of place by institutional agents. In the next chapter I emphasise further both the role of situated real-and-imagined experiences, and their instrumentalisation, disruption, and elision within Smithfield's culture-led development.

Chapter 7 Stories: Recognising a Sense of Place

Imaginary and material geographies are not incommensurate, nor is one simply the product, a disempowered surplus, of the other. They are complexly intertwined and mutually constitutive.

(Jacobs, 1996: 158)

The multisensory experiencing of the past in the present is usually lost in official accounts and academic outputs

(De Nardi, 2021: 2)

Urban environments are replete with imaginaries and representations (Degen & Ward, 2021; Greenberg, 2008; Prakash & Kruse, 2008; Price, 2004), aspects of place which combine with temporal, embodied, and sensory experiences to mediate senses of place (De Nardi, 2021; Hayden, 1996; Pottleiger & Purinton, 1998). For Soja (1996) these are integral to encounters with the material world in ‘thirdspace’, an understanding of places as “simultaneously real and imagined and more” (p11), while de Certeau (1984) and architectural theorists including Tschumi (1997) emphasise the movement of bodies through urban space in giving narrative meaning to spatial experiences. Others characterise places themselves as being composed of narratives (Soja, 1989, 1996; Tuan, 1977) revealed through historic, cultural, and personal associations (Malpas, 2018), and as collections of ‘stories-so-far’ (Massey, 2005) that are open to change and which reach into the future.

Stories and place – as aspects of what human geographer Jane M. Jacobs (1996) describes as ‘imaginary and material geographies’ – are therefore “complexly intertwined and mutually constitutive” (p158): experienced through the imagination and the body, socio-culturally and relationally diverse, they are thus intrinsic to place identity. This relationship is underscored in processes of urban regeneration as municipal and institutional actors engage with, disrupt, and reconstruct an area’s material and symbolic regimes (Degen and Lewis, 2020; Jensen, 2007; Patterson, 2016; Swenson, 2021), creating unstable local storyscapes. This applies to the London Museum as it approaches Smithfield. Indeed, stories

are integral to its future vision, with the 2023-2028 strategic plan envisioning “a shared place in the middle of it all where all our city’s stories cross and collide” (London Museum, 2023a: 5). Stories are here spatialised and mobilised within the Museum’s ambitions for its new site, linking individual stories, official stories, and material sensory encounters. Significantly, Smithfield’s own stories will play a role, with the Museum aiming to “use examples from its history to represent aspects of the wider city” (London Museum, 2021a: 8). In this research I therefore attend to how stories in and of Smithfield inform its senses of place, and their relationship to its culture-led development.

In this chapter, I examine how stories relationally mediate senses of place, alongside the ‘sensible’ and intangible cues established in Chapter 5, and expanded notions of rhythm established in Chapter 6. This chapter therefore continues to address the second of my three research questions, which asks how social actors define a sense of place. It also addresses my first research question, which considers how a sense of place is implicated in processes of culture-led development, by focusing on ‘stories’ to examine the interaction between such processes and the places they transform. I argue that stories in Smithfield are positioned and encountered through complex socio-cultural relations, market-led and municipal power dynamics, and across multiple story modalities. These are both disrupted and co-opted by institutional agents within Smithfield’s broader culture-led development. They are also entangled with individual and collective memory and everyday experiences, suggesting a nuanced approach for a museum’s relationship with a local sense of place, and in contrast to more totalising narratives. As established in Chapter 3, I distinguish between ‘narratives’ as higher order frames, such as the Culture Mile place brand, and ‘stories’ as situated entities, including situated fictions, contextual memories, and local histories and heritage. These are not discrete but inform one another.

My empirical focus here is social actors’ encounters with situated histories and heritage. I am interested in stories not as isolated fictions, textual accounts, or personal anecdotes, but as components of the ‘imagined’ dimension of social actors’ senses of place, aspects that are simultaneously embodied, socio-cultural, and political. In the first section I define situated stories and histories as *emplaced stories*, stories that are accounts of events that took place *in* Smithfield and which are also *told* there through various modalities. I detail

social actors' and institutional agents' engagement with three specific modes: public monuments and memorials; guided walking tours; and public interpretation. I argue that experiences of these *emplaced stories* mediate senses of place at different scales and are negotiated through socio-cultural relations, municipal consent, and what Ashworth and Graham (2005) term the 'needs of the present'.

In the second section I detail the use of participatory action research in the form of a walking tour of LGBTQ+ situated histories, outlined in Chapter 4. This provides a focused empirical counterpoint to the experiences described in the first section by engaging with 'absent' histories. This reflects Samuel's (1994) view of history involving "a series of erasures, emendations and amalgamations" (pX), and the need to listen to "alternative visions of reality, or moments that suggest things could have been otherwise" (Moretti, 2017: 103). I also draw on Fraser (2009) to argue that *emplaced stories* can highlight social injustice and condition *political* senses of place, as well as providing a basis for embodied-emotional participation in a local area's 'ongoing trajectories' (Massey, 2005). Yet as simultaneously subjective and shared, such stories also need to be considered in terms of various *degrees of recognition*. I conclude by relating this and other findings to the programmes and practices of a cultural institution as it approaches a new locality, proposing a framing of *narrative practices* to describe a museum's relationship with and role within a new local area.

7.1 EMPLACED STORIES: REAL-AND-IMAGINED ENCOUNTERS IN SMITHFIELD

"Liverpool Street is that way, Holborn is that way. Like... we're just kind of in the middle. But it's also unique because it's so historical."

(Amira, local coffee shop employee, 20+)

Smithfield is depicted as a richly historical area in official tourism and policy accounts (City of London, 2023c; City of London, 2024b: 277; London Museum, 2016) and is also broadly experienced as such by its local social actors, including Amira. Several other research participants also repeated the myth that Smithfield has the highest density of listed

buildings in London. While this is not the case, the area's assorted architectural heritage preserved as part of Conservation Areas in the City of London (Charterhouse Square, Smithfield) and Islington (Charterhouse Square, Clerkenwell Green) combine with the area's memorials, public interpretation, walking tours, and historic imagery displayed in shops, pubs, and cafes to produce a 'historic' atmosphere, a sense of "*1,000 years of history*" (Paul Martinelli, market trader and elected Member for Farringdon Without ward). Böhme's (2018) distinction of atmospheres as both perceived and produced is useful here, as it highlights the degree to which this aspect of Smithfield's identity is the result of 'staging', or the historic municipal placement of interventions in the public realm. I have previously distinguished between overarching narratives and component situated stories, and it is the latter aspect that I focus on in this chapter. Yet definitions of situated stories as embedded heritage or 'nested' stories (Austin, 2020; Potteiger & Purinton, 1998) do not for me sufficiently reflect the relationship between their content, their spatial context, and their deliberate placing. Likewise, cultural geographer Sarah De Nardi's (2021) use of the term 'emplaced heritage' does not convey the discrete potential of these stories. I suggest the term *emplaced story* to reflect that these are stories (and histories) that are actively and materially placed in the public realm, and which detail events that previously took place in that location. In this way they are doubly emplaced, both materially and representationally. This distinguishes them from the 'storyworlds' of place-based fictions discussed in Chapter 5. As well as engaging the imagination, for social actors these are also embodied sensory encounters, "the multisensory experiencing of the past in the present" as De Nardi (2021: 2) suggests. It is important to understand their haptic and atmospheric value as such within an analysis of senses of place, and within the unstable storyscapes of culture-led development.

These *emplaced stories* are expressed in Smithfield through multiple modalities, and I take three of these in turn, analysing how they manifest in Smithfield and are encountered by local social actors. In doing so, I show that these *emplaced stories* maintain and reproduce dominant cultural heritage narratives in Smithfield, obscuring other potential situated histories, and other potential senses of place. I also argue that these encounters are not a linear sequence from embodied location to imagined narrative, but one which is dynamic and operates at different scales and across multiple interactions.

7.1.1 'Recognised heritage': Encounters with public monuments and memorials

Public monuments and memorials (including plaques, panels and engraved text) express and encode *emplaced stories* in a physical form. It is a story modality most associated with explicit, public, and significant historical events. This was recognised by Ben:

"Just looking around here, there's so much heritage and there's so much recognised heritage as well, which is interesting because there's places of heritage everywhere but often they're not recognised."

(Ben, local employee, 20+)

Understood as 'recognised heritage' – or perhaps 'sanctioned heritage' – monuments and memorials reify the perceived importance of particular hierarchies, events, and individuals, as well as encoding the values of the society within which they are (or were) found to be significant. The quantity of such 'recognised heritage' in Smithfield is palpable (see figure 7.1) and includes monuments commemorating The Great Fire of London and the 1963 opening of the Poultry Market by the Lord Mayor; and memorials to the Marian Protestant Martyrs, the two world wars, and the 1958 Smithfield Market fire. Of the 40 such *emplaced stories* within the widest geographic 'boundary' for Smithfield identified in Chapter 5, links to the industry and architecture of the Central Markets predominate. These monuments and memorials also express national and local power structures, including royal and Corporation patronage, and the changing fortunes of Church denominations. The lives of women are poorly represented: men, excluding those commemorated on war memorials, are represented at a ratio of 7:1 compared to women. As De Nardi (2021) urges, we need to "understand how and why tangible memory-markers are purposefully designed and positioned to trigger, personify and communicate certain memories over others" (p26). In Smithfield, as in many areas, these *emplaced stories* represent an accrued history of such 'positioning' over many hundreds of years. It nonetheless forms an enduring network that expresses dominant social structures and narratives that affect place identity and experience. As Ashworth and Graham argue, "heritage is the medium through which senses of place are created from senses of time" (2005: 11). Meaning is accrued over time in material and symbolic form, conditioning senses of place.



Figure 7.1: Map of monuments and memorials in the wider Smithfield area. Source: London Remembers

While rendered in metal and stone, monuments and memorials are inevitably caught in the malleability of history and the changing significance of events, an inherently relational discourse that Samuel (1994) describes as “a social form of knowledge” (p8). Looking specifically at Smithfield, Swenson (2021) sees this as an example of how some stories are codified and formalised as “cultural memories” through material cues, manifesting supposedly shared narratives of national or local identity. Public monuments and memorials therefore sit in tension: conceived as visible, permanent, and unambiguous, their meaning is more nuanced. In the case of person-centred memorials, for example, the memory and significance of the deceased will likely change over time. Indeed, “their interpretations, and in turn, social effects, will be negotiated within a broader social discourse” (Torres & Garcia-Hernandez, 2016: 208).⁴ Interactions with the memorial to William Wallace in West Smithfield (figure 7.2) provide a further example of this socially-affective capacity:

⁴ This is seen elsewhere in the City of London in debates over monuments to individuals who benefited from or participated in the transatlantic slave trade, with the Corporation deciding to ‘retain and explain’ statues of William Beckford and Sir John Cass rather than remove them (BBC News, 2023).

“So, here we have William Wallace. Scottish patriot... it’s rather nice that they’ve put a little bit of white heather and some Scottish thistles.”

(Lucas, tour guide & former police officer, 60+)

Lucas observes the heather and thistles on the iron railing in front of the stone plaque, placed there by visitors to the memorial; these are both sensory and symbolic cues that amplify the importance of this *emplaced story* to Scottish identity narratives.⁵ Indeed, a brass plaque beneath the memorial describes how it was commissioned in 1956 by “Scots and friends at home and abroad”. The Wallace memorial is also the focus of an annual pilgrimage on 23rd August, the anniversary of Wallace’s execution, highlighting the rhythmic interaction of cultural history and collective memory, with repeated annual acts of bearing witness creating shared experiences.

Reflecting on Halbwachs’s (1992) work on the social construction of memory, Middleton & Brown (2011) suggest that space in this way becomes “territorialized” by collective memory (p48), a process that also extends into digital space via images shared on social media. The Wallace memorial highlights how Smithfield is linked through *emplaced stories* to multiple collective local and national identity narratives as well as embodied social experiences, demonstrating the potential for overlapping socio-spatial relations within a sense of place. These are characteristic of what Massey (2005) describes as the multiplicity of the spatial, as well as the ‘real-and-imagined’ simultaneity of Soja’s thirdspace (1996). Multiple relations and scales can seemingly coexist.

⁵ Another similar example was a bunch of white roses left in Smithfield Rotunda Gardens and anonymously dedicated to the memory of Ann Askew, a protestant martyr burned at the stake in Smithfield in 1546, and accompanied with the statement “live free or die” (fieldnotes, 28 January, 2022)

Figure 7.2: William Wallace memorial, West Smithfield. Left: Saltire and thistles added to railings (image taken 24th August 2021). Right: A tour guide and group gather in front of this emplaced story (image taken 24th November 2021)



Yet, crucially, rather than an open realm of representation, such *emplacement* is only by approval: a small brass plaque highlights that the Wallace memorial was installed with the ‘kind permission’ of the Governors of St Bartholomew’s Hospital in 1956. This suggests that *emplaced stories*, as examples of doubly-situated histories, are therefore not self-generating but the result of varying degrees of official sanction, whether the training and licensing of tour guides or the planning permission for a stone monument. Indeed, the Corporation also has its own commemorative plaque scheme, currently separate to the national ‘blue plaque’ scheme organised by English Heritage. A successful application takes approximately five years (City of London, 2023d), with the City Arts Initiative currently working to clarify and expedite this process. *Emplaced stories* thus require multiple acts of authorship and construction, from the desire to tell a particular story (or commemorate a life), to its eventual material expression. This local ‘power geometry’ of situated stories is further evidenced by the memorial commemorating Wat Tyler and the Great Rising of 1381, unveiled in July 2015 and initiated by local resident Matthew Bell. Local tour guide Lucas revealed the process of its installation:

"You wouldn't believe the red tape he had to go through in order to create this memorial. He had to get permission from English Heritage. He had to get permission from the hospital, clearly. He had to get permission from the City of London Corporation. He had to get permission from Uncle Tom Cobley and all."

(Lucas, tour guide & former police officer, 60+)

The memorials to both Wat Tyler and William Wallace are arguably commemorating radical anti-establishment figures, individuals whose deaths in Smithfield are linked to its historical siting on the edge of the City. Today, however, the *emplacement* of their stories in the public realm, negotiated through municipal permissions, make them settled and normative aspects of national and local identity, and "resources for the present" (Ashworth & Graham, 2005: 4). As far as place is concerned, there are evidently structures within the fluid malleability of history. In addition, I suggest that access to these 'resources' is far from equal, a tension I return to in section 7.2.

A less imposing memorial typology is the commemorative wooden bench, of which there are four in Smithfield Rotunda Gardens (see figure 7.3), a site that is due to be radically transformed as part of the Smithfield Public Realm project (Hawkins\Brown, 2019). Rather than reproducing or intensifying dominant narrative frames, these subtly challenge them.

Inscriptions on these benches, either carved into the wood or in the form of a metal plaque, comprise:

In Memory of Edward Brown of 14. West Smithfield

In Loving Memory of Joe and Olive Curley

In Memory of Win English May 1975 From Her Friends in Smithfield

Liz Blackender 1953-2018 "Tireless Stalwart throughout her life – an unsung hero"

Figure 7.3: Memorial benches in Smithfield Rotunda Gardens encircling the central allegorical statue of 'Peace' (left). Detail of inscriptions on two of these benches (right).



In contrast to the memorials discussed above, these express personal stories of care (*“an unsung hero”*, *“in loving memory”*) and local social inter-connection (*“from her friends in Smithfield”*). Research into these individuals also reveals the nature of their relationship to Smithfield, either in the meat trade (Joseph and Olive Curley, and Winifred English), or with local charity St Mungo’s (Liz Blackender). These lives are not part of canonical historical narratives but are no less part of Smithfield’s identity. Indeed, one research participant, Evan – an Islington Council outreach officer – showed me to the bench dedicated to Liz Blackender as she had once been his colleague. As he did so, a man eating his lunch on the bench moved out of the way and joined us as we read it. While in no way as prominent as other memorials in Smithfield, for some, embodied encounters with these benches nonetheless represent encounters with *emplaced stories* at an intimate scale, mediating personal and relational senses of place. As spatial practices, such encounters can be seen as a challenge to Smithfield’s dominant narratives, with intimacy and care discreetly subverting narratives of its ‘rich history’ or its identity as a site of sensory spectacle. They are relational and affective cues within a subjective and emotional geography of place.

7.1.2 ‘There’s so much history there’: The effects of guided walking tours

Guided walking tours are a further modality of *emplaced stories*, one that engages tour participants’ bodies and imaginations and adds another dimension to how social actors form senses of place. These are a regular feature of Smithfield and the wider City. Indeed, the Corporation runs a training and certification programme for official ‘City Guides’ (City of London, 2024e). Understood as a sequence of stories told by a guide *in situ*, usually grouped into a specific theme or overarching narrative, walking tours combine a temporal sequence of events and a spatial pattern, conforming as such to Ricouer’s (1984) definition of narrative ‘emplotment’. Unlike meaning defined by an individual’s own movement through city streets (de Certeau, 1984), the narrative here is externally authored and curated.

Walking tours are one of the earliest examples of urban tourism (Giddy & Hoogendoorn, 2018); today, their availability is amplified by online platforms, and they are a feature of both local and visitor experiences of place. Recent scholarship on urban walking tours has focused on tourists’ pursuit of authenticity (Giddy & Hoogendoorn, 2018) and their role in both reinforcing and challenging dominant narratives of heritage and urban space (Barber, 2019). Often overlooked however is their effect on passers-by, which I suggest influences senses of place in two ways. Firstly, the heightened presence of walking tours in Smithfield, passively and regularly encountered by local social actors, draws attention to the area’s *emplaced stories* in a similar register to public realm interpretation or memorials. Secondly, the volume of the tour guide’s narration needed to reach large groups of participants often means that stories and details can easily be overheard by passers-by. These entertain and educate, and enter narrative circulation. Joanne describes her regular encounters with walking tours:

“And, yeah, just, you know, like the history’s been... watching the tours, and even at the train station, watching the tours that people come and do, there’s so much history there.”

(Joanne, local unhoused person, 30+)

Joanne expresses her interest in history, and her knowledge of the area's myths and stories accrued from interpretation panels, and as in the quotation above, from "*watching the tours*". Indeed, my own mobile interview recordings are occasionally interrupted by background snatches of tour guide narration. For Joanne, the presence of the tours also affirms "*there's so much history there*". This may be the case, but the choice of which narratives to include on a walking tour is intricately linked to market demand and the compelling nature of the stories themselves. Indeed, as Samuel says of popular memory, "wonders and marvels are grist to its mill" (1994: 6). They therefore remain an act of curation within a wider span of possible stories.

Nonetheless, the storyscapes of Smithfield are a broad canvas for multiple *emplaced stories*, with both social and institutional interviewees seeing it as a microcosm of London's – or even Britain's – history. The Museum's Director of Content, Finbarr Whooley articulates this framing:

"...it's just all of the phases of London's story, and some of the most national stories, played out literally ... on the place itself."

(Finbarr Whooley, Director of Content, London Museum)

Likewise, Brian, a local tour guide, comments that "*...you can sort of do everything from medieval all the way through to the 16th, 17th, 18th century and it's World War One ... so you've got everything you want in one spot*" (Brian, local tour guide, 50+ years old). Brian suggests that his knowledge of the area's stories is comprehensive: "*I know it and I like it so well that I've probably come in and found out all the stories.*" However, he also admits he is selective, surprisingly omitting what is for some the area's defining feature – the Market:

"I've never shown anybody in the market.... don't ever remember sort of encouraging people to look through. ... it's a bit off-putting when you see someone wandering around with a white coat with blood all down the back of it or a side of cow on his shoulders."

(Brian, local tour guide, 50+ years old).

The visceral sensory intensity of Market activity seems to be at odds with his choice of *emplaced stories*, despite their own graphic references to plague, squalor, and execution. This is the result of his selective curation, and likely responds to his audience's expectations; indeed, Market-specific tours in Smithfield are available from other guides. Yet there is perhaps an analogy here with the Corporation's desire to also 'omit' the Central Markets from Smithfield, and relocate activity to Dagenham from 2028 onwards, echoing in turn the removal of 'polluting trades' from the medieval City in the 1300s. For the Corporation, the Market's ongoing operation is perhaps an anachronistic 'story' within Smithfield's unfolding narrative landscape, one that sits more comfortably as an aspect of the area's heritage than its future. This view was also shared by Nisha, a local business owner:

"I think that Smithfield, while it's quite attractive as a market, like it's a meat market and people think of it as a meat market, people are able to identify it on a map. I also think it has been working to the detriment of culture in the city."

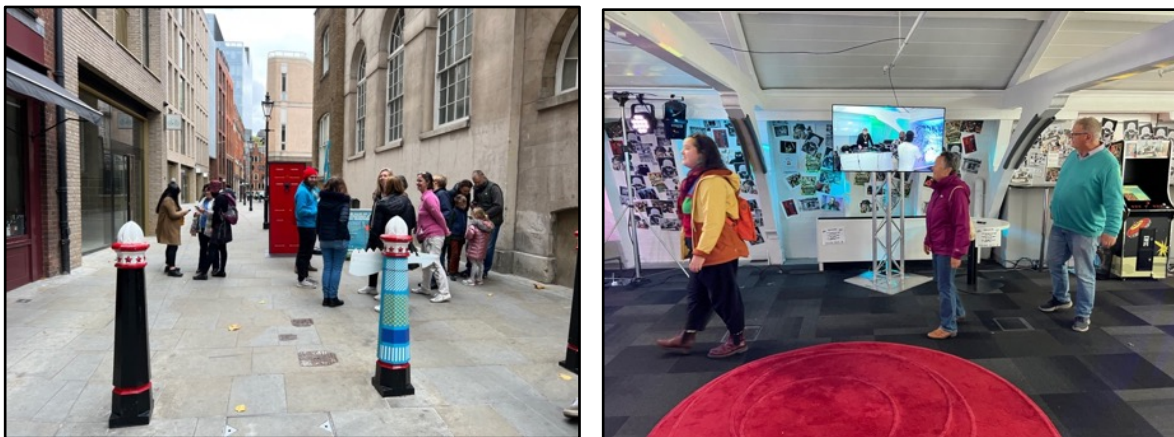
(Nisha, local business owner, 35+ years old)

Although perhaps its most identifiable landmark, for Nisha the meat market is not just an anachronism or an inconsequential aspect of Smithfield's identity but an impediment to the area's cultural transformation.

This tension was brought vividly to life through another form of walking tour that links directly to the area's spatial and symbolic transformation. 'The Golden Key' was the launch event for the Corporation's Destination City tourism campaign, a multi-site event held on 15th October 2022. This comprised free immersive theatre, games, and performances in 17 locations (Coney, 2022). Smithfield was the location of one of 12 interactive walking tours accessed via an individual's smartphone and headphones (see figure 7.4). The event was part of Destination City's aims to attract more footfall into the City of London post-COVID (*interview with Tim Jones, former Culture Mile Manager*) and attracted over 30,000 attendees (City of London, 2023e). It was met with scepticism by some local residents, however, including Siobhan, a Barbican resident ("*they're on at a time when there are no shops open*"), and an elected Member, Tina ("*[the] Golden Key event was an absolute farce,*

a million-pound farce”). More relevant to a discussion of *emplaced stories* and the unstable storyscapes of cultural regeneration is the modality used and its surprising culmination. Based on my own experience, the self-guided audio tour featured a combination of *emplaced stories*, such as the 1666 Great Fire of London reaching the edges of Smithfield, and others that are place-adjacent, such as the discovery of the Cheapside Hoard in 1912 near St Paul’s Cathedral and held in the Museum’s collections. A game element required me to complete various tasks including finding building names linked directly and tangentially to the stories. This ‘ludic’ practice in some ways corresponds to Stevens’s (2007) assessment of how play reveals the potential that public spaces offer. Yet here it is instrumentalised in its aim to not only increase footfall and associated visitor spend, but also contribute to Smithfield’s changing spatial practices, drawing in new consumers, establishing new patterns of movement and consumption, and participating in new cultural behaviours and uses.

Figure 7.4: Golden Key events in Smithfield. Left: Visitors assemble at a red door to begin their interactive walking tour. Right: Visitors who have completed the tour reach the temporary drill music studio above the Central Market.



The audio-guide’s final instruction led to former offices above the Central Market, accessed via No. 1 East Poultry Avenue. Here, the disused space had been converted into a temporary studio for an online drill music station, High Rise Radio. As one of the organisers Kimi described, “*it’s about bringing the culture of the east to the centre*” and into “*the heart of corporate London*” (ethnographic fieldnotes, 15/10/22). Another organiser Dominic

explained that the “*history of drill [music] is to take over empty or derelict spaces*”. On leaving the venue I spoke to two young adults who had seen that there was an “*immersive experience happening on TikTok*” but had found it “*a bit weird*” (ethnographic fieldnotes, 15/10/22). This juxtaposition of an audio walking tour through the area’s dominant *emplaced stories* on the one hand, and drill music takeover of empty market offices on the other represents the tension at the heart of Smithfield’s socio-spatial trajectory, one in which *emplaced stories* are a valuable experiential currency, and where alternative cultural practices can find purchase. Yet, this also highlights the potential incongruity (for some) that comes with engaging with existing senses of place, and extant stories, while also telling new ones. I suggest potential tactics to address this at the end of this chapter.

7.1.3 ‘An understanding of the space’: Siting public interpretation

Analysis of social and institutional interactions with a third modality of *emplaced stories* in Smithfield, that of interpretation panels, again reveals the dynamics that lead to the privileging of some stories over others. However, as an example of the notion of ‘history from below’ popularised by E. P. Thompson (1963/2013), they also suggest the potential for more polyvocal and heterogenous alternatives. Interpretation panels are notably found in Smithfield in Grand Avenue – a covered road between the two active spaces of the Central Markets – and in the window of The Rookery Hotel on Cowcross Street. The latter’s prominent placement was highlighted by several participants, who noted references to the area’s medieval executions and Dickens’s much-repeated description of ‘market morning’, as well as the burning of heretics. This boutique hotel “on the edge of London’s central business district” also offers a ‘Guts & Glory’ walking tour of the local area (The Rookery, 2024). The motivation for these *emplaced stories* is evidently commercial, a tactic in the production of an atmosphere intended to convey both the historical pedigree of the site and its affective sensory context. This is a motivation shared by the Corporation, as established in Chapter 2.

Commercial factors are also at play in the interpretation panels situated in Grand Avenue, installed in 2004. These panels detail the wider history of the area, the specific history and day-to-day operation of the Market, and the 2004 proposals by Kohn Pederson Fox and

Thornfield Properties for the demolition and commercial development of the General Market site (previously discussed in Chapter 6). The stories featured in these panels again find their way into the imaginaries of local social actors, with Nisha, a local business owner, using them as a visual prompt when talking about the area's past, commenting "*people were exchanging cattle, people were exchanging people, people were, you know, there were guillotines, there were beheadings and stuff like that.*" Alongside details of royal visits to the market, and the 1952 fire, the panels also celebrate the predominantly male Market traders, with photographic portraits from both 1986 and 2004. Unsurprisingly given that these are attached to the Market's railings, these stories do not stray far from the normative narratives of the wider area, albeit the lives of the traders are more prominent here than elsewhere. Relevant to this discussion is the motivation behind this interpretation: paid for by Thornfield Properties, these panels situate the proposed 2004 demolition of the General Market within the ongoing history of the local area and the social history of the Market, legitimising the development as part of a coherent sequence of stories. This can be seen as a straightforward instrumentalisation of both a story modality – the public panels – and of the *emplaced stories*. However, the reality is more nuanced, with the market traders of 2004 supporting the Thornfield scheme, and rejecting the opposition mounted by heritage bodies. *Emplaced stories* are again complicated here, manifested only by an opportunity provided by an institutional agent (in this case Thornfield) to platform the Market's heritage and workforce.

The London Museum is contending with its own *emplaced stories* in terms of the spatial practices and social history of the former market buildings it will inhabit. Indeed, adaptive re-use is understood not only as "a process of building conversion by recycling useable components for the purpose of new use, but also a method [...] to preserve its cultural heritage" (Abdulameer & Sati'Abbas, 2020: 1). As such, it can be framed as an appreciation of *emplaced stories* as much as embodied carbon. Director of Content Finbarr Whooley describes the General Market that the Museum will occupy as "*found architecture... it's a building that holds its previous history.*" He adds that it is part of the Museum's remit to "*interpret or help the understanding of the space*". This is a dynamic interaction between past and present, between material and social value, and between a new institution and established local identities. In part this interpretation will recognise the contemporary

ethical and environmental implications of the meat trade. As Programme Director Laura Wilkinson suggests, the Museum will not be “*shying away*” from these situated practices, nor will its representation be “*too nostalgic*”. This responsibility to the site suggests a duality in the role of the Museum, both to the market’s stories and to the history of London as a whole. The latter falls within an understanding of the Museum as a heterotopia or ‘unreal counter-site’ that mirrors the wider city (Foucault, 1984: 3); the former however is something conceptually different – a situated rather than abstracted story. In their *emplaced* nature, the market’s stories will be therefore be simultaneously real-and-imagined (Soja, 1996): stories that draw on the ‘imagination’ but which are situated in the ‘real’ location of their occurrence.

To tell these *emplaced stories* within its walls, the Museum is developing a set of ‘Smithfield Stories’: a series of individual interpretation panels that relate to specific material cues within the General Market building, including former shop lamps and an office fireplace. Here, rather than a discrete palimpsest or conventional exhibition display, they will coexist as a network alongside the other stories told in this space. Further, strategies for how the Museum will “*show the remarkable history of the surrounding area*” (Alex Werner, former Lead Curator, London Museum) are in development at the time of writing. This will likely encourage the embodied discovery of Smithfield’s *emplaced stories*. As Finbarr Whooley suggests, “*the obvious thing is that you want people to go out walking.*” A layer of digital interpretation has been discussed, virtual stories that will mediate place experiences alongside other material and experiential cues (Degen & Rose, 2022). In light of the preceding discussion, the choice of *which* stories is significant, choices that will mediate visitors’ senses of place in different ways. Local social actor Ben questions the diversity of the area’s potential stories, even challenging the rationale for the area’s preservation:

“It starts to make me think about the kind of validity of certain claims, I suppose, around here. It’s a traditional kind of British white history which preserving that perhaps has more legitimacy to a lot of people and has just a higher value in terms of in... as heritage in the minds of lots of people.”

(Ben, City of London Access Group member, 20+)

Ben articulates his experience of the heritage narratives in Smithfield as being part of normative white British history, and a concern that these will be preserved and re-told above other stories, something he finds “*problematic.*” This is a frustration shared by Amanda, an archivist at St Bartholomew’s Hospital. Celebrations to mark its 900th anniversary in 2023 included temporary public interpretation panels in the hospital’s central square. Amanda highlighted the institutional reluctance to stray from normative histories:

“Being part of an institution with a very long history there is a kind of feeling of reputational risk around the historical stories you tell. So obviously, this is a very old institution in the City. ... I think we’d like to tell those stories, but how do you do that in a way that seems kind of palatable to some people who don’t feel that those are the stories you could tell?”

(Amanda, archivist, Barts Health Archives)

Amanda also notes the male gender bias of the hospital’s histories, and the influence of funders that can mean the “*same stories*” are told “*again and again*”. While historic power geometries play their part in the lack of diverse stories to tell, current structures are clearly still at play. These inhibit a broader awareness of the multiplicity of place, with commensurate impacts on senses of place.

The Museum’s approach to Smithfield’s stories, however, appears to implicitly accept the multiple trajectories and voices of place, while at the same time acknowledging its role as one of those voices within the area’s evolving storyscapes. As Lauren Parker, Head of Creative Partnerships at the Museum suggests, this is a question of “*choices*”: “*choices about what stories you tell, and which elements that you focus on*”. Lauren highlights the understandably simplified narratives created by Culture Mile, Culture Mile BID, and Destination City, and argues that “*there’s a reductive quality*”:

“You know, life is messy. Smithfield as a place has that messiness, as others do, and some of the stories are less enticing or less positive, or more challenging than others.”

(Lauren Parker, Head of Creative Partnerships, London Museum)

If made visible and *emplaced* to varying degrees, these “*less written*” stories can provide diverse cues for visitors and local social actors and avoid a uniform ‘smooth’ or reductive narrative landscape. Again however there is the question of choice, and of *who* is telling these stories in and of Smithfield. This relates directly to strategies of local social engagement, and the participatory practices of new museology applied to the institution’s local context:

“We’re approaching storytelling in a different way, because it’s not the institution translating or telling those stories, it’s thinking about another version of what a shared place is.”

(Lauren Parker, Head of Creative Partnerships, London Museum)

I discuss the political and socio-spatial implications of becoming a ‘shared place’ in the next chapter. In this context, Lauren’s statement highlights the Museum’s intentions to co-create projects and collaborate with local groups to tell local stories, essentially ‘sharing’ the area’s storytelling. This is reflected in the London Museum *Engagement Framework*, a set of principles to guide the operation of the new Museum:

We need engagement in order to: humanise stories, so that they are meaningful for more visitors; foster empathy and make emotional connections.

(London Museum, 2021a: 4)

This, along with the Museum’s intention to use examples from Smithfield’s history to represent aspects of London as a whole, suggests a diversification of the existing storyscapes of Smithfield. Rather than stories *emplaced* as an extension of existing power hierarchies, produced without the voices and experiences of those represented, there is the potential here for a more polyvocal approach, in which crucially the power of authorship is either shared or relinquished.

There are of course caveats to this, including equitable and consistent acknowledgement – and compensation – for the labour required to do so, and the danger of instrumentalisation. Indeed, the Museum’s ‘Museum of Londoners’ marketing campaign can be questioned in terms of the latter. This 2017 installation on the construction hoardings around the General Market featured 5-metre-tall photos of ‘real’ Londoners: a reflection of London’s multiplicity, or the commodification of this for a striking advertising campaign? I discuss the subtlety of these aspects in the following section. Nonetheless, this highlights again the differential agency of a museum *within* a culture-led development process. It also underscores the distinction between broader narratives of development, and the affective power of *emplaced stories* that are present within a heterogenous and polyvocal understanding of place. While institutions may face internal inertia to the de-centring of an authoritative voice, or to moving on from ‘the same’ stories, collaboration in the authoring of a place’s stories recognises at least that “places do not come with some memories attached as if by nature” (Cresswell, 2015: 97) but are instead a “contested terrain of competing definitions” (Harvey, 1996: 309). Smithfield thus has the potential for a “messy” multiplicity of stories and voices, diverse cues that may condition emergent senses of place.

I have argued that local social actors’ varied encounters with *emplaced stories* mediate and condition their senses of place. These can contribute to the reproduction of dominant place narratives and associated power hierarchies as part of place experience and identity. These in turn can obscure other potential but absent *emplaced stories*, and therefore the formation of alternative senses of place, including the area’s history of radical politics, its position as an infrastructure of imperial expansion, women’s local social history, the contribution of local migrant communities, and its LGBTQ+ heritage. Nonetheless, relational and multi-scalar experiences of *emplaced stories* can also stand in opposition to the often-totalising narratives of place brands, for example those that seek to designate Smithfield as part of Culture Mile place brand or BID. This suggests the need for alternative institutional approaches to understanding and engaging with stories as an aspect of a local sense of place. I return to this premise at the end of this chapter, suggesting a set of *narrative practices*. Building on the arguments of this section, in the remainder of this chapter I turn to non-normative and ‘absent’ stories in Smithfield in order to discuss socially-engaged museum practice, social justice, and the commodification of stories in greater detail.

7.2 ABSENT STORIES: RECOGNISING LGBTQ+ HERITAGE IN SMITHFIELD

Kath, a gay woman in her 60s and former visitor to the London Lesbian and Gay Centre (LLGC) on Cowcross Street, shares her response to Smithfield's emplaced LGBTQ+ histories, many of which were new to her. She comments

"You may feel sadness and anger, but the progress that was made through those things is testament to the bravery of those people that got angry."

(Kath, 60+, former LLGC visitor)

I have established how diverse *emplaced stories* and modalities mediate and condition senses of place; Kath's statement further reflects this, and highlights the imbrication of personal, collective, political, historical, and emotional responses that are felt in and through place, and which become part of an individual's sense of place. I bring these themes together in this section by detailing the experience and outcomes of participatory action research that explored Smithfield's LGBTQ+ heritage and local social actors' relationship to it. This acts as a thematic case study of 'absent' aspects of place identity more broadly, with implications that extend beyond an LGBTQ+ focus to reveal the potency – and politics – of less-visible stories and their effects on senses of place; it hence questions and informs representationally-equitable approaches of a relocating museum to its new local context.

I begin by outlining my use of this approach and the relevance of an LGBTQ+ focus, one that acts as a critical counterpoint to the stories discussed in section 7.1, relates to current socially-engaged museum practice, and that comprises stories which are largely untold in Smithfield's public realm. Through analysis of participant contributions, I demonstrate how absent histories provoke emotional responses that reveal the politics of place. Drawing on Fraser's (2009) notion of 'recognition', I link senses of place to social justice, and to Massey's (2005) assertion of the plurality of place. This, I argue, suggests the need to think in terms of *degrees of recognition* within urban storyscapes, a view which complicates the often-totalising narratives of urban place brands and hegemonic narrative frames. I relate this to the potential instrumentalisation of non-normative stories by municipal and institutional

actors within a culture-led development's narrative re-coding of place. I conclude by arguing that institutions at the centre of culture-led development schemes have the potential to question and complicate dominant emplaced narratives through socially-engaged practices.

The arguments of this section are informed by analysis of a combined walking tour and workshop with local LGBTQ+ participants, an approach detailed in Chapter 4. I use this tailored 'inventive' method (Lury & Wakeford, 2014) to interrogate the dynamic interaction between real-and-imagined situated histories and social actors' senses of place. Participants were framed as 'peer researchers' rather than attendees or participants (Lushey, 2017), a positioning used to empower those taking part, emphasise the intersectional and diverse nature of place experience, and disrupt extractive notions of participatory research. This approach also recognises that social actors "within any community being researched are themselves competent agents, capable of participating in research on a variety of levels, including as researchers" (Higgins et al., 2007: 105). As 'competent agents', I also asked attendees to question the format, contents, and methods of the day.

This approach also relates to contemporary museum programmes and practices that increasingly centre concerns for equality, diversity, and social justice (Janes, 2024; Janes & Sandell, 2019; Lynch & Alberti, 2010). In this context, social justice has been framed as the ways in which museums "might acknowledge and act upon inequalities within and outside of the cultural domain" in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, class, disability, or sexuality. This is underpinned by a belief in the capacity of museums to "shape as well as reflect social and political relations" (Nightingale & Sandell, 2012: 3). More than Foucault's heterotopic 'mirror' of society (Foucault, 1984) museums here acknowledge their capacity to act as an agent of change within it (Gurian, 2006; Murawski, 2021).

To understand the limits and expression of that agency, however, a more nuanced understanding of social justice is needed. I turn to political theorist Nancy Fraser, who provides a framing of social justice that spans redistribution, recognition, and representation (Fraser, 2009: 6). This tripartite theory defines social justice in terms of economic redistribution, socio-cultural recognition, and political representation. Fraser's use of *recognition* in this context refers to the affirmation of under-represented or

minoritised communities and their experiences in the face of injustice. This is commensurate with respect for all identities within a ‘parity of participation’. Indeed, Fraser (2009) argues that “justice requires social arrangements that permit all to participate as peers in social life” (p60). This is a helpful framing in this analysis given my theoretical framework’s acknowledgement of the simultaneously relational, diverse, and political dimensions of a sense of place, alongside embodied and imagined aspects.

I specifically engage with LGBTQ+ individuals and histories in order to provide a focused lens through which to interrogate the relationship between situated heritage and senses of place, one that provides a heterogeneous yet shared set of participant experiences. This builds on the analysis of *queer rhythms* presented in the preceding chapter. As expressed in Chapter 4, other thematic approaches are possible in Smithfield, not least the situated histories of women, of local migrant communities, or a critical view of Smithfield’s imperial entanglement. These, and others, share a tension between a local embeddedness and public absence. In addition, this focus also relates again to contemporary museum practice, where although LGBTQ+ heritage is an increasingly visible component of many cultural institutions’ programmes and practices, its representation within museum spaces is still “uneven and partial” (Sandell et. al, 2018: 3; Winchester, 2012). This is a consequence of the perceived lack of ‘evidence’ of LGBTQ+ lives and a historic denial of queer existence (Cocks, 2010; Levin, 2012). This partial recognition also extends to the public realm where there remains an absence of permanent LGBTQ+ heritage, despite recent programmes to redress this such as the GLA’s Commission for Diversity in the Public Realm (GLA, 2024b). The exploration of LGBTQ+ history is therefore a relevant lens through which to understand the relationship between stories and senses of place precisely because of its emplaced yet material ephemerality.

7.2.1 ‘We were seen’: Fomenting political senses of place

Peer researchers’ previous experiences in and of Smithfield mediated their pre-existing senses of place, for example memories of visiting *Fabric* or the LLGC. These included overlapping feelings of excitement and anticipation, discomfort and reticence, and connection and community. Others articulated a sense of tension, with experiences of

different “*communities crossing over*”, for example clubbers and market traders, in line with experiences of Smithfield’s timescapes and their boundaries explored in Chapter 5. There was also a feeling that the meat market was “*off-putting*” because of its “*macho culture*”. Yet there was a camaraderie in this experience, reflecting the senses of alterity and community developed over time as part of Smithfield’s *queer rhythms* (see Chapter 6). For Kath, the area presented a “*lost gay space*”. Rather than expressing a sense of nostalgia of the kind felt by some for the heyday of Smithfield Market, Kath instead articulates a sense of regret: regret that this no longer exists and that this ‘gay space’ has been largely forgotten. These reflections also highlight how the area was historically able to accommodate more grassroots and autonomous sites of social significance, a capacity that is challenged by its formal market-led redevelopment.

The seven situated histories recounted on the walking tour spanned a range of emotional contexts, from the exuberance of *Trade* club night to the brutality of the West Smithfield pillory (see Appendix B). Consequently, peer researchers’ relational identification with the stories stimulated powerful and intense reactions. This was evident in the conversations that followed the walking tour, with peer researchers sharing their amplified feelings of anger, sadness, grief, acceptance, hope, and joy. Kath celebrated finding “*our place in history*”, commenting:

“It was really nice to share that, and the uplifting feel that we existed, and we stood up and we spoke up and we were, if not obviously seen, we were still seen.”

(Kath, 60+, former LLGC visitor)

This ‘uplifting’ feeling was juxtaposed with more sombre responses, for example reflections on the huge loss of life resulting from the HIV/AIDS epidemic in response to Derek Jarman’s death at St Bartholomew’s Hospital, “*a reminder of those times and the people lost*” (Chris, 50+, local resident). When linked to a specific cultural narrative or community, such emotions not only mediate how people feel about an area, but also have the power to foment political action, a view shared by Sara Ahmed:

Feminist and queer scholars have shown us that emotions 'matter' for politics; emotions show us how power shapes the very surface of bodies as well as worlds.

(Ahmed, 2004: 12)

Participants' recognition of these stories as part of their LGBTQ+ cultural heritage produced emotional responses; these emotions – in shaping 'bodies' and 'worlds' – mediated senses of place tinged with the politics of community identity.

While these responses undoubtedly represent embodied-affective experience, they go beyond the 'aesthetic feelings' of atmospheres (Böhme, 2018) to emphasise Massey's (2005) understating of space as fundamentally political and imbricated with power. As Andreas (40+, regular visitor) commented, *"when you're looking at the past, because it's so separate and desperate ... you're just having to piece everything together."* The past is here affecting the present because of its absence rather than in spite of it. Taking this a step further, we can link these emotional responses to Fraser's political dimension of justice. Sadness, anger, or even joy in these instances relate to a questioning of whether LGBTQ+ people have historically been 'permitted to participate as peers in social life' (Fraser, 2009: 16). The presence of LGBTQ+ heritage – as with other marginalised histories – is therefore a reminder of historic and in some cases ongoing inequality. As Butler (2004) argues, some lives are more 'precarious' than others, or as Purcell more bluntly states, *"the bodies of inhabitants are not all exposed to death to the same degree"* (2022: 3054). This is important for understanding the affective politics inherent to senses of place and heightens the risks of the symbolic and spatial rearrangement of place as part of culture-led development, as well as the opportunities.

7.2.2 'Another lens': From absence to recognition

Despite the peer researchers' pre-existing associations with the wider Smithfield area as residents, workers, or visitors, I have shown that the situated real-and-imagined (Soja, 1996) experience of previously unknown LGBTQ+ histories and their emotional engagement with it mediated new and potent senses of place. In Massey's terms, the impact of this narrative

mediation is to reveal “the multiplicities of the spatial” (2005: 83) and the potential for new meanings and trajectories. But what is the nature of this multiplicity within a sense of place, and the potential of these ‘trajectories’? Reflecting on the histories presented on the walking tour, and specifically that of the former HIV/AIDS ward at St Bartholomew’s Hospital (where Derek Jarman received medical care and later died), Zara describes it as “*another lens*”:

“I feel like it's kind of given another lens, you know. Smithfield's very familiar to me in lots of ways, but it's given me another lens to see parts of it. Like I've never been in St. Barts before. And I've read Modern Nature, but it suddenly gives it this complete other context, both of a point in time, I suppose, but also of, you know, bringing that experience to life. I mean, although it is done beautifully within the book anyway, I think it kind of brings it to life in a very much more tangible way [...] And I think that sense of the courtyard and the fountain and you know, even the chapel, suddenly makes it... you're there. And I think that's true for sort of each of these... some of the new elements that I knew nothing about before.”

(Zara, 40+, former local resident and regular visitor)

Supported by her existing knowledge of St Bartholomew’s Hospital from Jarman’s diaries, published as *Modern Nature* in 1991, Zara’s narrative imagination transports her into the past (“*you’re there*”) but also intensifies the experience of the present (“*bringing that experience to life*”). This intensification and the affective tangibility of the stories has an effect on her sense of place by providing more possibilities and more complexity (“*this complete other context*”). As explored in the context of perceptual ‘boundaries’ in Chapter 5, this experience can be understood in terms of ontological metalepsis, the momentary movement or ‘switch’ between two distinct worlds such as ‘the real’ and ‘the imaginary’ (Ryan, 2004: 442) – or in this case, between the haptic present and the imagined past. For Zara, these stories are also “*new elements*”. Put another way, Zara has tacitly recognised both the multiplicity of place and something that was previously absent from it. There is always more to place, and in that ‘more’ may lie a palpable sense of recognition. What fuels this recognition? For De Nardi, the mediation of place experience by situated histories is

fuelled by ‘affectual ties’, embodied-emotional connections which relate to immaterial aspects of a place:

Heritage can lend presence to absence by drawing on the affectual ties to things that may no longer exist in the perceptual realm, but that still inhabit affectual worlds.

(2021: 35)

This supports the potency of emotional reactions to the stories discussed above. But as well as being “key to affectual heritage experiences” (2021: 27), such ‘absence-presencing’ also makes real the multiplicity of place that Zara experiences. It is within this multiplicity that social actors can situate an embodied-emotional participation not just in the past, but the present and ‘ongoing trajectories’ (Massey, 2005) of place – the possibility of belonging. And to return to Fraser (2009), this can also enable the “parity of participation” needed for a just society, a conceptual premise that links the value of working with *emplaced stories* back to socially-engaged museum practices. Here then we have situated histories acting on local social actors’ senses of place, revealing multiple absences, which support recognition, and therefore the potential for participation. This understanding of the potential of untold – and otherwise wholly absent – local histories provides a conceptual provocation for the work of the London Museum within the unstable storyscapes of culture-led development.

7.2.3 ‘Maybe today was enough?’: The value of degrees of recognition

The contributions of peer researchers analysed so far largely concern their individual relationship to the heritage stories presented on the walking tour. However, the dimension of shared histories is equally pertinent to this analysis, both to notions of how cultural identity links to place (Halbwachs, 1992; Nora, 1984) and to a shared LGBTQ+ heritage. As I have argued above, *emplaced stories* mediate senses of place and do so at different scales and through multiple modalities, including public interpretation and memorials. For one peer researcher, Chris, the absence of such interpretation at 7 St John Street (figure 7.5) became a catalyst through which to consider the value of such devices. On this location in February 1994, ‘Dream City’, an illicit gay cinema and social space that occupied the second

and third floors, was the target of an arson attack in which 11 people died and 23 were injured:

“What’s interesting is that that cinema wasn’t a beautiful building, it probably was an incredibly ugly building. That’s not the point. It’s a significant, massively significant building. And I suppose, for me, the issue is, how do you memorialize it? What do you say about it? Or maybe just today was enough? Or do you write about it? Or do you have a plaque? But to go back to that question... where bad things happen – and often, often, a lot of places are places where bad things have happened – what do you do with that? And how do you share that?”

(Chris, 50+, local resident)

Chris’s complex response questions multiple dimensions of this situated history, not least the relationship between architectural preservation, memorialisation, and socio-cultural value. Rather than judging built heritage on its architectural and aesthetic merits, as seen for example in the Corporation’s *Smithfield Public Realm Statement of Significance* discussed in Chapter 6, he suggests other measures of worth: the ordinary Victorian terrace may not be a “*beautiful building*” but it is “*massively significant*” because of what took place there. He goes further, questioning whether and how ‘bad’ events are memorialised. This location emerged as being personally significant for Chris as he had known one of the men killed in the 1994 arson. However, despite being a local resident, Chris only discovered that this was the site of his former colleague’s death during the walking tour. In a subsequent email, Chris wrote that the tour had provoked a “*very strong reaction*” (email 8/8/23). In this case, sharing the story in situ provided a representation of the absent tragedy, and a catalyst to remember if not to memorialize.



Figure 7.5: 7 St John Street
Former site of the Dream
City Cinema (1980-1994)
which occupied the second
and third floors.

Memorials themselves can be considered a component of social justice (Torres & Garcia-Hernandez, 2016), allowing for the focusing of otherwise ‘disenfranchised grief’ (Doka, 1989) and calling attention to tragedy and injustice. As I have shown, many of Smithfield’s extant memorials do commemorate such ‘bad things’, including the murder of Wat Tyler, the execution of William Wallace, and the 1958 Smithfield Market Fire. Sharing the story of the *Dream City* fire with Chris and the other peer researchers is one aspect of communal memorialisation; however, this significant tragedy remains invisible within everyday experiences of Smithfield: its lack of representation is an absent ‘cue’ in mediating social actors’ senses of place more broadly. The same could perhaps be said for other histories presented as part of the walking tour including the victims of the West Smithfield pillory, and the medical care and loss of life at St Bartholomew’s Hospital at the height of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.⁶ And as I have previously stated, many other *emplaced stories* of

⁶ London’s first permanent HIV/AIDS memorial only received funding in December 2023 (GLA, 2023).

neglected histories are similarly absent in Smithfield. Fraser's (2009) notion of 'recognition' seems to support a making-public or democratisation of otherwise marginalised histories as an aspect of a just society, one that indicates "who counts as a member" (p17). This does not however suggest the platforming or homogenisation of LGBTQ+ heritage, rather that these and other non-dominant *emplaced stories* should be visible to that community as a component of local heritage, as well as part of the wider polyvocality and multiplicity of place. Seen through the frame of local heritage in Smithfield, LGBTQ+ heritage should not therefore be considered a totalising narrative, comparable to a place brand, but one of many potential cues within the relational formation of senses of place.

However, while memorials and plaques can provide a permanent and public manifestation of historic injustice, with implications for the present, the varied responses of the peer researchers suggest there is power in a variety of approaches and *degrees of recognition*. Indeed, the intimate sharing and sense of community experienced by the peer researchers can be understood an aspect of LGBTQ+ solidarity, a speaking to and for each other. Just as Chris comments that "*maybe today was enough*", Kath expresses the value of sharing the "*uplifting*" feeling of LGBTQ+ historical presence ("*it's nice to hear how people still were visible in those days. And how we're always [...] seeking out to find our place in history*"). The emotional experience of these situated histories, and the impact on Smithfield's senses of place for those that have taken part, here has its own value rather than as part of a wider strategy of re-coding place. This is therefore recognition in the form of self- or community identification, as well as the recognition of historic injustice. Urban historian Dolores Hayden suggests that the power of place in this regard is underutilised:

The power of place – the power of ordinary urban landscapes to nurture citizens' public memory, to encompass shared time and in the form of shared territory – remains untapped...

(1996: 9)

While the 'power of place' that Hayden describes has to some degree been recognised in the intervening years, and even commodified as I shall explore below, it is important to question among *whom* this time and territory is 'shared': the notion of 'public memory'

needs fine-tuning, not least given the relational, socio-culturally diverse standpoint of this research and the complexities already explored. I therefore want to acknowledge the difference between the visibility of *emplaced stories* in the public realm (with the potential to be encountered by the ‘public’ at large), and the power of sharing stories solely within a community or socio-cultural group – with and for each other. These are different tactics: *emplaced stories* that are made publicly visible, and which may address historic injustice; those which are reproduced and shared among a cohort who identify with or ‘recognise’ the lives recounted; and those which are yet more intimate and have a personal resonance as part of an emotional geography of place. The latter is also seen, for example, in the experience of Evan and his colleague’s memorial bench discussed in section 7.1.1 above. There is room for all of these to be accommodated within the multiplicity of place. The implications for the London Museum, as an institution that seeks to embed itself with its new local area, is the need to both recognise the potential of Smithfield’s stories, and to apply different strategies to engage with them, informed by the needs and capacities of different local actors and groups.

7.2.4 ‘So it’s up to us?’: The dynamics of telling untold histories

Lastly in this section, I consider the instability of *emplaced stories*. This relates closely to the labour involved in surfacing or ‘telling’ minoritised or non-hegemonic histories and highlights their potential to be variously co-opted within processes of urban change, a theme previously introduced in section 7.1.3. I have argued that social actors’ engagement with *emplaced stories* occurs at a variety of scales and degrees of recognition. In this way, Smithfield is not a celebrated LGBTQ+ *lieu de mémoire* (Nora, 1984) or site of collective memory and identification, rather it is an assemblage of relational memories, experiences, and emotions, some of which relate to its LGBTQ+ heritage as one aspect among many. Yet as places are open, dynamic, and always in process (Massey, 1991), and constantly becoming (Pred, 1984), associations with them can also change. Indeed, Nora (1984) suggests that sites of cultural association evolve over time and can be constructed as well as forgotten. Massey goes further, emphasising the power dynamics involved in such associations:

If space is rather a simultaneity of stories-so-far, then places are collections of those stories, articulations within the wider power-geometries of space. Their character will be a product of these intersections within that wider setting, and what is made of them.

(2005: 130)

Within this quotation I want to emphasise two points. Firstly, that although stories are ‘collected’ and linked in place, they are still in the making: open-ended aspects of place identity and experience that reach into the future. This emphasises their temporal capacity, linking their articulation to the rhythmic socio-spatial effects of power over time (Chapter 6). Secondly, that the character of places is a product of a story’s interaction with a ‘setting’ and – crucially – ‘what is made of’ it. This is a reminder that stories need to be told, they require a modality, and that this will invariably serve a purpose. During the workshop, peer researchers’ reflected on precisely this effort, with Andreas highlighting the struggle involved in surfacing absent histories:

“And I guess it gets deeper to what we talked about in the tour about how, as LGBT individuals, when you’re looking at the past, because it’s so separate and desperate, and you’re, you’re just having to piece everything together, right. And so to sort of formulate some sort of heritage, which you can sort of, in a way, for yourself looking back, [imagine] that this is how gay people lived at the time [...] Because there is something about all this [gestures to map] and probably other areas where there’s missing information because things aren’t being recorded properly. So it’s up to us to sort of fill in the gaps right? To... to... create this walk.”

(Andreas, 40+, regular Smithfield visitor)

This reflects an important distinction between ‘absent’ situated histories and normative *emplaced stories*: specifically the labour it requires. This effort to “*surface some sort of heritage*” in Smithfield and redress what Swenson (2021) identifies as its ‘systemic absences’ can be understood as the result – and accretion over time – of historic power structures that have occluded alternative accounts, also discussed in 7.1.1. In this context

the effort is two-fold: both mine, in researching and recounting these histories, but also the imaginative labour required of a social actor to “*fill in the gaps*”, and weave these stories within a ‘real-and-imagined’ experience of place.

However, even within the situated histories that I researched for the walking tour and workshop, there is a double marginalisation, that of race and gender within LGBTQ+ heritage, one that requires additional labour to redress. The seven histories recounted predominantly featured white, male, cisgender, and British cultural majority subjects. While this may be reflective of the current and historic make-up of Smithfield’s social actors, the lack of people of colour and people from non-Christian faith backgrounds was specifically noted by peer researchers, and falls prey to Halberstam’s (2005) critique of the ‘universal claims’ made by white cisgender theorists. The inclusion of these voices in researching and telling such stories is necessary to ensure inclusive representation and the ‘parity of participation’, and an example of the further labour required. This also corresponds with the London Museum’s own intentions to particularly engage with those Londoners “whose histories have been hidden or neglected and are often under-represented in museums.” (London Museum, 2021a: 6).

The labour identified by Andreas is also reflective of the mutability of stories: their retelling by a particular group or individual in a particular context changes their meaning. As I have noted above, *emplaced stories* as a component of place are not static but enhanced, maintained, re-told, or replaced within processes of urban change. This can have positive consequences in terms of recognition and participation as discussed above; but this fluidity of stories also means they can be shaped and co-opted by others. This was a fear raised by Kath, who worried that “*they might be told in a way where they’re demonizing the people.*” (Kath, 60+, former LLGC visitor), or be framed to perpetuate queer victimhood. Indeed, I am aware that such criticism can also extend to my own use of LGBTQ+ histories within this research. An important distinction however is the participation of those who are represented, and the uses to which such stories are put.

Here, issues of encounter, recognition, and the shaping of senses of place that have been the central preoccupation of this chapter come together. By sharing the labour – or more

practically sharing financial, spatial, creative, and research resources – with those who are represented or who ‘recognise’ themselves in the stories, institutions can also empower them. This is an approach that Fraser’s (2009) framework also supports, with Waterton and Smith (2010) highlighting its potential to guide the policy and practice of working with communities. Such approaches value participation beyond consumption, with institutions sharing their agency through models of collaboration, co-production, and community partnerships of the kind also represented in the London Museum’s *Engagement Framework*. Rather than the business-as-usual of museum practices, this is an approach that participates in ‘place’, and engages with senses of place. In Smithfield – as elsewhere – storyscapes are held in tension between the accrued *emplaced stories* that represent historic power structures and have come to convey a normative place identity on the one hand, and the possibility of the shared production, polyvocal telling, and varied recognition of absent stories on the other. The distinction between displacive acts of urban change and those that engage with the trajectories of place is to understand and engage with both aspects as part of an emergent sense of place.

CONCLUSION

The preservation or construction of a sense of place is then an active moment in the passage from memory to hope, from past to future. And the reconstruction of places can reveal hidden memories that hold out the prospects for different futures.

(Harvey, 1996: 306)

Stories change all the time. Just as Massey (1991) argues that places are open, dynamic and always in process, so *emplaced histories* change and develop as aspects of place. Indeed, as Samuel asserts, history is “inherently revisionist” (1994: pX). This adaptability is exacerbated in processes of culture-led development, as associated investments in branding, marketing, and interpretation compete for control over an area’s representation and experience within the ‘reconstruction of place’, as Harvey suggests.

In this chapter I have considered the ways in which stories in and of a place mediate the embodied-sensory experiences of local social actors and condition senses of place. I defined doubly-situated stories as *emplaced stories* and demonstrated that these are told in Smithfield through multiple modalities; these also accrue over time to form an enduring network that expresses dominant social structures, one that is realised through municipal consent and market-led power dynamics. These contribute to how social actors define senses of place, informing varyingly commodified, intimate, relational and emotional geographies. For culture-led development processes, this analysis illustrates how participating agents both instigate and galvanise the unstable storyscapes of urban change. Here they are instrumentalised for footfall and socio-spatial transformation by Destination City; and deployed as a response to adaptive re-use by the Museum inside the former market.

Pervasive political and economic forces are equally ingrained in the *absence* of stories, with implications for all local social actors not just those whose communities are represented. I have shown encounters with such stories can relationally condition *political* senses of place by drawing attention to social injustice, the possibility of belonging within the multiplicity of place, and the potential for a 'parity of participation' (Fraser, 2009). Here then, to paraphrase Harvey, are the hidden stories that hold out prospects for different futures.

However, these stories all require labour and resources to be told. Is this the role of a city museum? Yes and no. Some city museums, including the London Museum, exist in part to serve this function, and to conserve the material objects and artefacts that carry and inform these stories and histories. Yet, as part of a recognition of the polyvocality of place, it is a role that must be carried out in collaboration and through participatory approaches that share resources. Framing the interaction of a museum with its local – and changing – context in this way acknowledges the power of stories *within* place, but also the necessity of sharing this power as an agent of change. I suggest the need for specific *narrative practices* for new or relocating museums, ways of working that support equitable museum approaches to their new local contexts (see the *blueprint* organising structure in Appendix C). These represent the evolution of a place's stories rather than the imposition of a new narrative or co-opting or occupying what is already there. This is a further expansion of a

museum's spatial, programmatic, and conceptual boundaries: participating in a local place not to maintain the status quo, or to extend a totalising development narrative, but as one agent of many within an emergent sense of place. It is also a role that extends definitively beyond a museum's walls and beyond museological objects, one that as part of culture-led development processes is inevitably entangled with branding and marketing activities, as well the material reshaping and re-coding of place. I discuss this tension in detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 8 Placing the Museum

“The main risk is that they don't engage with their community, you know, that in their quest to establish themselves as the Museum of London in the new area, the area becomes incidental... where they could be based anywhere, and it would make absolutely no difference.”

(Olu Alake, former CEO, The Peel Institute)

Why do we believe that museums may abstain from addressing societal needs and aspirations and be absolved of greater accountability, especially at this time of extraordinary societal upheaval?

(Janes, 2024: 6)

Smithfield is a new social and spatial context for the London Museum, and an opportunity for institutional change. So, while the Museum is being ‘placed’ by the Corporation – as its landlord and its major source of capital funding – the Museum is also seeking to place itself, processes that will affect both the Museum and its new local context. I have proposed the experiential ‘mechanics’ of how social actors define senses of place in a changing urban environment, and examined how local identity is variously implicated and negotiated in culture-led development – both instrumentalised and transformed by market-led dynamics. These analyses have addressed my first and second research questions respectively. In this chapter, I switch perspective from place to institution, and look specifically at the London Museum’s interaction with Smithfield, informed by my preceding arguments. Through interviews with institutional actors rather than social actors, and analysis of strategic plans, engagement aims, and programmatic outlines, I here examine the role of the Museum as an agent of change, one that is negotiating a diverse field of social, spatial, economic, narrative and political dynamics. This engages directly with my third and final research question, which questions how an incoming museum can engage with and be informed by its new local sense of place. As an analysis of the Museum’s aims and ambitions within an ongoing process, aspects are inevitably speculative. Nonetheless, they reveal the Museum’s relative intentions and values. This analysis, I argue, shows the potential for museums to engage in

emergent change rather than maintaining or abstracting elements of a status quo, an agency that is nonetheless negotiated and in tension with wider commodifying and exclusionary forces.

In the first section, I analyse specific components of the London Museum's approach to Smithfield, including those planned and already initiated. These include the *Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme*, *London in Our Time*, and the *Engagement Framework*. These represent relevant aspects of the Museum's programmes of local engagement and its intended ways of working. I highlight how these programmes and practices engage with and are informed by Smithfield's senses of place, specifically through *reciprocity*, and by *propagating* multiple future-oriented forms of cultural transformation. I also relate this to questions of institutional scale and funding.

In the second section I consider the Museum's intention to become a 'shared place in the middle of it all', setting this within an academic discourse on shared social spaces (Oldenburg, 1999; Gurian, 2006) and museum agency (Janes, 2024; Murawski, 2021; Sandell, 2017). I examine the implications of this approach in Smithfield, including tactics of civic openness, commercial operation, and spatial planning. I also complicate the notion of a 'shared' space by considering tensions between museum neutrality and calls for institutions to 'take a position' (Sandell, 2017). I conclude by proposing a paradigm of *convening practices* to inform museum engagement with a new local context. This is the third and final aspect of the strategic sense of place *blueprint* for museum professionals. This suggests ways of working to guide a museum's long-term equitable engagement and reciprocal relationship with a new local area, outlined in Appendix C and disseminated online.

8.1 APPROACHING SMITHFIELD

Fittingly, the London Museum's relocation from London Wall to Smithfield is comparable to moving from a 'wall' to a 'field', an analogy that emphasises the perceived disconnection of the former site and the benefits of its new home in terms of audience visibility and visitor access. However, while the Museum has been "*thinking about Smithfield for a long time*" (Finbarr Woolley, Director of Content), and intends to "*land softly*" (Laura Wilkinson,

Programme Director), its approach “*has not been a linear process*” (Lauren Parker, Head of Creative Partnerships). This is reflected both in the changing scope and phasing of the Museum’s adaptive re-use of former market buildings, as well as the pattern of community engagement. In this section, I focus on the latter, examining how the Museum’s approaches to local social engagement relate to Smithfield’s senses of place. I first introduce aspects of the *Engagement Framework*, *London in Our Time*, and the *Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme*, considering these as both a platform for *reciprocity* and an act of negotiating place. I then consider the Museum’s position as an agent of change, both for its own operation and for Smithfield. I end this section by relating the Museum’s programmatic and philosophical approach to Smithfield to its spatial relocation, highlighting notions of *propagation* and disparities in scale and funding.

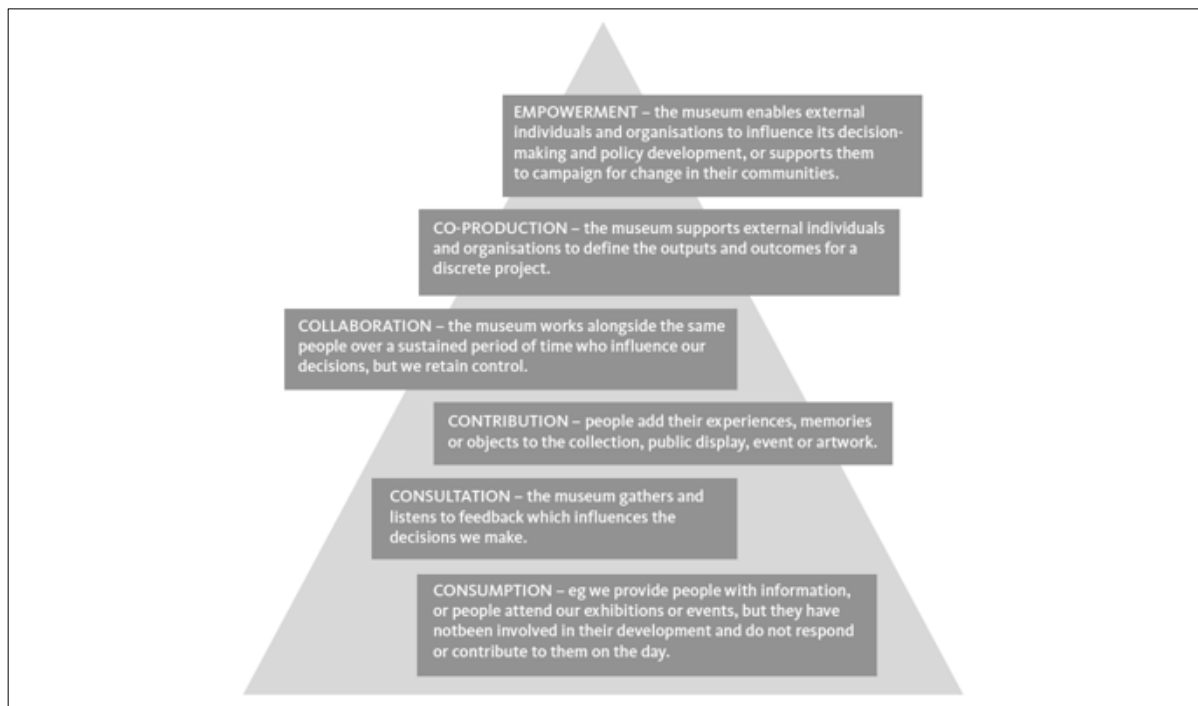
8.1.1 “A force for good”: Framing engagement in Smithfield

I turn first to the framework that guides the Museum’s planned and already-initiated engagement activity and public programming. In relocating to Smithfield, the Museum aims to embrace its physical connection to the “surrounding streets” (London Museum, 2023a: 20) from which it was disconnected at London Wall, coupled with an overarching vision to be “a force for good in our neighbourhood,” a goal that reflects ambitions for a sense of social ownership, belonging, and partnership. This is in line with arguments for the local social value of culture-led development, albeit linked to its economic and symbolic value as discussed in Chapter 2. It hence distils a recognition by the Museum of the considerable impact it will have on Smithfield: it is inescapably ‘a force’, but one that the Museum asserts “can make a real difference to the lives of local communities” (London Museum, 2023a: 18).

These locally-focused ambitions are informed by principles of co-production, participation, and socially-engaged practice, ways of working that are increasingly part of mainstream museological approaches (Kendall-Adams, 2019; Lynch & Alberti, 2010; Simon, 2010). As Finbarr Whooley, Director of Content, suggests, “*our natural way of working is collaborative.*” These approaches are formalised in the *Museum of London Engagement Framework*. The ‘engagement triangle’ within this framework visualises five modes of

engagement beyond the base level of consumption (i.e. attending an exhibition). These span consultation, contribution, collaboration, co-production, and empowerment (figure 8.1).

Figure 8.1: The London Museums' 'engagement triangle' visualises its different modes of engagement. Activities higher up the diagram tend to involve fewer people. (London Museum, 2021a: 5)



Interestingly, the base layer of 'Consumption' shown in figure 8.1 will be excluded in future versions of the *Engagement Framework* (unless it is the outcome of a collaborative project), to be replaced with 'Connection'. For the Museum, this change emphasises the importance of relationship building. It also demarcates the value, purpose, and approach of *engagement* as distinct from other museum functions and audience relationships, aspects its work nonetheless informs. Indeed, Miles (2021) explicitly links 'consumption' to 'consumerism' in museum contexts, an aspect of broader and evolving landscapes of experiential consumption. He argues, "we might have considered the museums of the past to be a relief from the obligations of consumerism. This is no longer the case" (2021: 110). This can extend to elements of a museum visit even beyond its retail and catering offer, and indeed such commercial consumption is an inherent part of many museums' operational

viability, one that ultimately funds socially-engaged practice. At the same time however, as I argue in this section, the practice and outcomes of *engagement* also lie beyond consumer logics in their capacity for reciprocity and their relationship to place.

The two uppermost levels at the top of the ‘engagement triangle’, for example, represent a relinquishing of control. Co-production – first outlined by Elinor Ostrom (1996) in the field of development studies – suggests a sharing of authority in the development and/or fabrication of exhibitions, installations, events, and other content or programmatic initiatives, and has gained momentum as part of a disciplinary emphasis on participation and socially-engaged practice within the ‘new museology’ (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; Marstine; 2006; Simon, 2010). This is also an example of what academic and museum professional Bernadette Lynch (Lynch & Alberti, 2010) calls ‘radical trust’, a practice through which a museum “may control neither the product nor the process” (p15) of cultural production. This relinquishing of power extends from a belief that shared authority is better able to create and guide cultural production than institutional control. Yet, along with the recognition of the polyvocality and multiple trajectories of place this represents, there is also a need “to make clear the responsibilities that accompany this process of power-sharing” (Sandell, 2017: 144), in essence, to set ground rules. For Alex Werner, former Lead Curator, such approaches are “*almost the norm now for any new museum*”, however they remain a relatively recent evolution of museum practice away from historically exclusionary practices of cultural institutions (Brook et al., 2020; Sandell & Nightingale, 2012) and they are far from universal. In some cases, they are also co-opted as a tool of authority rather than a challenge to it; indeed, Levine (2017) highlights that “increased participation has not necessarily resulted in increased influence” (p1155). This necessitates both ongoing internal assessment and the scrutiny of external evaluation.⁷

The London Museum however also aims to go further than sharing authority. Alongside its mission to be a ‘force for good’, the highest level in its *Engagement Framework* is

⁷ The Museum appointed external evaluators TSIP in Q3 2024 to create an evaluation plan and impact framework to explore longer-term outcomes and the impact on audiences, partners, participants and the Museum itself.

‘empowerment’: supporting local groups “to campaign for change in their communities” (London Museum, 2021a: 6), a progressive though challenging ambition. Yet it is one that positions the Museum alongside similar institutions that are “working towards being agents of positive change, acting upon the inequalities within and outside their local communities” (Murawski, 2021: pXIII). Institutions with similarly-framed aspirations, for example, are affecting change in South-Asian cultural identity, in people with experience of homelessness, and the legal rights of refugees (see Museums Association, 2023; Museum of Homelessness, 2024; People’s History Museum, 2024). Here we can see some of the mechanics for how Museum activity interacts with local political and socio-cultural dimensions of Smithfield. In its desire to relinquish (some) control to local social actors and support change, Museum aspirations can here be framed as working *within* a sense of place rather than *on* a sense of place. Counterintuitively, this is also an expression of institutional agency and not an abrogation of it.

Engagement is also stratified by the Museum’s target audiences, a stratification suggestive of the uneven power geometries (Massey, 1991) and relational disparities within everyday ‘lived’ space (Lefebvre, 1991), and one that challenges the status quo of museum constituents. While the Museum aims to engage with “all Londoners” (2021a: 6), there is an emphasis on those whose histories are underrepresented in museums, including Black, Asian and ethnically diverse people; children, and young people aged 16-24; older people aged 65+ at risk of social exclusion; people with lived experience of disability and neurodiversity; people on the LGBTQ+ spectrum; and people with lived experience of poverty. Explicit reference is also made to engaging “*with people who live and work in our local area*” (2021a: 8). As Murawski (2021) suggests, the more interconnection that exists between museums and their local communities, the more potential there is for positive change and accountability (p23). While one reflects a concern for socio-cultural structures and lived experience, and the other for place, these two audience approaches are nonetheless linked, cumulative, and potentially synergistic. Engaging local social actors, especially those whose histories are underrepresented, arguably maximises the potential to empower (local) social change.

Before situating these aspirations in an analysis of the Museum’s planned programmes and practices, I make two further points. Firstly, that these engagement activities represent a process of *reciprocity*, in their aim to both “provide value for participants” (London Museum, 2021a: 4) and “to make the museum a better place for our audiences in the future”. Rather than a benign institutional force unfolding totalising and centralised ambitions – however beneficially imagined – this then appears to expand organisational boundaries, allowing in the prospect of institutional change through the multiplicity of place and its local social actors. The highest mode, ‘empowerment’, for example centres change both in local communities *and* in the museum’s own decision-making and policy development (see figure 8.1). This is a departure from pure ‘consumption’ and from commodifying logics. Secondly, it is important to highlight that the ambitions of the framework may fall short in practice (see Lynch & Alberti, 2010), and be fragmented. As with the power of the Corporation established in Chapter 2, the Museum is itself not a “monolithic order” (Massey, 2005: 45) but subject to internal variation and negotiation. Indeed, informal conversations suggest some staff see the Museum’s agency in terms of activist responsibilities, while others see its ‘force for good’ as sufficiently conveyed in the everyday operation of ‘being a Museum’. This suggests a more granular and mediated unfolding of engagement ambitions in Smithfield.

8.1.2 “A kind of mutual encounter”: Approaching change through reciprocity

The values of the *Engagement Framework* inform two major strands of activity developed and recently deployed by the Museum as it approaches relocation: *London in Our Time* and the *Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme*. Aspects of these programmes can be read as serving a dual *reciprocal* purpose as action research towards the Museum’s future operation and as local social engagement in and of itself. The content of these programmes is summarised in figure 8.2.

Figure 8.2: Overview of the Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme and London in Our Time. These programmes span 2023-2026, with aspects informing future operating and engagement models. (London Museum, 2021b, 2023d)

Programme	Activity detail
Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme	Three-year programme of local activity supported by a grant from the Corporation's Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund and public funding by Arts Council England. The Museum aims to work with local communities to shape how a museum can be a force for good, beyond its collections, spaces and the traditional role of a museum.
Flourishing Neighbourhoods 2023-2026	Three-year programme exploring the role of museums and heritage organisations in supporting health and wellbeing, working with both community partners and healthcare providers. This work will inform the development of the Museum's public programmes, in which the health and wellbeing of local communities is embedded in the work of <i>Our Time</i> – the main public spaces, displays and activities of the new Museum. This includes the recruitment of <i>Community Associates</i> , partners recruited on a long-term basis to work with the Museum to co-develop programming, governance and legacy models for <i>Our Time</i> .
Creative Activation	Activities focused on public engagement with the new Museum site and informing future operating models. This includes monthly community tours of the construction site; participation in the annual Open House festival; Play Cycles – free summer play activities for local intergenerational families; and the development of a collaborative design brief, spatial plan, and operating model for a future temporary creative community space, to launch in 2025 and run until the Museum opens.
Next Gen Creatives	Developing training, volunteering, and employment routes for young people not in employment, education or training into the Museum and wider museum and galleries sector.
London in Our Time	Part of the Museum's Arts Council England activity plan, and a key constituent of the Museum's aspiration to work with 100,000 Londoners in the creation of the new Museum and to build <i>Our Time</i> together with Londoners. Part of ACE NPO 2023/2026 programme, its work has a range of outcomes and outputs: supporting the development of fixed-content displays, participative strands of the launch and future creative programmes, community partnerships and creating ongoing engagement models and tools for <i>Our Time</i> .
Dragging the Coach	A steering group collective of queer London performers and storytellers will explore and re-imagine what the pageantry and traditional institutions that surround the Lord Mayor's Coach could look like, resulting in an exhibit in the Museum.
Exploring Being Young	Run in partnership with Beyond the Box and taking place at MoL Docklands. Connected to <i>Being Young</i> (working title), a major ACE-funded collecting project collecting the life experiences of children across London before the Museum opens.
'It's a Dog's Life'	A film focusing on and around the Harringay totalisator and Welcome to the Stow signs, part of Harringay and Walthamstow dog racing tracks.

London in Our Time aims to support the development of *Our Time*, a central display area and communal space that will span the ground floor of the General Market building. Funded by Arts Council England (ACE), this programme includes projects supporting the development of fixed-content displays, participatory elements of future creative programmes, and ongoing engagement models and will run for the three years leading up to the Museum's opening in 2026. In the first year (2023-4), these comprise relationship building work, both within the City of London and London Borough of Islington and across London, an annual 'community celebration', and *Our Time*-specific engagement projects. Regarding *Engagement Framework* categories, these activities represent 'consultation' and 'collaboration'; I suggest they can also be seen in light of the *degrees of recognition* established in Chapter 7, with the experience of participation potentially having a meaningful impact on those taking part. There are also interactions with local political dimensions: re-imagining the symbolic authority of the Lord Mayor's coach from a queer perspective (see 'Dragging the Coach', figure 8.2) arguably challenges the real political emplaced power of the Museum's administrative context and its associated pageantry. This goes beyond merely recognising the symbolism of local municipal power to playfully critique it.

For the Museum, the *Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme* combines programming with relationship building, community partnerships and "place-making" (London Museum, 2023d) and, as its name suggests, has a more hyper-local focus than *London in Our Time*. This sits within the Museum's ACE Activity Plan for 2023-26, and is primarily funded by the Corporation's Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund (CILNF). It too will run for the three years preceding the Museum opening:

The Programme will act as a three-year neighbourhood incubator, creating an ambitious model of long-term local partnerships, engagement activity, creative activities and cultural events, and local training and employment into the museum's core workforce.

(London Museum, 2021b: 5)

The *Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme* can be understood as attempting to embed *reciprocity* and change beyond its three-year lifespan, informing longer-term operating practices of the Museum, establishing partnerships, and building the foundations for future local careers. It is directed at cohorts in both the City of London and the London Borough of Islington, with a particular emphasis on young people as one of the Museum's priority engagement groups. Ongoing and planned activities are taking place close to the new Museum site, building towards a launch programme in summer 2026. The programme comprises three strands: *Next Gen Creatives*, which aims to improve life chances of local young people; *Flourishing Neighbourhoods*, which investigates how cultural and heritage organisations can enhance local health and wellbeing, working with community partners and healthcare providers; and *Creative Activations*, which aims to establish Smithfield "as a thriving, healthy and welcoming creative neighbourhood" (London Museum, 2021b: 5) with the Museum at its heart (London Museum, 2023d).

Despite their different mandates, the language of these initiatives as it pertains to Smithfield's senses of place to some extent echoes that of Culture Mile, Culture Mile BID, and Destination City, for example in its celebration of local culture and creativity and intentions for public programming; this is partly a deliberate choice in order to correlate with Corporation agendas. However, rather than "investment in consumption spectacles" and "the revival of vernacular traditions associated with places as a consumer attraction" (Harvey, 1996: 298) seen for example in Corporation events The Golden Key in 2022 and Bartholomew Fair in 2023, the Museum is arguably engaging with Smithfield, per Massey (1991, 2005), as a site of multiplicity and ongoing change. This can be seen in its sequential, iterative and long-term approaches, and a concern for varied socio-cultural and demographic cohorts.

Further, these initiatives as outlined stem from a basis of shared and reciprocal change, aiming to affect both participants (and participating organisations) and the Museum itself. Anticipated impacts on the former include empowerment through opportunities to influence decision-making, skills development, and a sense of ownership; impacts on the latter include the transformation of working practices, improved workforce diversity and access, and a better understanding of local issues (London Museum, 2023d: 5). In addition,

the combination of local and socially-engaged practices may encourage participation of historically under-represented cohorts in communities close to Smithfield. For Ganga et al., “hyper-local events and co-production approaches may be key drivers of participation in areas/populations with historically low levels of participation in arts and culture” (2022: 1), distinguishing them again from place-branding activities designed with consumer consumption in mind.

An example of this is the *Flourishing Neighbourhoods* project (see figure 8.2), which aims to reciprocally benefit local participants, local partners, and the Museum. This project considers how a cultural institution can enhance the wellbeing and health of local people, particularly those who experience increased health inequality, for example as a result of overcrowded housing, air quality, social isolation and mental health problems. Within this, the Museum has sought ‘community associates’, partners who will help to co-develop programming, governance, and legacy models for the *Our Time* space. Further, the Museum will:

...fund our community partners to do the work that matters to them and their service users, building long-term trust and relationships and learning and growing together as a network.

(London Museum, 2023e)

In broad terms, the aims are: for ‘community associate’ partners to benefit from funding (£5,000) to deliver work in line with their own needs and goals; for the Museum to benefit by building relationships with local organisations and piloting new funding and operational approaches; and for participants to benefit from the experience and outcomes of the projects. Indeed, a six-week textile sewing project for women at The Peel Institute delivered as a pilot project has been continued independently by the participants. This approach combines to form a “new way of working” (London Museum, 2024b) for the Museum.

As these ambitions stand, the programmes can be framed as being not only mutually-beneficial, but also symbiotic. Impacts are intended to affect the futures of both the Museum and its local communities in a way that supports ongoing interrelation, and which

aims to increase participation from under-represented cohorts. This represents not an imposition ‘on’ a local place, but a *negotiation* ‘with’ it, arguably acknowledging political, socio-cultural, embodied, and imagined senses of place as not only relational and multiple, but that also warrant progressive change: a collaborative approach that fosters inclusion and social equity (Janes & Sandell, 2019). For Lauren Parker, the *Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme* aspires to be a form of encounter between the Museum and Smithfield’s local social actors and groups:

“In an ideal world, it would be a kind of mutual encounter [...] a sort of a sharing of different skills, resources, knowledge, opportunity, that sort of equity, of, you know, fully acknowledged, agreed, equitable, compensated, non-instrumentalized [participation].”

(Lauren Parker, Head of Creative Partnerships, London Museum)

For me, such ‘mutuality’ and *reciprocity*, as I have previously argued, is predicated on the Museum working within an *emergent* sense of place in Smithfield, and its shifting trajectories, connections, boundaries, and uneven power structures. Yet it is also tempered by the likely fragmented and negotiated realities of delivery. Rather than a reliance on the *imaginative displacement* of a planning rhythm that is foregrounded by CGI and a branding strategy, and which prefigures an established outcome, this is then an acknowledgement of both a period and a process of ‘approach’: a bespoke set of practices as the Museum builds up to its opening in 2026. For Lauren Parker, this is characterised by ‘listening’, suggesting, *“I think we’re still a mode of listening and learning to others”*. Yet perhaps there is room to go further and embed such listening as an open-ended practice of Museum operation rather than a period of approach.

Taken together, the *Engagement Framework*, activities of *London in Our Time*, and the *Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme* therefore suggest an approach to Smithfield that acknowledges the uneven power geometries of diverse socio-cultural groups and cohorts, and takes action to affect these; that works reciprocally within a set of contextual relations (including people and organisations) that is always “in progress” (Massey, 1991); and

recognises the polyvocality and multiplicity of place in attempts to share power. This strategy appears to consider a sense of place as a complex landscape of interactions rather than a static development site. At the time of writing however, much of this strategy remains to be tested, and evaluated. Further, as I now go on to discuss, these ambitions are complicated by questions of organisational and temporal scale, funding, and a need for the Museum to consider itself as an *ongoing* agent within Smithfield's changing senses of place, rather than a (purely) incoming institution.

8.1.3 “Putting down roots”: Parameters of cultural propagation in Smithfield

Although intended to offer reciprocal benefits to both the Museum and individuals, groups, and organisations in Smithfield, the ambitions of the frameworks and practices of local-social engagement outlined above are tempered by interrelated issues of workforce change, organisational scale, the longevity of capital projects, and incompatible funding structures. These produce multiple disparities that are elided within the overarching processes of culture-led development, and which potentially hinder a place-centric approach. I consider each of these in turn, along with productive tactics of mitigation.

Firstly, the structures of working life are at odds with long-term engagement and development programmes. This is evident even in my own research timeline and the movement or retirement of institutional interviewees during fieldwork. Anecdotally, this may be as high as one-third of Museum staff between 2020-2023. Former Lead Curator for the new Museum Alex Werner (who himself left the Museum team during fieldwork) summarises this issue:

“And it's probably, you know, I would say five or six years, about the maximum you can keep a team together. And this is more like 10 years. And that's going to be a real challenge because the people who were there at the beginning are not there in the middle.”

(Alex Werner, former Lead Curator, London Museum)

Staff changes are a “significant issue” on a project of this size and timescale. They risk a loss of institutional knowledge and can also undermine capacity building; this is also likely to be exacerbated by the length of capital building projects, project delays, and the labour market opportunities of a global city such as London providing alternative employment prospects.

Secondly, there is a disparity of institutional scale. The London Museum is a medium-sized organisation with 269 staff across its sites (London Museum, 2023b: 16) (neighbouring St Bartholomew’s Hospital has 2,500 staff by comparison (Barts Health, 2024)). Yet through the ambitious nature of the project, and the Museum’s positioning by the Corporation as part of internationally-focused and local economic rationales of culture-led development, it is expected to have a far larger socio-spatial, economic, and symbolic impact. This over-sized expectation reflects the perceived prestige of such an institution (Evans, 2005), a representational value that is central to both the area’s centralised place-marketing strategies as well as those of private developers, as seen in the ‘JJ Mack’ office development discussed in Chapter 6. Further, this impact is catalysed by significant capital funding for the Museum by the Corporation, and by the multiple strategies of local aesthetic and material transformation outlined in Chapter 2 and elsewhere. However, this does not substantively enhance the capacity of the Museum to respond programmatically to the scale of cultural production or local-social engagement required. Indeed, this has been exacerbated by the need to continue ‘business-as-usual’ operation at London Wall and Docklands while also planning for the new Museum. Lauren Parker expresses the Museum’s challenge:

“It’s not like our funding is going to increase, or our workforce is going to increase massively. So it’s thinking about [...] is it possible to do that, you know, to transform ourselves in a way that meets the scale?”

(Lauren Parker, Head of Creative Partnerships, London Museum)

For the Museum, this may in part be alleviated through partnership working, reflecting Wolff’s (2010) notion of communities ‘doing together what we cannot do apart’, but applied here in terms inter-organisational collaboration. Indeed, sharing resources – human and financial – was an aspect of Culture Mile’s distributed organisational model, one that

anecdotally resulted in an increased capacity to focus on public facing activities. Programme Director Laura Wilkinson agrees, explicitly linking such practices to the future operation of *Our Time*:

“Our whole kind of, sort of aspiration around how we deliver Our Time in the future... [is] around this idea of partnership. [...] I believe we have to do it, because we're never going to be able to afford to deliver the programme, the scale of programme we're talking about. And we will never have the breadth of skills, life experience within our museum team. And they're all really good things. Yeah. Why would we want to do it alone?”

(Laura Wilkinson, Programme Director, London Museum)

This reflects the *reciprocal* aim of the programme to engage and empower local groups, and to test future models of operation ultimately informing new Museum practices. Notably, this approach also cements the economic necessity of partnership working. However, there are benefits (“*why would we want to do it alone?*”) not least in terms of engagement as an active sharing of authority and as a means of building relationships. The latter also implies a *convening* role for the Museum, in the creation of productive networks linked to Smithfield in which actors reciprocally support each other’s local aims and ambitions, as well as amplifying some groups’ limited resources and agency.

Thirdly, in addition to questions of workforce cohesion and of organisational scale, the longevity of the material transformation of the market buildings in preparation for the Museum’s relocation has also affected how it has approached and engaged with Smithfield. Indeed, the tension between planning local social engagement programmes on the one hand and the timelines of a capital build project on the other mirror those between *queer rhythms* and *planning rhythms* discussed in Chapter 6. The *planning rhythms* of the new Museum project follow fixed milestones and phases; these are not only longer than the timelines conventionally employed in planning engagement programmes, they have also been subject to significant delays. This causes uncertainty that inhibits planning and disrupts partnership working. Further, capital building projects are driven by set deliverables that are

required well in advance of opening; engagement work follows a different rhythm, with time needed to build relationships, understand needs, and develop mutually-beneficial outcomes before projects can even begin.

Yet the length and delays of the programme have also conditioned a way of working that I suggest supports a more equitable relationship between the Museum and its local context. This is found for example in the different modes outlined in the *Engagement Framework* and visualised in the ‘engagement triangle’ (figure 8.1). Considered through a temporal lens, these modes can be seen in terms of synergistic progression, with the lower tiers (consultation, contribution) working together to inform higher tiers (collaboration, co-production), building on one another over time. The approaches themselves are also iterative: the *Engagement Framework* informing an *Engagement Charter*, informing a co-production tool (in development summer 2024), and with lessons and outputs ultimately informing a governance framework for *Our Time*. The extent to which these synergistically inform overall Museum operation, however, remains to be seen and will inevitably take time.

A further example of incremental engagement is the *Next Gen Creatives* project, part of the *Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme*. In the first two years of this project young people progress through a sequence of free creative skills sessions, then paid work placements, and will ultimately have their work showcased at Museum events. In the third year, the aim is to offer apprenticeships or traineeships into the new Museum as part of the *Our Time* delivery team. *Reciprocity* is here deployed temporally, building value to individuals and the institution over time and as the Museum prepares to open. Although disrupted by COVID-19, this is also seen in the sequence of projects from Smithfield 150 (August 2018), a large-scale public event organised with Culture Mile and Smithfield Market Tenants’ Association that attracted over 25,000 visitors, to London’s Biggest Play Street and Smithfield Street Party (August 2019) and to the events now proposed within the *Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme*. For Lauren Parker, these and other pilot projects have informed “*how we work and what our values are*” in a way “*that doesn't exist so well in a kind of institutional story or institutional memory.*” This then is a distinct practice of institutional ‘approach’ to a new context within the parameters of a phased capital project.

There are also longer-term interrelations between the Museum's strategy of approach and its senses of place. In their assessment of the economic impacts of arts and culture in regional development, cultural economists Bille and Schulze (2006) highlighted the 'short run' and 'long run' impacts of museums: 'short run' effects equate to quantitative and tangible impacts, such as employment, tourism, and visitor footfall, while 'long-run' effects include the representational benefits of place branding, educational impacts, and cultural preservation. Jimenez (2015) also adds qualitative notions including "soft power" to these long-run effects. Seen through the lens of senses of place, and in addition to *reciprocal* impacts discussed above, the Museum's local- and socially-engaged programmes and practices appear to transgress this model to have both tangible short-term impacts and 'long run' effects: by growing participation, capacity and cultural-production in ways that emerge slowly in place over time and are self-reinforcing. As such, I suggest they are a form of *cultural propagation*. This describes both the incremental engagement evidenced in the *Next Gen Creatives* project and the initiation of relationships (with both local social actors and organisations) that may reach long into the future. This is a scenario that is evident at local community charity *The Peel Institute*, which has had a presence in Clerkenwell for more than 125 years:

"And some ... of those older people have had a 70, 60-year history with the Peel because their parents used to bring them to the Peel when they were children, you know, and now they are bringing their grandchildren."

Olu Alake, former CEO, The Peel Institute

Such a span of community interaction and engagement enables a generational relationship with place. Aspects of the Museum's approach mirrors this longer-term sense of connection seen, for example in supporting potential creative careers for local young people, a focus on children, providing training for local organisations, and informing future operational practices. Each of these has impacts beyond the timespan of their initial implementation. Indeed, the Museum's 2023 *Strategic Plan* implies an analogy of 'growing' in term of its engagement with its new context, stating "the next five years will see us put down roots in Smithfield" (London Museum, 2023a: 16). Yet rather than growing, those aspects of the

programme highlighted above suggest multiple acts of ‘seeding’, not a single linear trajectory of growth but instead a *propagation* of future benefits that is cyclical. (This is seen, for example, in the decision by participants of the pilot *Flourishing Neighbourhoods* sewing group to continue meeting together). In Chapter 6, I have drawn on Massey’s framing of place as process (1991) to argue that senses of place are in part defined through local social actors’ relational experiences of long-term processes and power dynamics. By using its agency to build “the conditions for long-term cultural transformation” (London Museum, 2021b: 5), the Museum is engaging in Smithfield’s sense of place by initiating a new process, with its own rhythm of propagation and change.

However, this approach is still challenged by my fourth and final constraining parameter (after workforce change, organisational scale, and project longevity), that of programmatic funding. Indeed, I suggest that cultural funding structures are out of step with the longer-term approaches needed to engage with and be informed by local senses of place. For the Museum this is partly due to the wider “funding and fundraising landscape” (London Museum, 2023a: 15) and is despite programmatic funding support from the Corporation and Mayor of London. This is also a consequence of how funding bodies structure award payments, processes that can require annual applications limiting longer-term planning, or which are susceptible to delays that impact timelines. Such processes are also largely predicated on pre-determined deliverables that challenge the production of truly co-created outcomes and outputs.

The programmes discussed above (*London in Our Time* and the *Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme*) are supported by funds from Arts Council England (ACE) and the Corporation’s Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund (CILNF). Funding for the *Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme* was first sought from the CILNF in October 2021, but a series of delays, partly a result of COVID-19, meant that funding was only approved in early 2023. While this delay has been mirrored in delays to the Museum construction timeline, there are nonetheless unrealised experiential, socio-cultural and representational effects as a result. However, where ACE funding is approved on a yearly basis, with informal quarterly reporting and more substantive reporting on an annual basis, CILNF funding is approved for three years, with payments released quarterly with annual approval to proceed to the next

funding year. This provides a greater degree of certainty for future projects, supporting improved planning, assumed financial contributions from the Museum, and potential partnerships or match-funding. This approach also supports the greater *cultural propagation* necessary to accompany the multi-year programmes of social engagement, and a reciprocal approach to local places. This suggests a need to adapt funding policy frameworks for the specific practices of ‘approach’ required of institutions at the heart of culture-led development schemes.

In this section I have discussed aspects of the Museum’s planned locally- and socially-engaged programmes, and their institutional and strategic context. I have argued that these reach towards *reciprocity* and *propagation* as modes of engagement with Smithfield, and as tactics that enable the Museum to simultaneously affect change in and be informed by its new local sense of place over time. The efficacy of these modes of engagement are both constrained and, in some cases, engendered by the parameters of culture-led development. This includes short-term personnel changes, a dissonance of scale, and unsuitable funding frameworks. Together, this suggests a further layer of *negotiation*, one that is between institutions (including partners and funders), but also between the Museum and Smithfield as a dynamic field of relations, seen for example in audience and engagement priorities that reflect uneven local power geometries.

Many of these approaches reflect a recognition that relocating to a new local area requires a discrete set of museological practices compared to everyday operation. These are deployed in the lead-up to the Museum’s arrival in Smithfield and will inform operation from that point on. However, also necessary in engaging with an emergent sense of place is to continue this spirit of ‘approaching’ Smithfield once the Museum is open. This is therefore an ongoing process of reflective practice, ‘deep listening’ (Janes, 2022), and openness. This does not mean a repetitive and unchanging relationship with local social actors, groups, and partners – indeed as time passes needs will change, and relationships will necessarily evolve and end. However, it is a shift in institutional participation that imagines the institution, like place, as itself always ‘becoming’ (Pred, 1984). In light of this, I now turn to consider the Museum’s broader vision for its new site, and the productive instabilities of shared places.

8.2 A SHARED PLACE?: CONTEXTUALISING A SOCIO-SPATIAL VISION FOR SMITHFIELD

In this section I consider the Museum's intention to become a 'shared place' (London Museum, 2023a: 6) and force for good, and the potential effects of this vision on Smithfield's simultaneously socio-cultural, political, embodied, and imagined senses of place. In section 8.2.1, I outline this intention, in particular its relationship to the Museum's commercial strategy and the public realm around the site. I relate this to the Museum's own *sensible boundaries*, and the ongoing process of *negotiation* between overlapping and conflicting institutional intentions. In section 8.2.2, I address tensions within the notion of a 'shared place'. I set this ambition within the academic contexts of socially-engaged museum practice (Murawski, 2021; Sandell, 2017; Sandell & Nightingale, 2012) and the value and complexity of shared social spaces (Gurian, 2006). I also highlight the tensions of museum neutrality, and the limits of the Museum's agency to challenge established power geometries within a changing sense of place. I conclude by proposing a paradigm of *convening practices* for new or relocating institutions to guide equitable relationships with a new local area.

8.2.1 "We can't deny that we are a force": Negotiated tactics of inclusion

A central ambition of the Museum's new site is to be a 'shared place'. This is articulated throughout its *Strategic Plan*, *Engagement Framework* and other policies and activity plans:

The museum is London's shared place in the middle of it all. Slap bang in the middle of rush hour, of 10,000 years of history, of London's biggest arguments, trade routes and memories. No matter where you've come from, how long you're staying for, or what side of the river you live on, we offer a home where all of London's stories cross and collide.

(London Museum, 2023a: 6)

This statement centres the importance of the Museum's geographic location in Smithfield, as "*slap bang in the middle*", as well as its epistemological role as a nexus of ideas, histories, and objects. In emphasising its 'shared' nature, the Museum also seems here to be working

to counter the historically exclusionary status of museums more broadly. This tension is highlighted by Janes:

Although still plagued by elitist behaviour and denialism, museums are public places where people can meet, work, and learn from each other.

(2024: 55)

This ‘elitist behaviour’ is in part challenged (although likely *negotiated* in practice) by the *Engagement Framework*, which advocates sharing authority, and a prioritisation of specific cohorts and stories – an aspect of its *narrative practices* (Chapter 7). This also goes beyond conventional museum audiences, to “involve people who can often be excluded from cultural experiences” (London Museum, 2021a: 6) and “why young people, who make up a third of London’s population, will be a focus” (London Museum, 2023a: 5). As well as invoking an ethos of civic openness and inclusion, there are also practical operational conditions of being a place ‘where people can meet’, reflected for example in an ambition to be “open all hours” (2023a: 16). This is further influenced by the architecture of the General Market, a space that was “designed to operate ‘in the round’”, an intent that the Museum “will honour” (New Museum interpretation panels, London Wall, 2022). This is reflected in increased spatial ‘porosity’ with several entrances and exits, and a non-linear exhibition layout for *Our Time*.

Accompanying the intention to be a ‘shared place’ is the Museum’s ambition to be ‘a force for good’. This is articulated as “central to our mission and something we will work ever harder to be” (London Museum, 2023a: 5). The *Engagement Framework* explicitly ties this to practices of inclusion:

We will [...] take engagement to a new level in order to create a new museum that is an inclusive, welcoming, world-class shared space for all and a force for good in and beyond the city.

(London Museum, 2021a: 4)

This frames the Museum as an agent of progressive change. Unmistakably, the Museum here aims to inhabit a role well beyond the storehouse or ‘cabinet of curiosity’ origin of some city museums (Hebbert, 2020), and beyond even a view of museums as part of “a pantheon of civic institutions that together provide a resource for the public good” (Gurian, 2006: 58). Perhaps here, *as well as* a passive resource ‘for public good’, the Museum is asserting an active role in shaping change – one particularly evident within Smithfield’s culture-led development. This duality is succinctly expressed by Laura Wilkinson:

“We can't deny that we are a force, but trying to be a force for good, as we like to say.”

(Laura Wilkinson, Programme Director, London Museum)

I have previously suggested several conceptual foundations for institutional engagement with an emergent sense of place as part of this ‘force’. I now turn to two ostensibly spatial aspects of the Museum’s relocation to Smithfield that similarly affect local senses of place while also aiming to embed inclusion: its commercial strategy, particularly retail mix, and its ambitions for the public realm.

I turn first to the commercial strategy. The Museum is multiply engaged in the economic future of the wider Smithfield area beyond its role as an institutional actor within a culture-led development scheme. These include its role as a future employer of local workers, apprentices, and volunteers (discussed in section 8.1 in relation to *Next Gen Creatives*); its function as an institutional customer of local goods and services through future procurement strategies; and its position as a future landlord of the commercial units that form part of the General Market perimeter or ‘Outer Crust’. These approaches should be understood in the economic context of the Museum’s future operation, which require it to be “*much more income generating than its current model*” (Finbarr Whooley, Director of Content), expressed in a commercial strategy that aims to “unleash new socially significant opportunities to create value for ourselves and Londoners” (London Museum, 2023a: 16). Aspects of this implicitly relate to the Museum’s ambition to be “a shared space” and its impacts on relational socio-cultural aspects of local senses of place.

The Museum's future role as a retail landlord, for example, is addressed in the Museum's 2023-28 Strategic Plan, which highlights that the commercial strategy:

...will be complemented by an approach to the Victorian high street of shops surrounding the General Market exterior, which will see vacant units inhabited by like-minded London-focused partners.

(2023a: 16)

The Museum here aims to create a mixed economy of social enterprise and conventional commercial tenants, a 'shared' approach that may be susceptible to the Museum's financial imperative to earn more income in its new location. Given their spatial prominence, the resultant tenants will affect socio-cultural and experiential facets of place experience in Smithfield, with commercial choices affecting senses of place in terms of who feels welcome. Paul Martinelli reflects this:

"It's interesting in discussing the plan for the shops, or 'the crust' as they call it. Who do we get in, are we going to get DeBeers in? [...] Which coffee shop are we going to put in there? Are we going to put in one of the small chains, or are we going to put an independent? Are we going to be charging three pounds for coffee or one pound?"

(Paul Martinelli, Market Trader, City of London Member
& London Museum Governor)

Paul's comment about high-end diamond and jewellery retailer *DeBeers* alludes to an earlier conversation about the development of Covent Garden, and diverse responses as to the attractiveness of that model for Smithfield. This also underscores issues of economic inclusion, which Paul illustrates using the cost of coffee as an example differentiator, a notably classed commodity (Miles, 2021: 143). My own analysis of coffee prices on Long Lane in March 2022 found prices ranged from £2.85 (*Redemption Roasters*) to £1.05 (*Ferraris*), the latter as mentioned in Chapter 6 providing an affordable option for Connor, a local unhoused person. Indeed, there is an active discourse underway on how best to

‘poverty proof’ cultural institutions (Children North East, 2023; Jenkins, 2023), and the suggested correlation between café prices at cultural institutions and a lack of government funding (Turner, 2023). Local social actors are also curious about these shops’ future tenants and the type of consumers they might attract as well as deter. London cab driver Phil makes a comparison to Spitalfields Market, a wholesale fruit and vegetable market which the Corporation relocated to Leyton in 1991. The former site is now home to a covered retail market as well as commercial food and retail units:

“I mean, you’ve only got a look at Spitalfields that, you know, that went from being a working market and that [to] being you know, trendy shops, trendy stalls.”

(Phil, taxi driver, 40+ years old)

I have argued in Chapter 6 that the *imaginative displacement* of planning rhythms and the increased accessibility of the site due to the Elizabeth Line is already changing the type of shops, restaurants and cafes in Smithfield, affecting perceptions of inclusion and Smithfield’s social mix and rhythmic ‘24 hour’ distinctiveness. However, as Finbarr Whooley, Director of Content argues, *“it is not in the museum’s interest for the space to become very gentrified,”* presumably aware of the implicit aesthetic, commercial, and socio-cultural barriers this may bring, and the diversity of prospective audiences this will limit. Indeed, strategies such as late-night opening and a desire for a mix of ‘like-minded’ tenants speaks to a concern for both inclusion and an attempt to maintain locally-informed commercial rhythms as part of a ‘shared place’. Yet, as I have argued, non-residential displacements of the kind associated with gentrification are already occurring, and several of the factors affecting Smithfield’s changing sense of place are also those most beneficial to the museum, including new transport infrastructure and an improved public realm. It is this latter aspect that I turn to next.

The Museum’s aims to foster a ‘shared place’ ethos also extend to the public realm that will adjoin its new site. This amounts to a rearrangement of Smithfield’s micro-spatial cues with implications for the Museum’s own *sensible boundaries* (Chapter 5), as well as for senses of inclusion and exclusion. One element of this is the staging of events and temporary

interventions in the build-up to the Museum's opening, an aspect of the *Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme's* 'Creative Activation' strand (London Museum, 2023d: 17) that I frame as a 'temporal practice' of *propagation*, within which young people and families are a key audience. As a form of reiterative social practice (Cresswell, 2015: 70) this creates both an "affective alignment" (Ernwein & Matthey, 2019: 296) towards the area's future uses, but also an embodied-experiential one. Yet it is also a 'shared' endeavour, with outcomes influenced by the voices and practices of local social actors and young people that participate.

As well as audience development and growing the Museum's visibility, these events will also inform the *Smithfield Public Realm Scheme*, an ongoing Corporation project advanced across various strategic plans and design schemes (see Alan Baxter Associates, 2022; Hawkins\Brown, 2019; Tavin, 2019). Along with its aesthetic parameters, including the stone setts discussed in Chapter 7, this scheme proposes the pedestrianisation of Long Lane and West Smithfield, and the introduction of green spaces, seating, and event spaces. For Laura Wilkinson, the public realm also needs to produce a specific embodied and emotional response:

"The 'public realm' to me seems quite physical and tangible, but it's actually experiential, [...] we need to contend with visitors, you know... that they have an accessible, equitable, joyous experience of finding the museum."

(Laura Wilkinson, Programme Director, London Museum)

This is echoed by former Lead Curator Alex Werner, who talks in terms of 'activating' West Smithfield by creating *"an amazing playground"*, adding that *"the City have a bit of a way to go to think about that audience"*. The design of the public realm here equates to Böhme's (2018) sense of the 'production' of an atmosphere. Böhme suggests atmospheres are a means of revealing the political issues and concerns of contemporary society; although multifarious, and entangled with displacements discussed elsewhere, this atmospheric staging imagined by Laura above arguably reveals 'inclusion' as a major concern. The Museum's agency then here extends beyond its walls to engage with embodied senses of

place in terms of the material and intangible cues described in Chapter 5, and the production of an inclusive atmosphere. This is negotiated with the strategic aims of the Corporation, which is anecdotally supportive of the ambition to create a public space that welcomes young people, as well as city workers. (Indeed, an action-research project ‘Play Cycles’ was held in June 2024 and was match-funded by the Corporation). Despite this, and the existence of a *Smithfield Area Advisory Group*, there remains the potential for conflicting needs and ambitions given the quantity of strategies and organisations that seek to animate, ‘activate’, or otherwise intervene in Smithfield’s public realm (i.e. the Corporation’s *Public Realm Scheme*, Central Markets master-planning and Destination City, as well as those of Culture Mile BID and the Museum’s own ‘shared place’ aims). While these are publicly communicated as sharing a holistic vision, they offer competing ideas for the area’s future, not least its intended audiences. Indeed, while on the one hand there may be a genuine ambition to create an inclusive and ‘atmospheric’ public realm, on the other this is consistent with an experiential urbanism linked to consumer capitalism (Miles, 2021). These are also not mutually exclusive.

Nearby Paternoster Square provides a relevant comparator, one that highlights not only the socio-cultural, embodied, and representational interactions of the public realm, but its simultaneously political significance. Alex Werner cites it as an example:

“They have a big screen up occasionally to give you, you know, sporting events. They have the food thing occasionally with about 20 stalls [...] It’s quite interesting because they’re trying to obviously make that into – they’re trying to – you know, it’s a square but it’s a bit of an odd space, but as soon as you start adding things in, you can change the feeling of it.”

(Alex Werner, former Lead Curator, London Museum)

Notably, as the site of the London Stock Exchange, Paternoster Square was the planned location of a protest by the ‘Occupy’ movement in October 2011. However, City of London Police prevented protestors entering the square following a High Court Injunction, and the protestors relocated to the steps of St Paul’s Cathedral. Here, Doreen Massey addressed the

camp, asserting its importance in challenging the social relations of the City as a nexus of financial power (Featherstone & Painter, 2013: 1). In 2014 new laws were passed allowing the City of London Police to clear the square in future without a court order (Blunden, 2014). While the legal status of Paternoster Square and Smithfield's public realm are different (Paternoster Square is privately owned), this nonetheless illustrates the fundamental contingency of senses of place – 'animated', inclusive or otherwise – to institutional forces and the prospect of spatial control. This is also in line with Mitchell's (1995) recognition of the importance of public spaces to democratic life, and their increasing regulation. While an extreme case, for a 'shared place' to necessarily extend beyond the Museum may mean negotiating such *political* aspects of who feels welcome and included.

8.2.2 Agency in place: From social 'forum' to practices of convening

The Museum's ambition to be a 'shared place' can be seen as the realisation of broader museological trajectories that emphasise social purpose and civic utility, summarised in Chapter 2 in terms of the 'local social value' rationale for culture-led development. Further, I suggest its mission to be 'a force for good', emphasises institutional agency within a broader instrumentalisation (albeit *negotiated*) of a cultural regeneration project. However, there remains a degree of instability within this ambition, one that has implications for an institution's role within an emergent sense of place, and the diverse relations of local social actors. I frame this as a broader industry tension between a desire to provide a neutral gathering place or forum where 'strangers can safely meet' (Gurian, 2006: 118) on the one hand, and an ability to assert potentially divisive moral agency (Sandell, 2017) and contribute to social change on the other. I begin by situating this discussion in a wider discourse of the value of shared social spaces.

As a "shared place in the middle of it all", the Museum perhaps seeks to provide a safe space for informal social contact of the kind Jane Jacobs (1961/2020) argues is the foundation for safe cities and healthy civic participation. While Jacobs suggests that the majority of this social interaction is trivial, as observed on the 'sidewalks' of Greenwich Village, its combined effect "is not trivial at all" (p67). In this analysis, the social space of the

museum is analogous to that of the 'sidewalk' as a setting for a shared public life, one with wider value to society. Yet although aiming to keep its "feet on the street" (London Museum, 2023a: 4), the Museum remains separate from it – not least in terms of its *sensible boundaries* – sharing more socio-spatial affinities with 'third places' (Oldenburg, 1999). For Oldenburg, the 'third place' is "inclusively sociable, offering both the basis of community and the celebration of it" (p14). Such spaces, he suggests, engender inter-generational contact, relieve stress, and provide pleasure in urban environments. He warns however, they have been "largely reduced to consumerism" (1999: 10), a concern shared by Harvey (2012) over the loss of other such 'urban commonalities', and one I have shown is entangled within processes of culture-led development.

More significant than the pleasurable social benefits of 'third places' however is their value as social and political forums. Indeed, it is exactly this practice of "drawing together difference in space" (Purcell, 2022: 3056) characteristic of urban environments generally that the Museum hopes to galvanise. As "places in which people can find and sort one another out across the barriers of social difference" (Oldenburg, 1999: 74), such spaces not only support civic life but also help democracy to function. The Museum's desire to "discuss bigger issues" and "spark meaningful encounters across place, time and difference" (London Museum, 2023a: 6) can be seen as a manifestation of this. Yet what are the conditions for such 'encounters'? Addressing this question, museologist Elaine Gurian combines and expands Jacobs's (1961/2020) 'sidewalk ballet' and Oldenburg's (1999) 'third places' into a new conceptual category of shared social space. Gurian (2006) defines "congregant spaces" as places organised for strangers to safely meet. These include stations, markets, cafes, parks, libraries, and museums. In contested times, Gurian argues that:

Museums can aspire to become one of the community's few safe and neutral congregant spaces.

(2006: 92)

Here, a museum is not only a shared place but a 'safe' one, aspirations that Gurian associates with neutrality. As Gurian also identifies, many new (or relocated) museums articulate a desire to mimic the function of a "town square" (p58) and to provide a safe and

neutral gathering space. As well as the London Museum, recent examples include the Young V&A, London (AOC, 2024), and the “city room” of the WA Museum Boola Bardip, Perth (Crook, 2020). This goal, Gurian suggests, is more than a purely spatial provision, and stems from the belief that “the museum is a fitting safe place for the discussion of unsafe ideas” (2006: 93). This can be seen in the Museum’s own intentions for Smithfield. For Director Sharon Ament this includes being “in the middle of big ideas” (Bennett, 2023), suggesting a willingness for debate also echoed in the *Strategic Plan*:

We are unafraid to discuss the bigger issues and spark meaningful encounters across place, time and difference.

(London Museum, 2023a: 6)

Rather than a didactic position, this is instead one that appears to recognise the multiplicity and relationality of urban experience. Here, though, the diverse and meaningful – and safe – encounters that a ‘shared place’ hopes to establish are based on a perception of museums as neutral containers, open to and reflecting wider society. Yet, as I have argued previously, social spaces – and indeed ‘places’ more broadly – are not experienced as neutral and are riven with unequal power structures (Lefebvre, 1991; Massey, 1991, 2005). Indeed, for Lefebvre, space is “never empty: it always embodies a meaning” (1991: 154). Puwar (2004) is more specific, highlighting the tension between ideas of social spaces as open settings, and a person’s embodied, relational experience of them. This has also been evident in the diverse and relationally rhythmical experiences of Smithfield’s spaces and places I have presented, and which mediate its senses of place more broadly. No ‘shared place’ or ‘congregant space’ is therefore immune from the effects of power geometries, not least museum spaces with their legacy of elitism and exclusion. Further, programmatically, the neutrality of museums is being increasingly called into question, seen in efforts to decolonise museums (Museums Association, 2021) and the ‘Museums are Not Neutral’ campaign, launched in 2017 by activists and museum professionals LaTanya Autry and Mike Murawski (Johnson-Cunningham, 2018). These are part of a broader recognition of the “powerful part museums play in engaging visitors in dialogue surrounding contemporary social issues, and in shaping the way we see, think about and act towards others and the world around us” (Janes & Sandell, 2019: pXXVII), and a deconstruction of what Murawski

describes as “the oppressive myth of neutrality in museum culture” (2021: xv). For Programme Director Laura Wilkinson the term is however a distraction from other beneficial museum practices:

“But you know that neutrality has become this word. It's got all this power and connotations around it, that we've kind of applied to something that perhaps makes something quite black and white, whereas, I don't know, I feel like museums have that ability to transcend such, you know, stark contrasting views.”

(Laura Wilkinson, Programme Director, London Museum)

Laura adds that such terms “*shut down a conversation about what we could be and what we could do.*” This then suggests a *negotiation* between an ambition to be a ‘force for good’ and the binary politics of specific debates.

Yet there are also conditions for creating a ‘shared place’ that may require an institution to take sides. For Sandell (2017), for example, there is a moral imperative for institutions to act when human rights are in question. Indeed, “an unwillingness to take a position... risks complicity with forces of domination and oppression” (p161). While this might seem distant from the everyday practice of museums and indeed from senses of place, it is deeply connected to various aspects of social life, its museological representation, and its future trajectories. Sandell makes the case, for example in terms of LGBTQ+ and gender discrimination, arguing that institutions must ‘take sides’:

Where human rights claims revolve around these fundamentally clashing moral positions, it is no longer appropriate, I conclude, for museums to operate as impartial observers or spaces for dialogue in which alternative viewpoints are respected, aired and debated. Rather they must, as far as it practically possible, be prepared to take sides and speak out unequivocally against attempts to justify unequal treatment of people on the basis of gender or sexual difference.

(Sandell, 2017: 7)

As well as sexuality, gender, and gender non-conformity, such ‘clashing moral positions’ also extend to discrimination based on race, disability, or age; issues related to housing and homelessness; police conduct; and matters of immigration and asylum. For Janes (2024) this also applies to environmental as well as human rights. Indeed, as “deeply trusted, social institutions in civil society, museums are essential in fostering public support for decisive action to address a litany of threats” (Janes, 2024: 5). Such language is reflected in the Museum’s *Engagement Framework*:

As we seek to engage audiences that hold diverse beliefs and opinions, we will uphold and make explicit our unwavering commitment to including and representing the full diversity of Londoners.

(London Museum, 2021a: 6)

The power that museums have to educate, inform and shape the social world thus requires them to make value-led decisions on issues of social equality, ranging from terminological choices through to deciding whether to open museum lobbies to Black Lives Matter protestors rather than boarding them up (Holmes, 2020). This has also become a question of sponsorship and the platforming of contentious individuals. Laura raises the latter point:

“...because we're an actor in this world, we will have to make choices about how we, how we do programme and think about who we platform and how we platform them.”

(Laura Wilkinson, Programme Director, London Museum)

As I have argued, such choices are also reflected in material, commercial, representational and programmatic actions that extend beyond the Museum’s walls, and which will affect Smithfield’s senses of place; indeed, through aspects of *cultural propagation* within the *Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme*, it is already doing so. Returning to the notion of a ‘shared place’, Sandell (2017) suggests that the idea of a ‘museum as forum’, where the legitimacy of different moral standpoints is left for the visitor to decide, should be reconceived as the ‘museum as arbiter’ (p148). Here, possibilities for debate are still open, but set against an “unwavering institutional commitment” (p160) to human rights and social

justice. This is perhaps analogous not to Massey's (1991, 2005) open field of trajectories and relations, but rather Malpas's (2018) "bounded openness", a shared place that is also experienced as distinct from the contested territories and spaces beyond it.

There are significant qualifications to such a positioning. These include Ahmed's (2012) warning over the dangers of diversity and inclusion as a "branding exercise" (p153) rather than a genuine commitment to institutional change. This was intended in the context of workforce inclusion but is a concern that also applies to engagement strategies in general. While an evaluation of the Museum's strategies in light of this is beyond the scope of this research, it is reasonable to conclude that the effects of such policies are felt not in their intention, but over time and in *place* – an effect of an institution's *temporal practices* within an emergent sense of place. Further, and relevant to the discussion above, is the extent to which transgressive topics, "bigger issues", and even the 'taking sides' in ethical debates, is itself a form of 'branding exercise'. As Harvey suggests, there are perhaps limits to what positions can be taken:

It is ... one thing to be transgressive about sexuality, religion, social mores, and artistic and architectural conventions, but quite another to be transgressive in relation to the institutions and practices of capitalist domination that actually penetrate deeply into cultural institutions.

(2012: 110)

This relates to the multiple practices of *negotiation* redolent of a cultural institution's position within a culture-led development scheme, particularly one that participates in improving the international status of the Square Mile. Such an argument is tempered – albeit modestly – by practices of *reciprocity*, and a sharing of authority discussed in section 8.1, and by those socially-engaged practices that seek to address inequality and representation. However, notably the financial settlement of the Museum or indeed arts organisations across the UK (South Western Museum Development, 2023) is one of ongoing vulnerability, and for some institutions this forces difficult compromises. This is seen not least in debates over museum sponsorship, whether mutually-beneficial in nature (Proteau, 2018) or highly-contested (Serafini & Garrard, 2019).

In the context of a museum's effect on a sense of place understood as simultaneously socio-culturally diverse, political, embodied and imagined, I propose further refining the notion of museum as 'arbiter', towards the museum as *convener*, spatialising its capacity to engage in social equity and rooting it in *place*: I envisage this as a set of *convening practices* that engage not only with the creation of a town square or forum, but that use it to bring people together safely to affirm rights and challenge power. In the Museum's own terms, this can be seen as acting as a 'force for good' within a 'shared place'. This embraces not the neutrality of place, but its necessary incoherence, one that for Massey, is the basis of 'novelty' and progress:

...the spatial, crucially, is the realm of the configuration of potentially dissonant (or concordant) narratives. Places, rather than being locations of coherence, become the foci of the meeting and the nonmeeting of the previously unrelated and thus integral to the generation of novelty.

(2005: 71)

Within this, rather than an observer of the meetings and non-meetings, a museum uses its agency to *convene*, actively welcoming through various means (including pricing, programmes, opening times, practices of engagement), inviting a 'configuration' in Massey's terms, within which it is one actor among many. I suggest specific approaches in this regard, which combine with *temporal practices* and *narrative practices* to provide a holistic strategic *blueprint* to inform equitable museum approaches to new local contexts (outlined in Appendix C). These *convening practices* comprise, firstly, the creation and ongoing maintenance of 'inviting boundaries', or the conditions that determine who feels welcome. This is in terms of both local economic inclusion (i.e. affordability) and spatial practices (i.e. play) enabled within the public realm, as discussed in section 8.2.1. Secondly, through safe and non-discriminatory shared spaces for socio-cultural inclusion; and thirdly through representation, co-production, and organisational partnerships that advance social equity. Together these recognise a holistic socio-cultural, political, embodied and imagined sense of place within and outside the institution, and the tools that an institution has to affect these.

Before concluding, I suggest that the Museum's specific geography, highlighted as an aspect of its 'shared place' ambitions, also provides it with a unique political agency within Smithfield's senses of place, beyond those aspects already discussed. As a consequence of the City of London's corporate democracy, representatives of Smithfield Market have historically been elected as Members for Farringdon Without ward and given roles on City Committees and other appointments. Once the Market relocates from 2028 onwards, the democratic franchise of its situated traders will no longer apply, radically changing the area's potential democratic representation, and arguably consolidating and accelerating its market-led transformation. Yet, the Museum also has notional voting rights within City of London elections and the potential therefore to shape its future ward's representation. Might Museum staff replace the historic role of the market traders in the Corporation's power hierarchy? Based on conversations with senior Museum employees this seems unlikely, given that voting rights were not previously exercised in Aldersgate, the Museum's previous ward. But it remains a fascinating prospect for how far the tactics of being 'a force for good' might extend.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have questioned how an incoming museum can engage with and be informed by a local sense of place. Although variously instrumentalised and internally heterogenous, this engagement should principally extend from a position of *reciprocity*. From this basis, institutions can recognise their potential to challenge potentially homogenous and exclusionary urban development schemes: in essence, meaningfully working *within* a changing sense of place. I have shown however that the efficacy of such a strategy is inhibited by funding structures and labour market forces which do not align with longer-term place-centric approaches or the realities of large-scale capital projects. Further, institutions should consider their relationship to place not only as an initial 'approach', but one that is part of an ongoing continuous process of emplacement. In the timescales of urban regeneration and the development of new social practices, this can also be considered as the slow release of social value from capital investment.

The Museum's aim to become 'a shared place in the middle of it all', is one that engages directly with Smithfield's sense of place through its overarching ambition for inclusion, and its implications for spatial interventions and commercial participation in the wider public realm. For Massey, "places do not have single, unique 'identities': they are full of internal differences and conflicts" (1993: 69); indeed, my arguments in the preceding chapters have shown that senses of place in the context of culture-led development are not only subjective, but that the 'differences and conflicts' are in part sown by the agents and globalised market forces responsible for redevelopment. There are then several implications for 'shared' places: they are experienced relationally, mediated by material, experiential, and representational cues; they also have a political importance as – arguably – sites of non-commodified social experience and identification, even if these sit alongside broader landscapes of consumption. However, this does not abrogate an institution of responsibility to 'take sides' and condition shared space where needed to protect against discrimination and engage in aspects of representational and social inequality. This acknowledges and formalises the view that "museum activities have social effects and political consequences" (Sandell, 2017: 10) which also affect senses of place.

This chapter has also informed further aspects of a strategic *blueprint* for equitable museum approaches to new local contexts. These *convening practices* are ways of working that affect who feels welcome, both within and beyond the institution where practicable; that emphasise institutional participation in *affective place networks* to share local resources; and a decisive commitment to safe non-discriminatory spaces. These approaches may result in friction with the territorialisation and aesthetic goals of other agents of change. Indeed, this analysis has revealed a complex and nuanced picture of institutional ambition for equitable and long-term social engagement, instrumentalisation by municipal and political forces, and a commercialisation necessitated by funding structures and operational sustainability. These forces are felt in the ongoing experiential re-coding of Smithfield's senses of place. And while ostensibly oppositional, the London Museum aims to operate pragmatically and within this tension. This is an agency that may reasonably challenge the conventionally exclusionary and commodifying logics of culture-led development through an accrued reciprocity and a progressive influence on Smithfield's senses of place.

Chapter 9 Conclusion: Re-placing Smithfield

“In another 30, 40, 50 years, we will be the last connection, you know, because in the same way that your generation doesn't know that Covent Garden in central London was a fruit and veg market, your children won't know that this was a meat market.”

(Margaret Boanas, Master Butcher 2021-22)

“I walk past those hoardings on Farringdon Road a lot, the ones on the front [of the General Market], and I think ‘don’t you dare touch it! Leave it alone!’”

(Conversation with local commuter, fieldnotes, 5/2/23)

The culture-led urban development of Smithfield is a transformation that has been decades in the making, and whose effects manifest in and through the varied embodied, imagined, political and socio-cultural experiences of its social actors. This research has examined what constitutes the identity and social experience of an area undergoing accelerated change, and how a relocating museum approaches its role within this place and this process. Through this, I consequently call for the reconceptualisation of a ‘sense of place’ as a dynamic concept, incorporating a heightened awareness of rhythm, multiplicity, and the uneven effects of power – factors that reveal the interdependence of place and processes of urban change. Such an open and fluid understanding is fundamental to any analysis of the operation and effects of culture-led development. Based on this, I have defined ways of working to support equitable museum engagement with a changing local area, a *blueprint* predicated on polyvocality, emergence, social equity, and an inherently dynamic sense of place.

In Smithfield, as elsewhere, the ambitions and processes of culture-led development both derive from and impact local senses of place. They are felt in the mechanical thrum of construction machinery and the subtleties of restored stonework; they are imagined through planning procedures and the circulation of seductive imagery; and they are

experienced – unevenly – by local actors through anticipation, dissonance, and change as a reflection of relational power dynamics. In the process of my research I have shown that, while entangled with global flows (Massey, 1991) connections, and both inter- and intra-urban competition, such schemes are also grounded in perceived local specificity (Miles 2005; Miles & Paddison, 2005; Patterson, 2016), and indeed are accommodated within it. The relocation of the London Museum is the first major cultural component of the wider redevelopment of Smithfield, an instrument and agent of the area's changing sense of place. This interdisciplinary research has sought to understand the nature of these dynamics, and usefully question the Museum's role in this process.

In Chapter 2, I established that culture-led development is an increasingly complex process of socio-spatial transformation enacted through multiple institutional strategies of neo-liberal economic development. These variously draw on, transform, and commodify existing places in both visible and invisible ways, utilising aesthetic, experiential and affective marketing and design strategies to not only legitimise change but prepare the ground spatially and symbolically. Instead of a linear process led by a single institutional agent, however, I argue that culture-led development is today a multi-scalar process that is negotiated within and between both agents and instruments. And crucially, rather than an all-pervasive approach to displacement and control, I argue there is scope for more equitable and socially-engaged approaches to culture-led development as a result of the 'new museology' and the progressive agency of museums. I also stress that for a museum, engagement with a local sense of place is entangled with and beyond spatial and architectural notions to encompass strategic, programmatic, and ethical dimensions. I questioned the possible framing by which such agency might be analysed, alongside an examination of the social effects and impacts on local identity and experience that are the result of urban development.

I developed this theoretical framing in Chapter 3, establishing that a sense of place is a multi-faceted concept that comprises embodied experience – involving sensory, emotional, and temporal dimensions; and situated imagined experience – involving affective narratives, memories, and histories; these are simultaneous and mutually interrelated. They are also fundamentally political and socio-culturally diverse. These are necessary dimensions of

analysis to account for the complex field of social experiences that stem from the culture-led development of urban space in advanced capitalism. In this I stressed Massey's (2005) emphasis on the relationality of place, its openness to change, and its imbrication with diverse and uneven power relations. This supports analysis that accounts for the economic and political dynamics of cultural regeneration, and which recognises the centrality of change within senses of place; it also emphasises the need to recognise and delineate multiple dimensions of power within urban change.

Informed by a theoretical framework that emphasises socio-cultural, political, embodied and imagined aspects of place identity and experience, and the multi-scalar transformations of cultural regeneration, I ask what constitutes the sense of place of an area undergoing culture-led development, and how does a relocating museum approach its role within this place and this process? My three research questions examined these interrelated issues:

1. How is a sense of place implicated in processes of culture-led development?
2. How do social actors define an area's sense of place?
3. How can an incoming museum engage with and be informed by a local sense of place?

These questions frame my analysis of the relationship between a local area and its development strategies, the empirical 'anatomy' of senses of place in a changing environment, and the approaches of a museum as an agent of change.

In the first section of this conclusion, I discuss my findings in relation to my empirical chapters. I highlight their differing perspectives on senses of place within a culture-led development process across its boundaries, rhythms, and stories, and my analysis of the aims of the London Museum, and show how each informs my wider argument for the reconceptualisation of senses of place to include notions of power, and an approach to museum emplacement predicated on reciprocity and emergence.

In the second section I set out my additional contributions to the academic discourse on culture-led urban development within urban sociology and urban studies. Here, I detail the

productive expansion of Lefebvre's (2004) rhythmanalytical method through Massey's notion of place as a process (1991, 2005), a methodology that I argue accounts for both ongoing social experience and historical processes of urban change. I also outline and contextualise a theory of *accommodation within senses of place*, accounting for how a local sense of place is represented and commodified as a discursive entity within processes of urban change. In addition, I highlight my contribution to museum practice through a sense of place *blueprint* for new or relocating cultural institutions. This is functionalised through a publicly-available website for museum professionals including directors, planners, managers and creative producers to inform engagement with a new – and changing – local area. I end this thesis with directions for future research informed by my findings, and a final synthesis of the implications of my research.

9.1 A PLACE IN PROCESS: ANALYSING SMITHFIELD

'Boundaries' emerged as a key concern within multiple aspects of my theoretical framework, not least a tension between Malpas's (2018) 'bounded openness' and Massey's (1991) reluctance to 'draw boundaries'. Hence, in my first empirical chapter I use this notion as a catalyst to examine how local social actors come to experience and define the sense of place of a changing urban environment, one of my three key research questions.

I established that local social actors mobilise multiple 'sensible' and intangible cues in order to define their individual senses of place. These include material indicators such as bollards and building façades, as well as sensory cues such as the chimes of St Bartholomew the Great's bells or the market's smell of raw meat. They also include less-tangible aspects of place and experience such as the area's varied timescapes (Adam, 1998, 2004, 2008) including the intensity of weeknight market activity or the stagnancy of weekends, and real-and-imagined experiences of individual memories, and historical and fictional narratives – whether Dickens or James Bond. While these 'cues' are ostensibly shared, experiences of them are always subjective and unevenly affective, mediated by an individual's relationality. This reinforces Massey's (2005) arguments for the multiplicity of place in the context of post-industrial urban change: indeed, there is no singular place to be 'developed' or 'regenerated'. Further, this multiplicity is not purely borne of human subjectivity, but the

uneven structuring of society and its spaces rooted in the power geometries of capitalism, municipal control, and hierarchies of social value.

This is evident in the contrasting experiences of Linda, an affluent retired local resident who enjoys Smithfield's mixture of the 'sophisticated and ordinary', and Tyler, a local unhoused person who is legally restricted from entering the City of London and "*can't walk on that side of the road because of a postcode and a logo*". Not only do local social actors draw on different constellations of cues to define a sense of place, their experience of those cues is also differentiated as a result of relational power dynamics. I suggest that culture-led development deliberately structures certain 'constellations' of cues to predominate in order to further overarching economic rationales. While I established in Chapter 2 that this is negotiated within and between agents, in part addressing my first research question, I subsequently demonstrated empirically that this is also a negotiation with the dimensions of place. This analysis also provides a basis for a museum's approach to its new local area in the context of culture-led development. I argue that museums should recognise the multiplicity of senses of place; and while their own institutional understanding of local identity is one of many, it is nonetheless a powerful one that has structuring effects. As such, museums should identify and mitigate their own conceptual boundaries to support a more open and equitable relationship with a local context.

I subsequently built on this empirical grounding for how senses of place are defined in Smithfield in my second empirical chapter, arguing that they are not only the result of social actors' mobilisation of 'sensible' and intangible cues, but that they are *relationally rhythmical*: conditioned by differentiated experiences of rhythmic processes in Smithfield over time. This basis allows unseen and unfelt manifestations of power and process to come into view. These are not only the everyday rhythms of capitalist society, but the effects of increasingly complex strategies of urban regeneration felt in and through changing senses of place. These *relational rhythms* are found, for example, in a Long Lane estate agents' excitement over CGIs that project a sanitised future landscape, compared to market worker Rick's present sense of loss and powerlessness over the Central Market's future relocation: "*It's not just a building. It's not just the land. It goes deep*".

In examining Smithfield's rhythmic constitution, I theorised two rhythmic categories to represent how power, as an aspect of place, operates over time. These comprise *planning rhythms*, manifestations of urban planning processes that mediate senses of place through experiences of anticipation, uncertainty, and imaginative displacement; and *queer rhythms*, patterns of activity that subvert heteronormative sociobiological rhythms and manifest in senses and spaces of community and alterity. The former are the effects of top-down, but negotiated, market-led urban development processes; and though dominated, the latter reveal the potential for deliberate and affirmative non-normativity, and hence time-spaces beyond capitalist consumption. This is a friction that is implicit in Smithfield's culture-led development. While not a holistic 'map' of the area's rhythms, these categories nonetheless exemplify the dynamics of temporal control and subversion that permeate urban development.

This analysis contributes further to an understanding of the interaction between senses of place and culture-led development processes, the first of my three key research questions, describing this in rhythmical terms and showing how place is doubly 'implicated': both informing and transformed by regeneration processes over time. This demonstrates the value of an *adapted rhythmanalysis*: an approach that accounts for local social actors' experiences of Smithfield's distinct temporalities, including its timescapes and everyday rhythms, but also aspects conventionally neglected in rhythmanalytical approaches, specifically its socio-spatial heritage, accrued experience, and longer-term patterns and processes of urban change. I discuss this in more detail in section 9.2. This assessment also provides insights towards answering my third research question, which asks how an incoming museum can engage with and be informed by a local sense of place. Here, the strategic importance of time is revealed. This informs a set of *temporal practices* that stress the creation and maintenance of reiterative social practice, that support alterity through a temporal diversity of programming, and which propagate cultural production rather than static or commercially-led consumption.

I expanded further on how senses of place are defined by social actors, and how they are implicated in processes of culture-led development in Chapter 7, examining these questions through the paradigm of stories in Smithfield. I argue that situated stories and histories play

a definitive role not only in how senses of place are experienced and defined, but also in a place's future trajectory. These are not neutrally given, but variously negotiated and instrumentalised in the processes and power dynamics of culture-led development. These unstable but affective storyscapes are hence susceptible to commodification within market-led urban change, but also offer a means of symbolic participation, recognition, and progressive change – aspects that can be galvanised by a museum working within a changing sense of place. Stories are also in motion: shifting meaning, accrued over time, and reaching ahead – they are 'stories-so-far' [my emphasis] (Massey, 2005); as such this chapter's analysis further emphasises my call for a dynamic and fluid reconceptualisation of senses of place within landscapes of culture-led development.

By defining doubly-situated stories as *emplaced stories*, I emphasise that stories and histories in and of Smithfield do not emerge by chance but have been reified by historic and ongoing municipal consent and/or commercial appeal. These are encountered by social actors at different scales and across multiple modalities. This ranges from local employee Evan's intimate encounter with a memorial bench for his former colleague, to Destination City's gamification of *emplaced stories* including the Great Fire of London as part of 'The Golden Key' self-guided immersive experience. This adheres to the model of how senses of place are defined by social actors I developed over the preceding chapters: such *emplaced stories* are further cues that are relationally and rhythmically mobilised by social actors in assembling a sense of place. Why is this significant for how culture-led development processes relate to a sense of place? Stories explicitly link place identity and experience to the overarching narratives of cultural regeneration: the rationales for development, the perceived symbolic suitability of a location, and the vision for a future landscape and who is welcome. These are all expressions of power and intent. Emphasising the role of stories in this way as both locally encountered and representationally leveraged allows a critical analysis of the representational tactics of such strategies. It also draws attention to those stories that are absent.

It is my examination of absent stories that reveals the potential for symbolic participation, recognition, and equitable futures, aspects that are felt within a changing sense of place. I also argue for the value of various *degrees of recognition*, a nuanced view absent from

totalising narratives and experiential placemaking strategies. This ranges from the sharing of LGBTQ+ histories among a small group – reflected in the comment by Chris that “*maybe today was enough*” – to institutional support for a ‘parity of participation’ (Fraser, 2009), the ability to not only recognise oneself in a place, but to also stake a claim on its future. These discussions further address how incoming museums can equitably engage with their local area. I suggest here a set of *narrative practices*. These recognise the labour required to make-visible otherwise absent stories by proposing approaches that share a museum’s institutional power through local participation, and which recognise the polyvocality of place – with the institution as one voice among many. These also attempt to counter the potential for non-hegemonic stories to be instrumentalised within the broader symbolic re-coding of place commensurate with culture-led development.

In the first three empirical chapters I established the socio-spatial parameters of Smithfield, I detailed its rhythmic constitution, and I examined its situated stories and their symbolic power and uses. These three related but distinct perspectives build a cohesive understanding of a locality being reshaped by cultural regeneration, and how power operates in this context through multiple agents and instruments. This provides a basis through which to examine the detail of the London Museum’s approach to its new area and to specifically address my third key research question, how can an incoming museum engage with and be informed by a local sense of place? In Chapter 8 I hence provided a critical analysis of the Museum’s strategies, aims, and planned and initial programmes as they relate to Smithfield’s senses of place, a notion now established as a temporally dynamic concept, incorporating power and multiplicity. This analysis also informs future strategies of equitable engagement, both in Smithfield and other contexts of culture-led development.

I argue that although variously instrumentalised and internally heterogenous, this engagement should principally extend from a position of *reciprocity*; from this basis, institutions can recognise their potential to challenge potentially homogenous and exclusionary urban development schemes: in essence, meaningfully working *within* a changing sense of place. Analysis of the London Museum’s strategies illustrates an institutional ambition for equitable and long-term social engagement, albeit alongside

instrumentalisation by market-led and municipal forces, and a commercialisation necessitated by funding structures and operational sustainability. This, again, is the negotiation redolent of culture-led development processes. Yet this informs a view of a museum as engaging in emergent change rather than maintaining or abstracting elements of the status quo. This is a revised paradigm of a museum as an agent of change within a local area predicated on multiplicity, social equity, and an inherently dynamic sense of place.

Further, in examining the Museum's aim to become "a shared place in the middle of it all", I accentuate the political importance of such a place, a potential space of non-commodified social experience and identification alongside broader landscapes of consumption. I also go beyond this, extending the "moral agency" (Sandell, 2017) of socially-engaged museums to reach beyond a museum's walls to underpin broader civic openness and a reciprocal relationship with local social actors and organisations. Within this lies the potential for socially-engaged and even activist programming and co-production: indeed, being 'a shared place in the middle of it all' doesn't have to mean taking the centre ground. This informs a set of *convening practices* for new or relocating museums, suggested ways of working that are also supported by notions of 'boundaries' with which I began my empirical chapters. These are ways of working that affect who feels welcome within the relational diversity of an area's senses of place; that emphasise the importance of museum participation in local networks that share resources – and which also share and challenge the cultural dominance of a museum; and which centre a decisive commitment to safe non-discriminatory spaces. Along with *temporal practices* and *narrative practices*, these ways of working form an integrated strategic *blueprint* for museums within culture-led development processes to inform their equitable engagement with a changing local area. The organising structure of this *blueprint* is outlined in Appendix C, and is disseminated, elaborated, and illustrated as a research output online.

In this discussion of my empirical chapters I have synthesised my analyses and conclusions, addressing my ultimate research aim to examine what constitutes the sense of place of an area undergoing culture-led development, and how a relocating museum approaches its role within this place and this process. I have shown this is not an interaction with a static

singular sense of place, but with a diverse and emergent one; a changing landscape that, in Smithfield, the London Museum is in part helping to both accelerate and define. Further, I have recognised and delineated the multiple dimensions of power that operate within an emergent sense of place, and which are emphasised in processes of urban change. This original reconceptualisation of a sense of place shows, for example, the centrality of relational power dynamics to individual senses of place – embodied, imagined, and socio-cultural relations that include some and excluding others; they also reveal the differential and situated effects of power over time, through rhythmic socio-spatial transformation and by affective municipal visions for change. In this way, senses of place are predicated on visible and invisible power relations at multiple scales, aspects that are leveraged and negotiated within culture-led development processes. This finding, I suggest, contributes to our knowledge of such processes, and how they should be analysed and understood.

9.2 WITHIN AND BEYOND SMITHFIELD: ACCOMMODATING SENSES OF PLACE IN CULTURE-LED DEVELOPMENT

I now turn to consider the wider implications of my research, asking what does my study add to future interdisciplinary research into senses of place and cultural regeneration? And how does it support professional museum practice in this field? In this section I detail and contextualise three contributions my research makes: firstly, to methodological approaches to the study of culture-led development within urban studies and urban sociology; secondly to the conceptualisation of senses of place within these; and lastly to the professional practice of museum planning and strategy development for new and relocating cultural institutions.

I have devised and applied a research method that accounts for both ongoing social experience as well as historical processes and associations and the affective power of urban planning. This *adapted rhythmanalysis* responds to a previous neglect of the “interaction between a variety of temporal scales and practices in urban regeneration processes” (Degen, 2018: 3) and has resulted in a fuller recognition of the *relational rhythms* of place. Using Lefebvre’s (2004) rhythmanalysis as a point of departure, I have drawn on Massey’s (1991; 2005) framing of place as process and Soja’s (1996) notion of a real-and-imagined

‘thirdspace’ to expand the field of view. I suggest this approach supports a richer understanding of the differential social and temporal effects of urban development processes.

The analysis of urban experience through rhythmanalysis is well established (see Degen, 2010; Edensor 2010a, 2010b; Lyon, 2016; Nash, 2022), along with approaches to rhythm more specifically within urban change (Degen, 2008; Monstadt, 2022). Related to these time- and mobility-attuned approaches are those that focus on the power dynamics and differentiated experiences of social actors and cultural groups in everyday life (see Gieseeking, 2020; Halberstam, 2005; Sharma, 2014). These provide an understanding of the varied and uneven temporalities of social experience, aspects that are somewhat neglected in Lefebvre’s formulation. As Sharma argues, “time, as it is constructed in terms of power, must be acknowledged as differential, relational, and tangled” (2014: 80). As I have argued, it is also relationally rhythmical.

The temporal power imbalances found in urban development and planning have also been brought into focus (see Monstadt, 2022; Moore-Cherry & Bonnin, 2020; Raco et al., 2008, 2018), and while not always described in rhythmic terms, underscores a correlation between processes of urban change, sequences or patterns of action, and lived experience. Understanding urban development as inherently processual, and therefore rhythmical, supports a greater understanding of longer-term power dynamics and their effects – aspects of lived experience that, I have shown, mediate senses of place. This draws on Massey’s (1991) framing of place itself as *process*. Indeed, by helping to build “the conditions for long-term cultural transformation” (London Museum, 2021b: 5) in Smithfield, the London Museum is participating in a new process with its own rhythm of propagation, growth, and change.

Adapting rhythmanalysis’ temporal field of view through longitudinal research allows us to consider both the long-term continuous present (i.e. ethnographic observation over two years) as well as backwards in time (i.e. policy and historical research), enabling unseen or unfelt manifestations of power and process to come into view. This also supports the inclusion of narrative and imagined mediations of place, both the ‘real’ *and* ‘imagined’ (Soja,

1996). This reveals, for example, the long-term affective power of *emplaced stories*, which I argue mediate senses of place at different scales and through multiple modalities; in addition, this shows how local social actors are conditioned by institutional narratives and market-led urban development imaginaries, which have rhythmic material and embodied expressions, for example anticipation over the realisation of a specific CGI vision. These, I have argued, are resisted, negotiated, retained, or amplified over time by both social and institutional actors.

Examining how longer-term processes of change have relationally affected individuals and groups, alongside their contemporary expression and experience, provides a broader basis for analysis. In Smithfield, this *adapted rhythm analysis* also reveals the situated effects of *queer rhythms* and *planning rhythms*. Significantly, this approach does not aim to describe a holistic ‘map’ of an area’s rhythms; rather it provides valuable ‘through-lines’ across time periods and temporalities that show how capitalist and municipal power operates within the dynamic, relational, and evolving nature of social landscapes. This method, I suggest, is therefore a valuable addition to research approaches to the negotiated, uneven, and long-term contexts of culture-led development.

My research also contributes to the interdisciplinary study of senses of place within cultural regeneration through a theory of *accommodation within senses of place*. This theory underpins how a ‘local’ sense of place achieves a shared and discursive value within processes of urban change. Within this, I engage directly with tensions within spatial and social theory between conceptions of place as subjective, radically open, and differentiated, but that also produce shared and salient identities and experiences. I suggest that while senses of place are various, they are also interrelated, loosely constrained, and *accommodated* within a set of possible relations. This underpins how a ‘local’ sense of place is represented and commodified within culture-led development, as well as supporting possible approaches to more inclusive urban change.

I have framed this research project within an understanding of place as fundamentally open (Malpas, 2018; Massey, 1991, 2005; Soja, 1996) and, as a consequence, “always under construction” (Massey, 2005: 9). In other words, places are constantly in the process of

being made – formally, experientially, and relationally. Indeed, space is “not an already-interconnected whole but an ongoing product of interconnections” (2005: 107). For processes of urban change, these concepts stress that places are not static sites to be ‘developed’ or ‘regenerated’, but moving targets to be interpreted and engaged with.

An understanding of the ‘ongoing interconnection’ of place also highlights the impossibility of its homogeneity; indeed, Massey sees space as the sphere of ‘coexisting heterogeneity’, a realm of multiple simultaneous and co-existing trajectories, practices and processes. These are further differentiated, I have argued, through relational and rhythmical power relations, producing multiple senses of place. This “fuller recognition of the simultaneous coexistence of others with their own trajectory and their own stories to tell” (Massey, 2005: 11) supports not only polyvocality, but simultaneous and subaltern senses of place. I have shown the political and socio-spatial consequences of this multiplicity for museums in terms of the possibility of belonging and *degrees of recognition*. However, for places to have a discursive identity beyond their geographic location – for senses of place to be recognised and shared – this ‘coexisting heterogeneity’ cannot be infinite, unrelated, or even radically divergent. They must “overlap and interconnect in various ways” (Malpas, 2018: 25). I suggest, however, that we need to enhance our theorisation of *how* they overlap to fully understand the currency of shared senses of place.

The metaphor of spatial *accommodation* is used briefly by Massey to illustrate the potential of an ‘open’ spatial realm in which “different temporalities and different voices must work out means of *accommodation*” (2005: 111) (my italics). In my view, the value of this term has been overlooked, and can be productively applied to senses of place. Further, the potential for an ‘accommodation’ of different temporalities and voices implies the existence of a wider frame of entanglement, i.e. what it is entangled within. Throughout the preceding chapters I have drawn attention to the potential for varied experienced, imagined, rhythmic, and relational senses of place to simultaneously co-exist, negotiated through socio-cultural relations and uneven power dynamics – whether the divisive smell of the market, the timescape of *Fabric’s* queue, or who is welcome at *Ferraris*. I have argued that the conceptual ‘boundaries’ of a local area can be usefully expanded beyond spatial or material parameters, to include temporal and imagined aspects, thereby *accommodating*

multiple senses of place. Further, I have suggested that these are the result of diverse experiences of ostensibly shared ‘sensible’ and intangible cues – aspects of place that both prompt and constrain. I have also shown how local imaginaries are mediated by narrative frames of urban change, selective visions that result in experiences of consensus and discord, suggesting the *accommodation* of varied and even contradictory senses of place. In addition, with the understanding that experiences of change are innate to senses of place, I have shown that these are relational and rhythmical and emphasised by processes of urban development. Though differentiated, these experiences of a changing sense of place are nonetheless shared, overlapping and loosely *accommodated* within a wider set of relations: although divergent, they are still inter-related.

These ‘diverging-converging’ and ‘prompted-constrained’ dichotomies are perhaps akin to Malpas’s “bounded openness” (2018: 25) of place. However, rather than a basis for structuring subjectivity as Malpas intends, here these tensions are grounded on social experiences of shared ‘cues’, and mediated by the local and uneven effects of power. These aspects *link* senses of place as well as *differentiate* them. I therefore suggest that senses of place are not only mediated by relational and rhythmical experiences of ‘sensible’ and intangible cues, but also constrained by them. Consequently, whether mobilised by experiences of everyday working practices at a Long Lane café, by a mental image of Wat Tyler and his army meeting Richard II, or by the orange flashing lights of a forklift, a diversity of relational senses of place can be accommodated within a single place. A local sense of place can therefore be considered an accommodation of varying relations to shared cues.

This theorisation brings together several of my previous conclusions and contributes to the interdisciplinary analysis of culture-led development. It affirms how senses of place can be invoked as discursive entities, or units of currency within global, inter- and intra-urban competition, and instrumentalised by institutional agents within processes of urban change. As a set of loosely-shared relations, a single ‘sense of place’ implies a coherence that is appealing and communicable. However, as one of many configurations accommodated within a broader network, they can never be totalising. Hence experiences of dissonance, displacement, and negotiation as a result of uneven power dynamics – seen for example in the experiences of market traders, and the progression of Culture Mile to Culture Mile BID,

and in the persistence of non-hegemonic experiences, histories, and socio-cultural relations. It also provides a theoretical basis for how a museum within a culture-led development scheme can engage with a local sense of place: by acknowledging its own relations to shared cues (its own *sense* of its local *place*), it can better understand others', and also negotiate inevitable change based on extant relations – essentially it can work within a changing field. These are the “connections yet to be made, the juxtapositions yet to flower into interaction” (Massey, 2005: 107), but which are accommodated within an emergent sense of place.

Lastly, throughout this thesis I have devised and contextualised elements of a sense of place *blueprint* for equitable museum approaches to new local contexts, outlined in Appendix C and publicly-available online. This resource is designed for museum directors, planners, and creative producers and represents a practical contribution to the field of museum planning and strategy development for new and relocating museums. It responds to the power dynamics of culture-led development through cross-cutting approaches of ‘support and ‘reciprocity’. These encourage institutions to empower others to advocate for themselves, and to decentralise authority through collaboration and partnerships. It includes three sets of practices through which museums can engage with their new local contexts including socio-cultural, political, and narrative dimensions. Underpinned by my research findings, these comprise *temporal practices*, *narrative practices*, and *convening practices*. These ways of working support institutional efforts to develop a reciprocal relationship with a changing local area. This *blueprint* addresses culture-led development processes’ neglect of existing local identities and imaginaries, diverse place experiences, and the potential for inclusive regeneration. It also informs three policy recommendations for stakeholders involved in culture-led development, which I detail below in turn.

Primarily, local authorities, planners, and cultural institutions should work together to understand the long-term impacts of culture-led development schemes in terms of economic and social sustainability, and for ongoing institutional relevance. This should be based on navigating emergent senses of place rather than creating static or discordant alternatives. Within this, museums can also recognise the opportunity that a new location provides to change how they operate, based on the dynamics of that location. Likewise,

operational practices should differ from business-as-usual, with programmes and practices needed to 'grow' in place rather than 'land' from elsewhere.

Secondly, funders should recognise and redress the disparity in scale between capital funding and programmatic funding to support the longer-term propagation of culture and support an institution's meaningful local embeddedness before it even opens. A memorandum of understanding between funding bodies, institutions, local organisations, and planners could include the funded provision for involvement by local social actors and groups on an ongoing basis, as an extension of Section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy arrangements, and as an alternative to ad hoc consultation or funding bids. Likewise, museums should be resourced to sustain the longer-term programmatic needs of relocation as a component of, rather than separate from, capital costs.

And thirdly, research strategies for local areas undergoing change should expand from geographically- or materially-centred studies and reports to include a fuller spectrum of local senses of place, including imagined, socio-cultural, rhythmical, and political dimensions. This fuller understanding, alongside statutory heritage, topographical, and ecological considerations, would inform holistic material and programmatic public realm strategies to accommodate diverse relations and diverse groups, including those who are absent. This could extend to support for existing 'third places' (Oldenburg, 1999) through complementary commercial provision or ongoing procurement rather than accepting (or encouraging) displacive market dynamics.

My research conclusions and contributions to knowledge provide a basis for three potential future research areas, which I outline below: the expansion of the sense of place *blueprint* to account for environmental sustainability; the comparative study of other cultural institutions beyond museums; and the practical application and evaluation of the practices currently set out in the *blueprint*.

Cultural institutions are increasingly centring strategies and practices for environmentally-sustainable operation, as indeed are organisations in multiple sectors. Funding frameworks and accreditation schemes often separate these from practices of social sustainability, or

consider them at different spatio-temporal scales, yet both are considered part of global sustainable development pathways (UNDP, 2024). At points, this research has shown the complex interplay between discourses of sustainability and urban development in Smithfield. This is seen, for example, in narratives of adaptive re-use of Victorian and 1960s market structures; public realm schemes that centre material re-use (i.e. stone setts) and biodiversity; and planned improvements to air quality that result from the end of local HGV traffic. Further, innovations in local energy production, such as Smithfield's Citigen district heating plant, point to the increasingly networked and localised nature of urban energy flows. As functional and affective aspects of place, research to incorporate non-human actors and systems into a broadly 'anthropogenic' sense of place would allow the holistic framing and analysis of an institution's interaction with its local place across multiple material, environmental, and social flows, processes, and temporalities. Predicated on the findings of this research in terms of incorporating time, power, and the multiplicity of place, this could provide lessons and provocations for sustainable urban development processes, and examine the interaction of a changing sense of place with a changing planet.

This research has focused on the London Museum as an empirical case study, from which I have extrapolated practices and contexts for museums more broadly. Outside the scope of this study, however, has been a critical analysis of the different epistemologies and associated practices of multiple *types* of cultural institution – for example, performing arts, libraries, galleries, or cultural centres. While many practices and approaches are shared, each has its own critical and academic discourse, and as a result, a different institutional approach to and impact on their local context. Comparative interdisciplinary research to understand the strategies, tactics, practices, and effects of discrete institutional typologies would improve understanding of how different approaches to culture-led development affect urban experience. As well as supporting supply-side decisions on cultural provision, this research could also inform understanding of demand-side preferences and behaviours in the context of a cultural landscape diversified by new technologies and challenged by economic trends. It could also provide a basis for knowledge transfer between cultural and artistic paradigms.

Lastly, I propose future longitudinal analysis of the practical application of the sense of place *blueprint* as a cross-cutting set of practices within museum planning and ongoing operation to test and validate its efficacy. In attending to experiences of local social actors and organisations, as well as museum professionals across leadership, management, and delivery, this research could support the evaluation of museum approaches to engage with a local sense of place, within the context of the paradigms and practices suggested. This would also expand the knowledge base for funding bodies and lobbying groups seeking to evidence the social and economic value of cultural institutions in terms of their impact on local places and the resources needed to do so.

I bring this thesis to a close by returning to the central themes of my completed research. This has shown that a sense of place means more than an attractive backdrop or the character of a restored building; it means more than a particular smell in a particular place, or the recollection of a memory on a street corner; and it means more than an awareness of local histories or a sense of late night revelry. Senses of place may be all of these things, but they are also replete with geometries of power, affective regimes, and narrative dynamics that mediate experiences and condition futures. They also continually change, both from person to person and as aspects of a 'place' that is always in process. Such change is also accelerated and refashioned by development processes.

Thinking of sense of place in this way matters for culture-led urban development, indeed it provides a critical framework through which to analyse and engage with social experience, multiple and situated dimensions of power, and institutional agency. Ideally, culture-led development should combine funding and strategy for capital buildings with long-term programmes and practices that build over time, and emerge from the existing context; they should also value diverse social embodied, imagined and temporal relations, establishing mechanisms for ongoing participation and that surface local needs and address barriers; participating cultural institutions should also seek a role in a local context that is both active and collaborative within the multiplicity of an emergent sense of place. The vested interests of commercial developers, economic competitiveness, and political agendas may hinder such an approach. But, as I have shown, place is open to change, and "only if the future is open is there any ground for a politics which can make a difference" (Massey, 2005: 11). As

the original 'smooth field', Smithfield may yet provide a grounding for such a future, emerging in unexpected but no less accommodated ways from its lively, contested, and changing senses of place.

Appendix A:

List of Participants and Sample 'Boundary Walk' Maps

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Local social actors

'Amira' - local coffee shop employee, 20+
'Anya' - local resident, 25+
'Ben' - City of London Access Group member, 20+
'Billy' - local business owner, 25+
'Brian' - local tour guide, 50+
'Christine' - former market visitor, 50+
'Clare' - local resident, 70+
'Daniel' - local resident, 60+
'Dave' - local restaurant owner, 40+
'Eddie' - local unhoused person, 50+
'Evan' - Islington outreach officer, 30+
'Henry' - local resident, 70+
'Jade' - local GP, 35+
'Jim' - former local employee, 80+
'Joanne' - local unhoused person, 30+
'Keith' - former local resident, 50+
'Linda' - local resident, 60+
'Lucas' - tour guide & former police officer, 60+
'Mark' - senior market trader, 60+
'Mia' - Islington council employee, 30+
'Phil' - taxi driver, 40+
'Nisha' - local business owner, 35+
'Sergio' - local charity manager, 40+
'Tyler' - local unhoused person, 30+
'Vandana' - local resident, 35+

Workshop attendees

'Andreas' - gay cisgender man, regular visitor, 40+

'Anna' - gay cisgender woman, local resident, 40+

'Chris' - gay cisgender man, local resident, 50+

'Kath' - gay cisgender woman, former LLGC visitor, 60+

'Matt' - gay cisgender man, regular visitor, 30+

'Zara' - straight transgender woman, former local resident and regular visitor, 40+

Local institutional actors

Alex Werner – former Lead Curator, London Museum

'Alice' – urban planner, Central District Alliance BID

'Amanda' – archivist, Barts Health Archives

'Beth' – Smithfield market administrator

'Bruce' – local architect

David Shalit – former City of London Alderman

Finbarr Whooley – Director of Content, London Museum

Fr. Marcus Walker – Rector, Great St Bartholomew's

Josh Green – Head of Design, London Museum

Laura Wilkinson – Programme Director, London Museum

Lauren Parker – Head of Creative Partnerships, London Museum

Margaret Boanas – International Meat Trade Association Chairman and Master of the
Worshipful Company of Butchers 2021-2022

Olu Alake – former CEO, The Peel Institute

Paul Martinelli – Market Trader, City of London Member & Museum of London Governor

'Paulo' – local architect

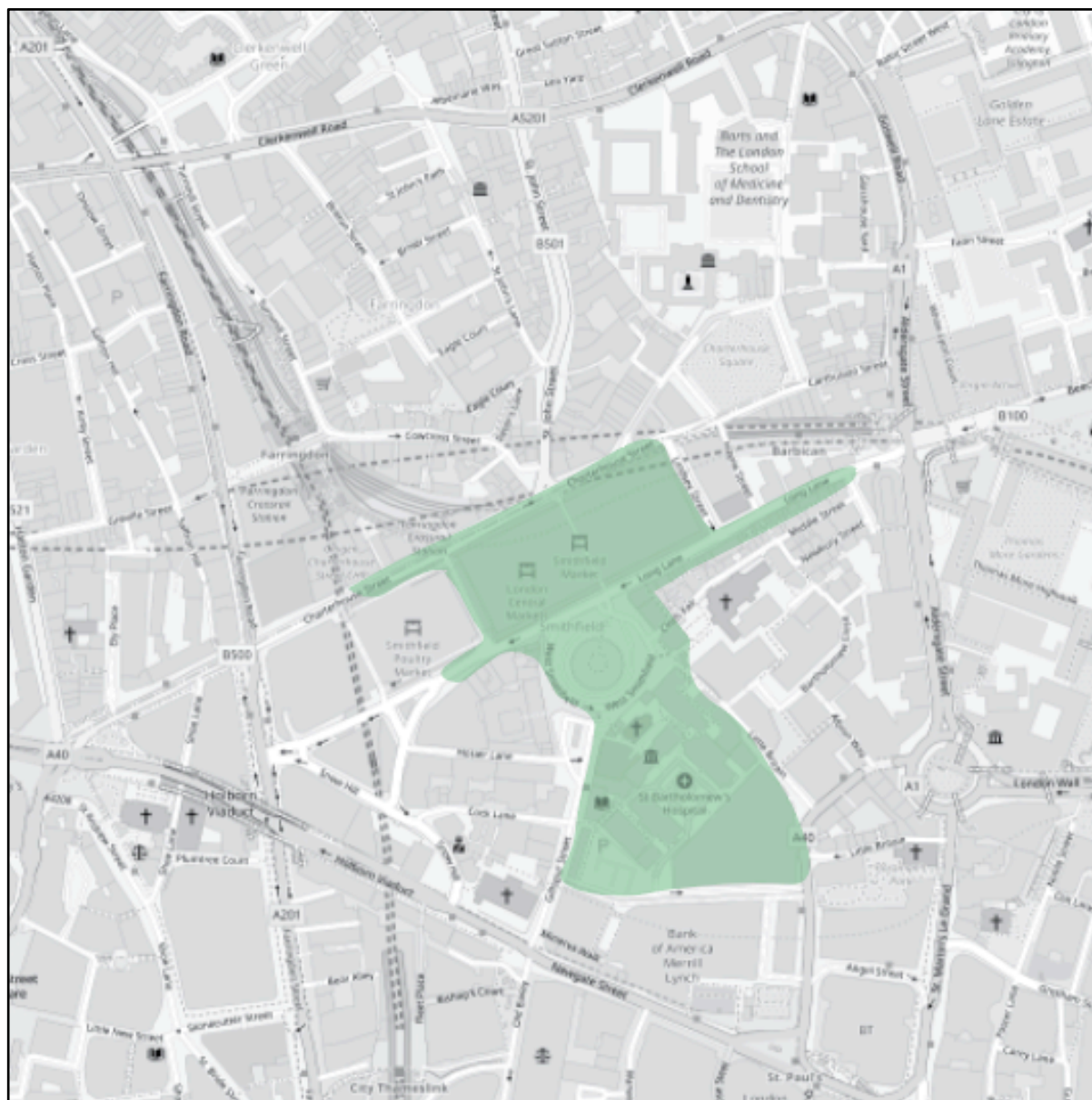
'Siobhan' – Barbican resident and Barbican Quarter Action group member

Tim Jones – former Manager, Culture Mile

'Tina' – local elected official

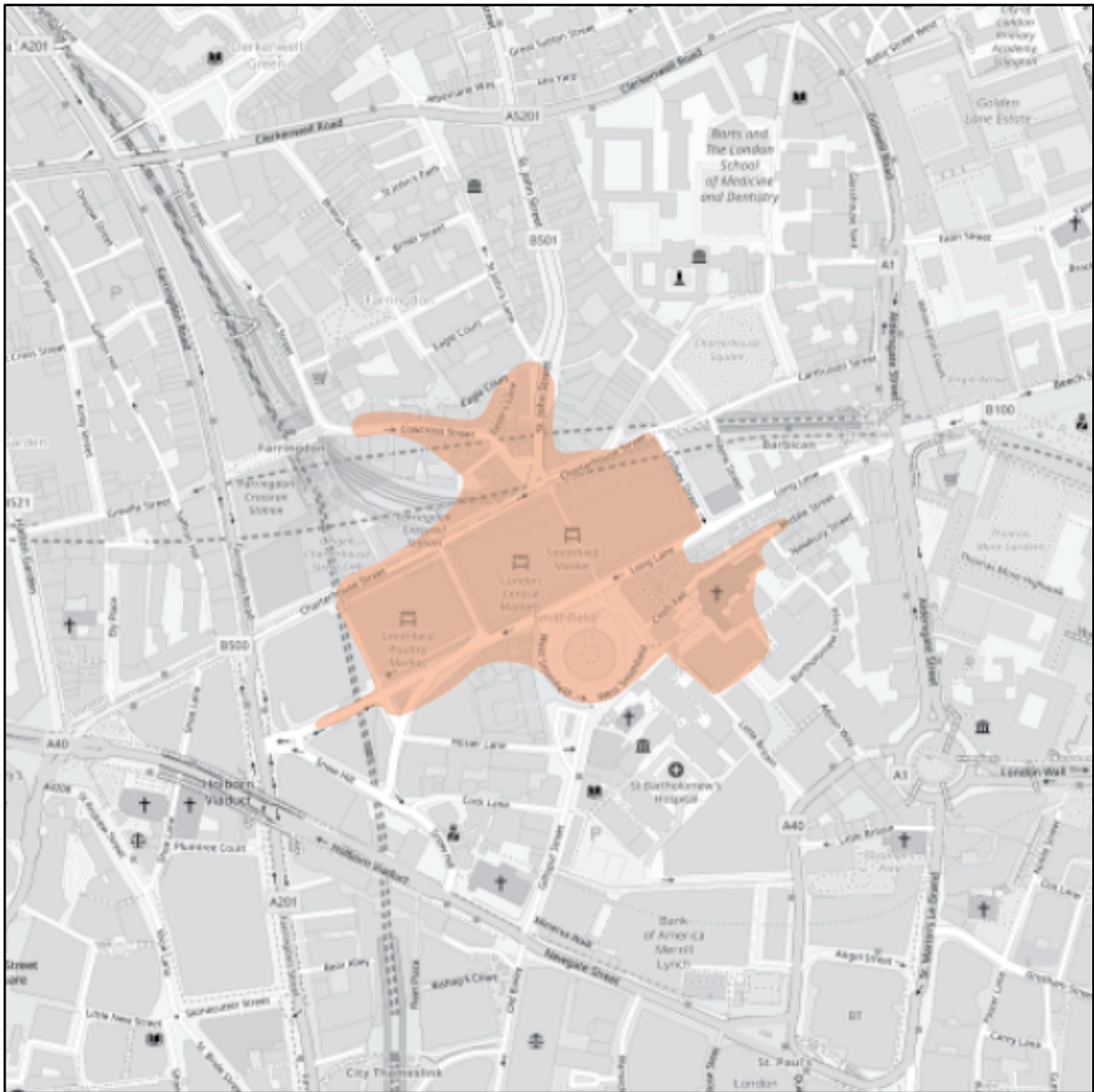
SAMPLE 'BOUNDARY WALK' MAPS

Anya, local resident, 25+



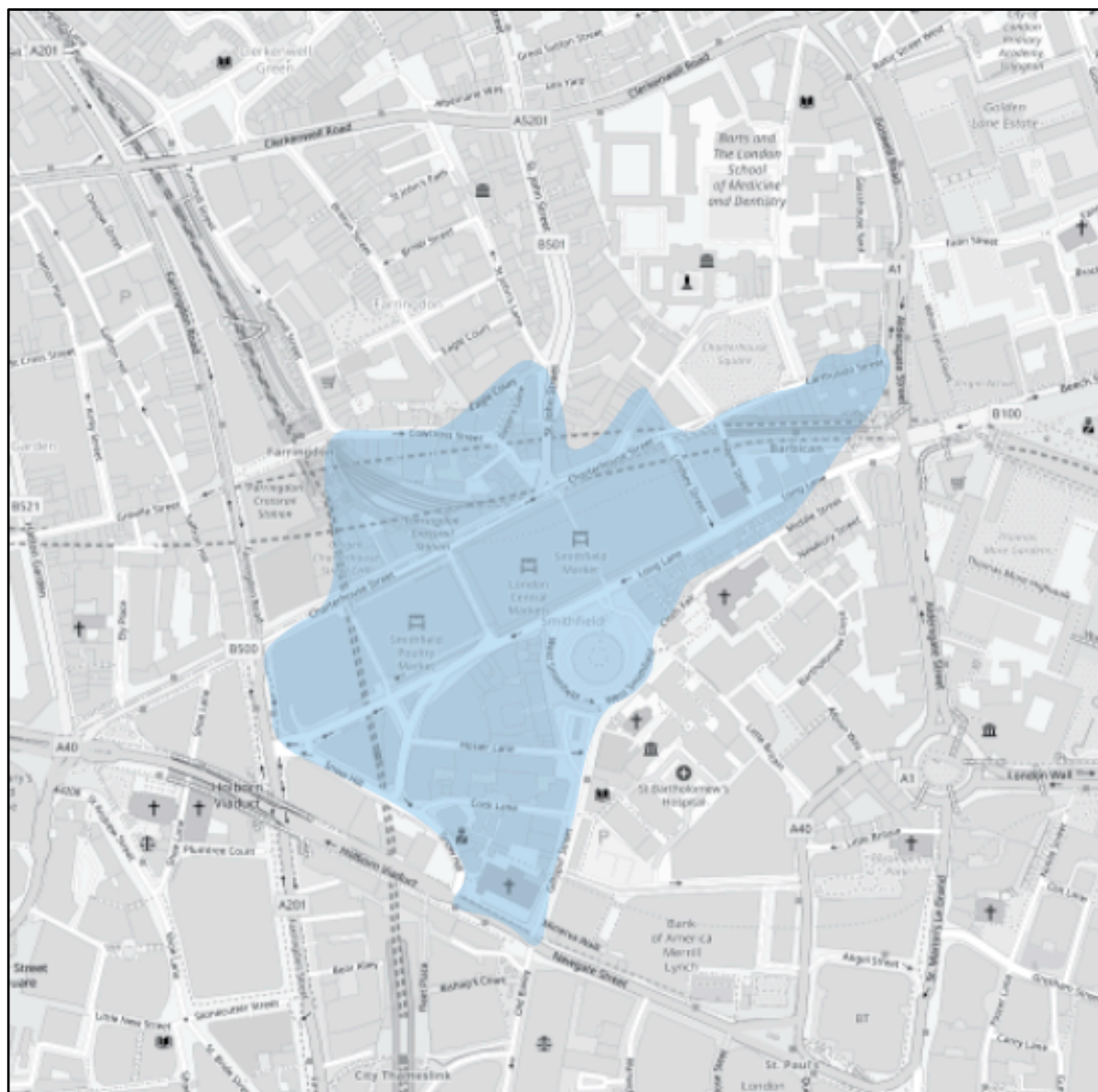
Appendix A: List of Participants and Sample ‘Boundary Walk’ Maps

Ben, City of London Access Group member, 20+



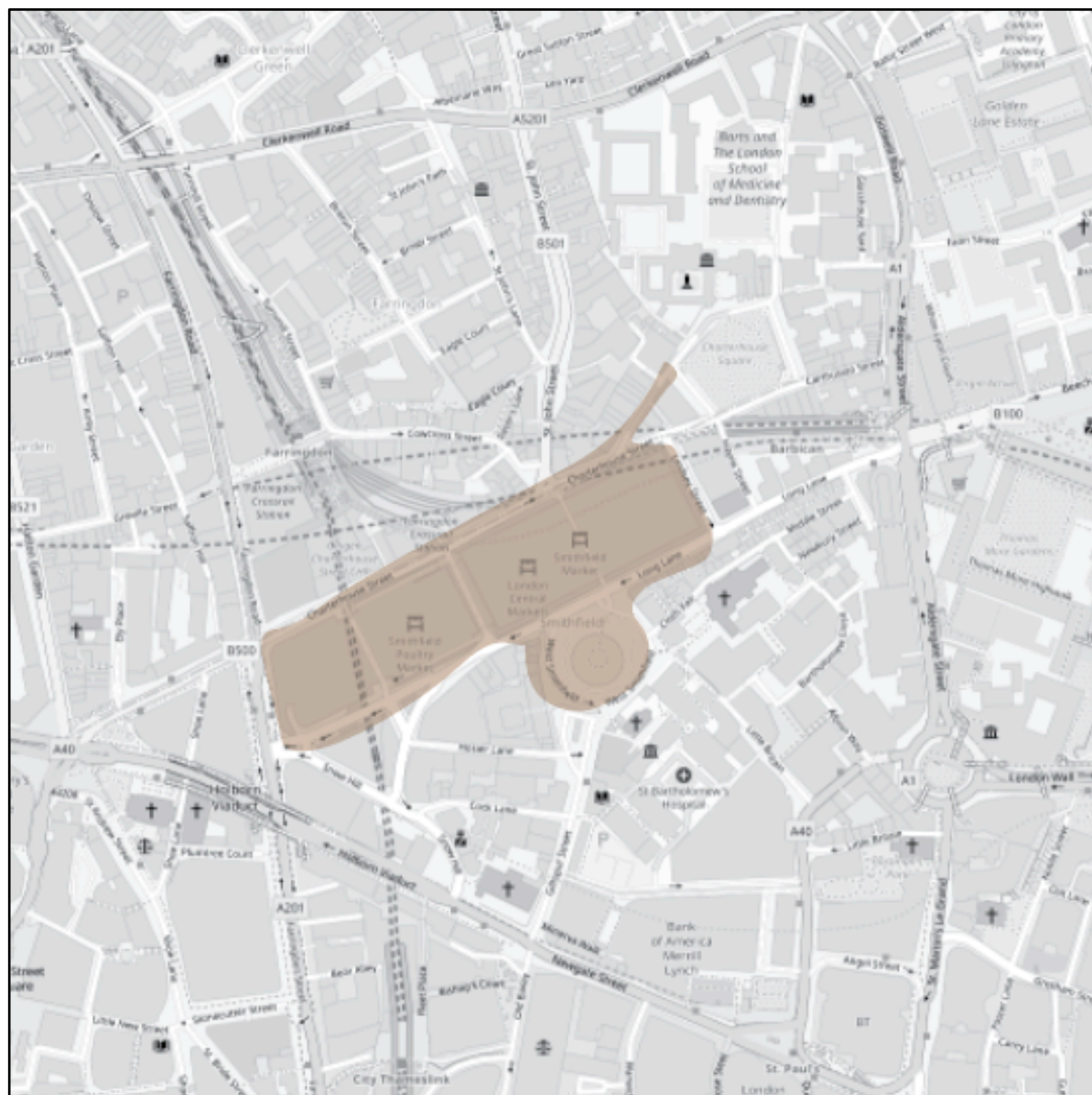
Appendix A: List of Participants and Sample 'Boundary Walk' Maps

Christine, former market visitor, 50+ years old



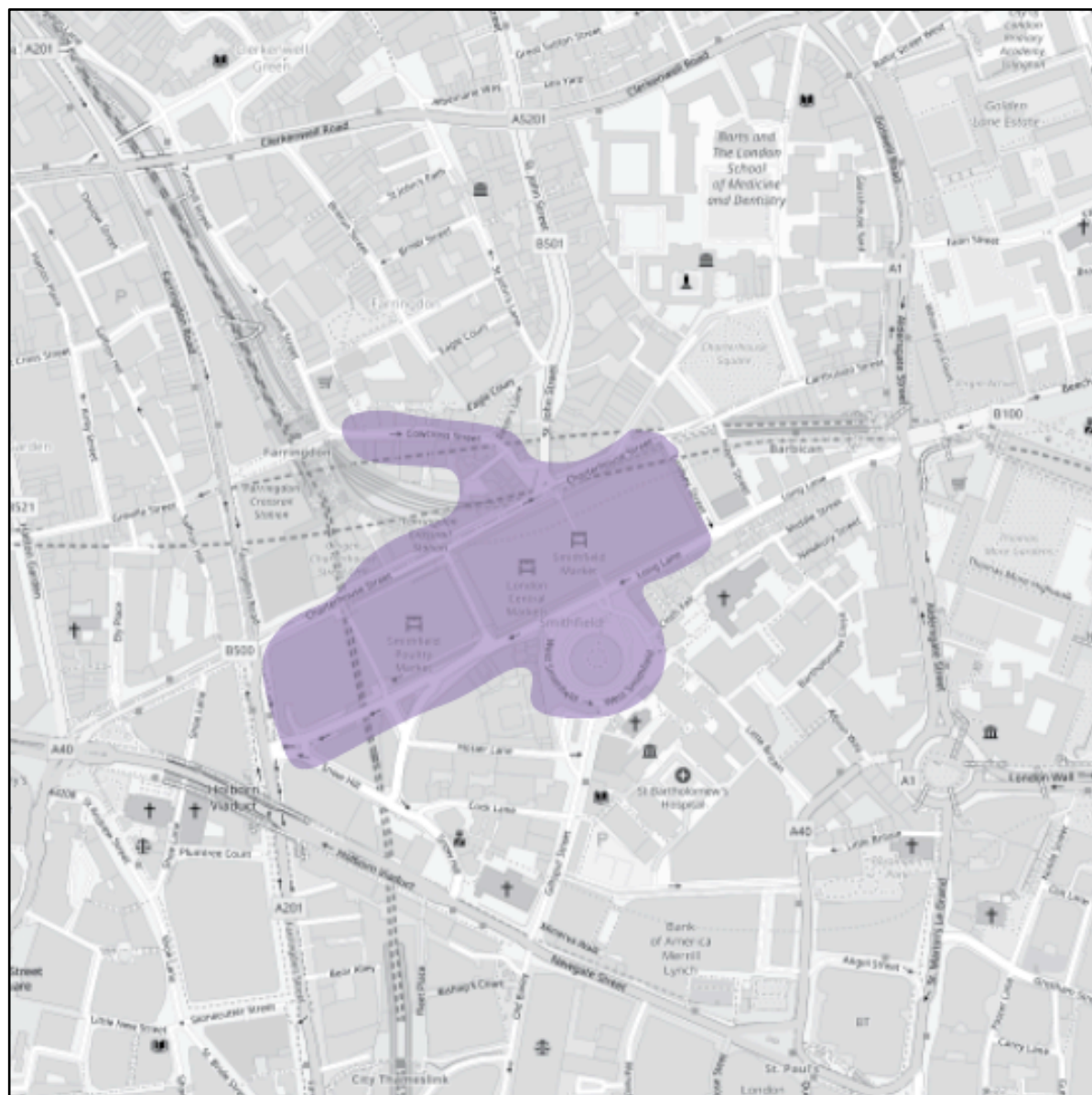
Appendix A: List of Participants and Sample ‘Boundary Walk’ Maps

Daniel, local resident, 60+ years old



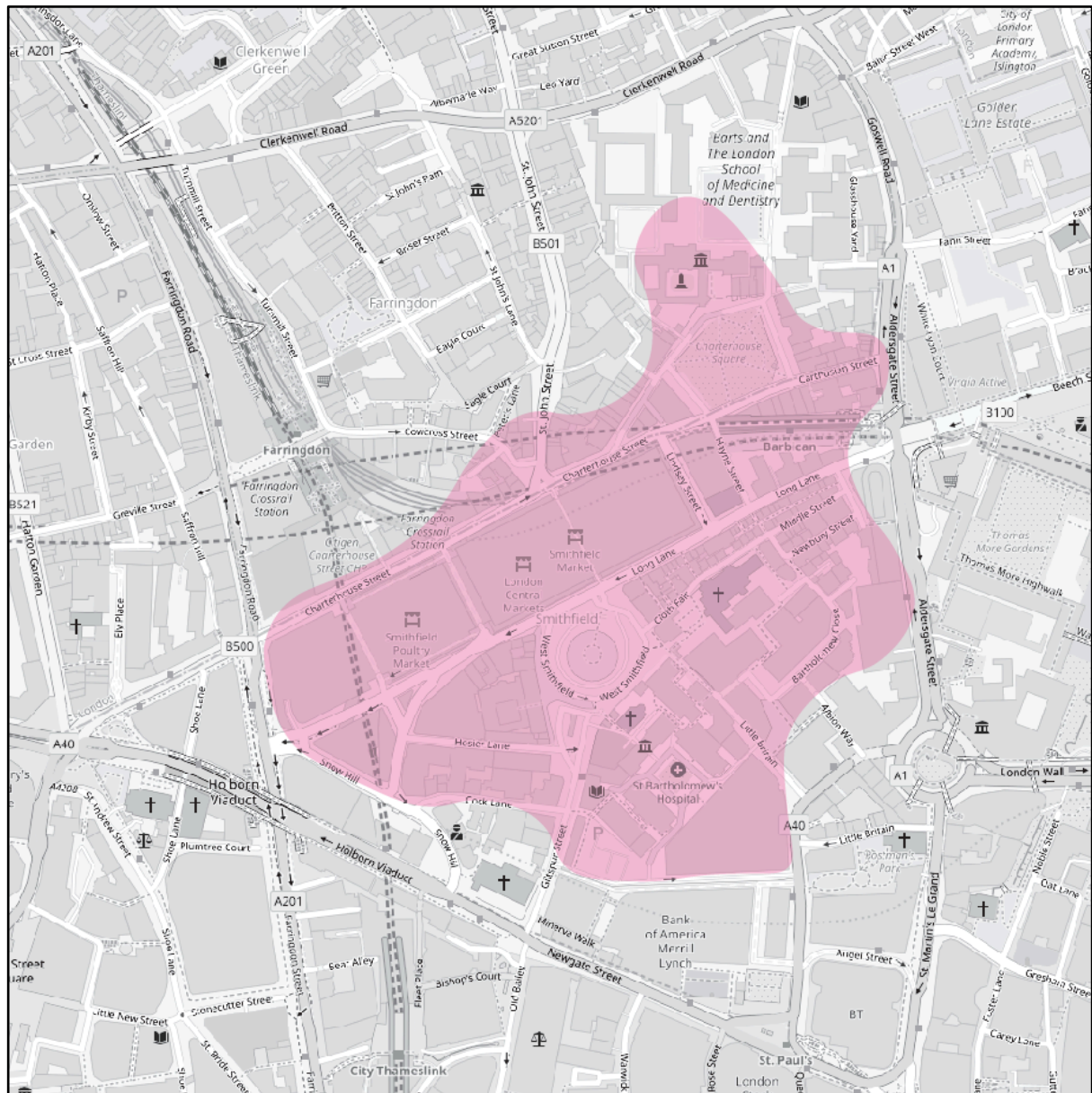
Appendix A: List of Participants and Sample 'Boundary Walk' Maps

Dave, local restaurant owner, 40+ years old



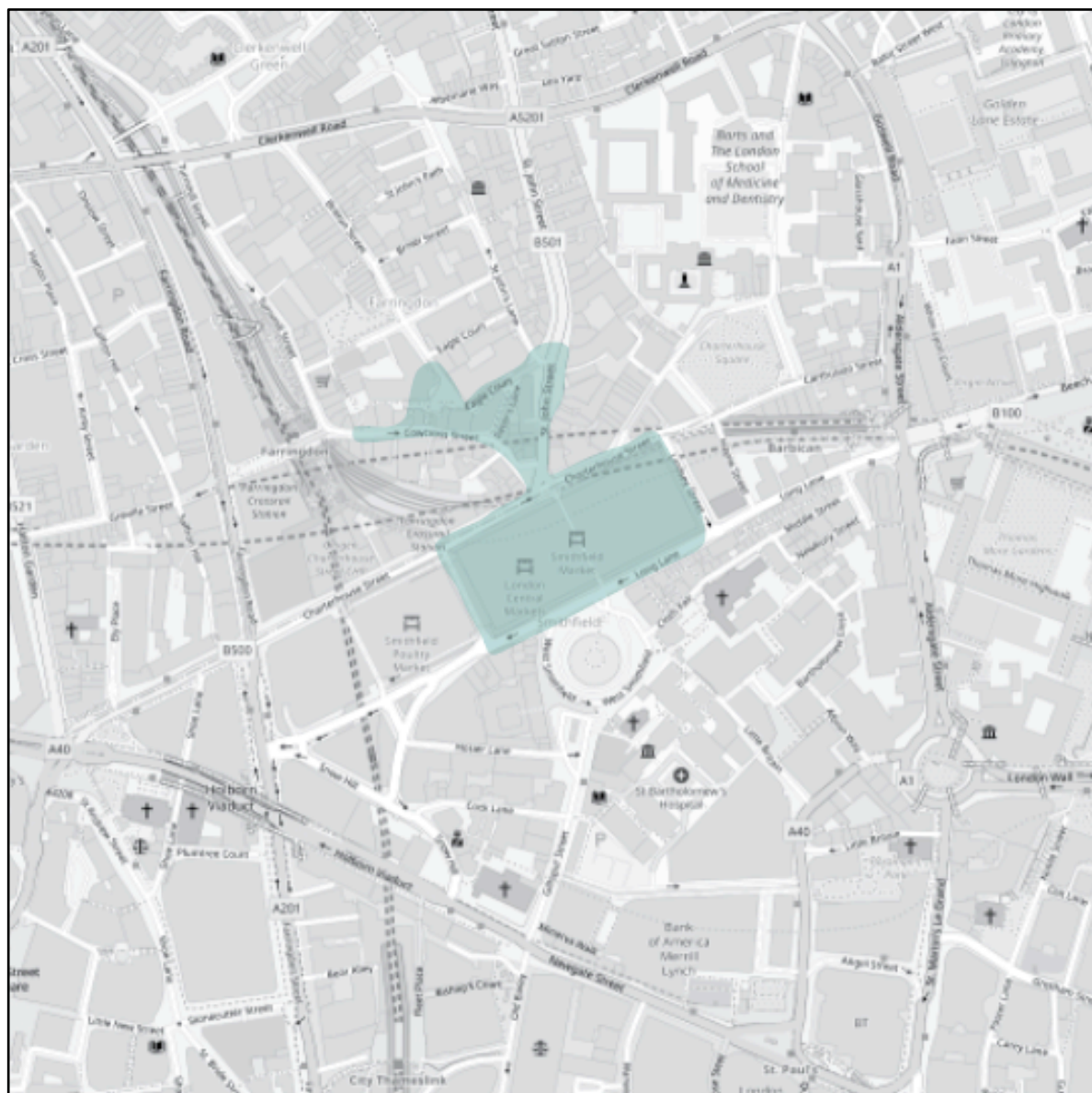
Appendix A: List of Participants and Sample ‘Boundary Walk’ Maps

Jade, local GP, 35+ years old



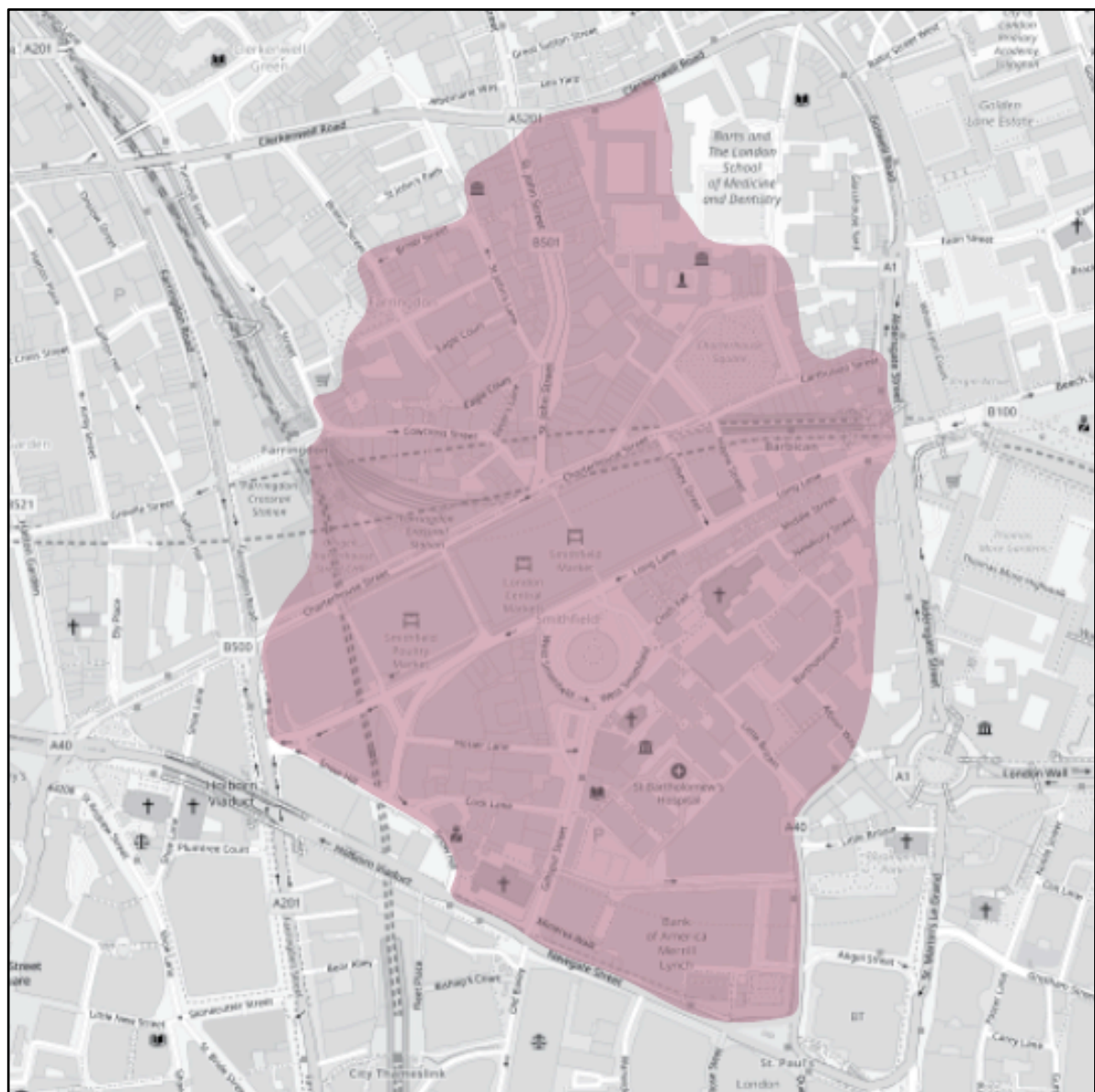
Appendix A: List of Participants and Sample 'Boundary Walk' Maps

Joanne, local unhoused person, 30+



Appendix A: List of Participants and Sample 'Boundary Walk' Maps

Linda, local resident, 60+ years old



Appendix A: List of Participants and Sample 'Boundary Walk' Maps

Mia, Islington council employee, 30+ years old



Appendix A: List of Participants and Sample 'Boundary Walk' Maps

Phil, taxi driver, 40+ years old



Appendix B:

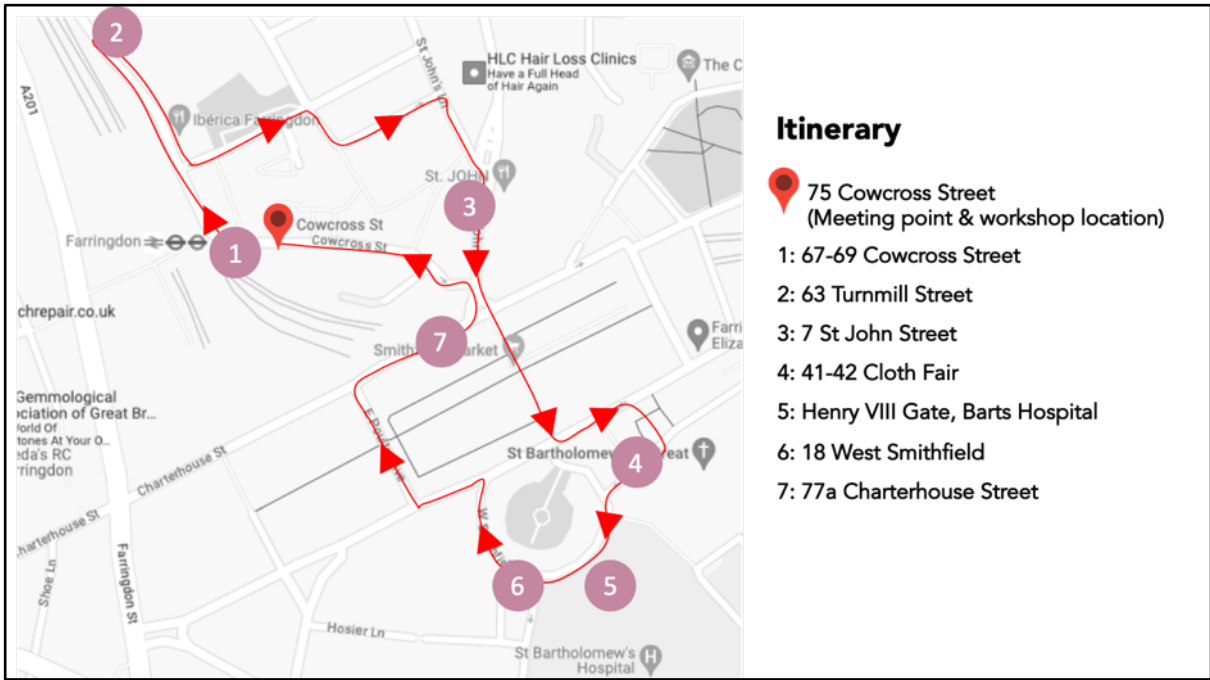
'Queer Smithfield' Walking Tour and Workshop Overview

Appendix B: “Queer Smithfield’ Walking Tour and Workshop Overview

Figure B.1: Summary of stories as part of ‘Queer Smithfield’ walking tour and workshop

Location	Associated history
67-69 Cowcross Street	Site of the <i>London Lesbian and Gay Centre</i> (1984-1992), a community-based social and education centre run by lesbians and gay men as an alternative to the commercial “scene”. It acted as an ecosystem for other LGBT and minority groups.
63 Turnmill Street	Former site of Turnmills nightclub and home to <i>Trade</i> (1990-2002), the UK’s first legal after-hours gay club night. <i>Trade</i> ran from 3:00am onwards on Sunday mornings, partly as a safer alternative to cruising in parks. <i>Trade</i> ’s popularity supported a number of smaller gay and lesbian bars nearby. The building was demolished in 2011.
7 St John Street	Former site of the <i>Dream City Cinema</i> (1980-1994), an unlicensed pornographic cinema and social space that screened both gay male and straight films on the building’s second and third floors. The cinema was the target of an arson attack on 26th February 1994 in which 11 people died and 23 were injured.
41-42 Cloth Fair	Former home and office of partners and architects John Seely (1899–1963) and Paul Edward Paget (1901–1985). The pair restored and refurbished the Jacobean house, including the installation of twin bathtubs. Their privileged backgrounds and society connections contributed to the success of their architecture practice, including the transformation of Eltham Palace in 1936.
King Henry VIII’s Gate/ St Bartholomew’s-the-Less	St Bartholomew Hospital played an important role in the early years of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, with the Andrewes Ward providing one of the capital’s only dedicated AIDS wards. Gay artist, filmmaker and activist Derek Jarman (1942-1994) was one of many patients that received medical care here, and where he died of an AIDS-related illness in February 1994.
18 West Smithfield	Site of the West Smithfield pillory, a form of punishment and public humiliation used from medieval times until the late 18th/early 19th century. It was here that Margaret Clap, known as ‘Mother Clap’, endured punishment after her Molly House (a type of gay meeting space) was raided by law officers and 40 ‘mollies’ were arrested. She died in Newgate Gaol as a result of her ordeal.
77a Charterhouse Street	<i>Fabric</i> nightclub (1999 to present). Situated in a former cold storage vaults, <i>Fabric</i> has hosted numerous queer and intersectional nights, including DTPM a weekly gay polysexual club night held between 1999 and 2007. The club was threatened with closure in 2016 after two drug related deaths, with some seeing this as part of a wider war on London’s club culture.

Figure B.2: Participant map of walking tour locations



Appendix C:

‘Placing Museums’: A Sense of Place Blueprint for Equitable Museum Approaches to New Local Contexts – Organising Structure

Placing Museums

A sense of place
blueprint for equitable
museum approaches to
new local contexts.

Structure & summary
September 2024

Introduction

Place is important. It provides the backdrop to our everyday lives, a context for shared identities, and a focal point for our memories. But as well as grounding us, place can also restrict and unsettle us, and affects different people in different ways – whether socially, economically, or politically.

We visit, live and work in places that continually inform who we are, where we have come from, and where we might go. These tangible and intangible aspects combine in our unique senses of place: the experience, identity, and potential of specific landscapes and settings.

The [sense of place blueprint](#) is a strategic framework for how new or relocating museums can equitably engage with their new local contexts in both the short and long term. This is informed by an expanded understanding of what senses of place are, how they are defined, and how they evolve, as well as by recent developments in socially-engaged museum practice. This document summarises the interdisciplinary academic grounding and organisational structure for the ways of working proposed, informed by an AHRC-funded doctoral research project by Tom Butler at Brunel University London and London Museum undertaken between 2020 and 2024.

The suggested practices span multiple aspects of museum planning and programme development, ways of working that are explored in greater detail alongside examples and key principles on placingmuseums.co.uk⁸ – an open access resource for museum professionals.

Why do senses of place matter?

Why is this blueprint needed? Culture-led development processes have historically neglected pre-existing local identities, the diversity of place experience, and the potential for equitable change that regeneration can bring but which often doesn't deliver (Miles, 2005; Patterson, 2016). Some schemes have recognised and responded to these criticisms, partly as a result of the growth in adaptive re-use for cultural capital projects, with planners seeking to preserve heritage buildings and respect their local significance (Abdulameer & Sati' Abbas, 2020). However, there remains a lack of holistic thinking about broader aspects of local identity and experience, senses of place that include different socio-cultural perspectives, political dimensions, narrative dynamics, and the active role played by our senses.

The last two decades have also seen an increased adoption of socially-engaged and participatory practices by museums (see Simon, 2010; Sandell, 2017; Janes & Sandell, 2019). These approaches seek to break down barriers between institutions and their audiences,

⁸ This is currently a beta version subject to testing and feedback from intended audiences.

diversify representation, and increase relevance. These are now established ways of working, with many museums already showing how these approaches are informed by and affect local senses of place, for example through the participation of local community groups, public installations and events, and critical approaches to local history and heritage.

However, the centrality of these approaches to wider culture-led development processes and new museum projects, particularly at the earliest stages, has been undervalued and under-theorised. Opening a museum in a new location requires a set of strategies that are manifestly different from everyday museum operation – spatially, philosophically, and programmatically. These should not be considered as a standalone period of activity, however, but as approaches that evolve and coalesce into the eventual day-to-day operation of a new museum site. In this way museums can build an ongoing reciprocal relationship with their new local area.

There is then a need to establish how museums might approach and engage with a new local area and its sense of place to inform longer-term, locally-relevant, and responsive programmes and practices. The *blueprint* responds to these needs. It suggests a set of interlinked practices that support new approaches to cultural regeneration, emphasising the importance of local senses of place, acknowledging the agency of museums, and recognising the dynamics of change within museum relocation and urban development. These build on, link, and reposition existing activities and approaches, as well as proposing new ones.

Who is it for and when is it useful?

The intended audiences of the *blueprint* are directors, planners, and managers within museums who are responsible for strategy development and implementation. While there are no standardised UK-wide bands for institutional size, visitor numbers, or income (Ballatore & Candlin, 2023) the *blueprint* is more relevant to larger institutions that have the capacity to engage in capital projects and to sustain public programme, social engagement, and partnership functions. This is not prescriptive however, and although more relevant to ‘large’ (50,001-1 million yearly visitors) and ‘huge’ museums (1 million+ yearly visitors) (Mapping Museums, 2018), aspects of the *blueprint* will be relevant to any institution intending to relocate or open for the first time. It will also be of interest to urban planners and developers as part of a holistic approach to culture-led development. Its proposed practices offer a common ground from which to engage with museums and to centre the importance of place.

Equally significant is when the *blueprint* is most useful. As sets of practices to inform a museum’s engagement with its local context, the *blueprint* is best used when institutions are starting to plan their move to a new location and before initiating capital building or adaptive re-use projects. However, central to its approach is the idea that engaging with a sense of place is an ongoing process. As such, it includes the nuance of both ‘approaching’ a new location and ‘maintaining’ interaction once in situ. Its suggested practices can consequently be applied or revisited at any stage of a relocation or new museum project.

How can museums engage with senses of place?

The *blueprint* is structured around three core practices: *temporal practices*, *narrative practices*, and *convening practices* (figure 1). These ways of working support institutional efforts to develop a reciprocal and equitable relationship with their local contexts.

Figure 1: Organising structure of the sense of place blueprint for new or relocating museums.

	<-- approaching & maintaining engagement with local senses of place -->	
<-- support & reciprocity -->	TEMPORAL PRACTICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhythmic spatial provision • Cultural propagation • Cyclical participation
	NARRATIVE PRACTICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open narrative frames • Polyvocal authorship • Contextual storytelling
	CONVENING PRACTICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating inviting boundaries • Generating affective place networks • Meeting safely

The *blueprint* includes cross-cutting values of ‘support’ and ‘reciprocity’, framed from the perspective of museum agency and activity. To ‘support’ is to encourage others to speak for themselves and to one another, achieved for example through activities that empower groups, fund activity, or build capacity (i.e. in terms of resources, experience, and tools). ‘Reciprocity’ here underscores approaches that de-centre power through learning, collaboration, and partnership. This corresponds to an understanding of place as always in process and composed of multiple experiences and identities, and approaches that aim to destabilise established power structures.

Temporal practices

Culture-led development is a spatial strategy with temporal effects. These play out in changes to an area's sense of place, and are experienced, for example, through the effects of market-led urban planning, varied experiences of displacement, and the slow transformation of local identity.

Museums that are at the centre of such processes can engage with their new local context, and express their agency, through *temporal practices*. These go beyond notions of localised 'timescapes' (i.e. late-night activity or working rhythms) or a desire to maintain a particular atmosphere (i.e. through replica buildings or material use) to have socio-cultural, political and economic impact, achieved through empowerment, education, capacity building, training and employment, and cultural production. They also go beyond conventionally time-bound practices of social engagement, (i.e. as part of thematic programming or temporary installations). Instead, these are long-term and slow strategies that span multiple timescales.

Temporal practices are based on conceptions of place as dynamic and constantly changing (Massey, 1991; 2005), and the differential experiences of lived time (Lefebvre, 2004; Halberstam, 2005; Sharma, 2014), extrapolated into longer term rhythms and processes. Three types of temporal practice, *rhythmic spatial provision*, *cultural propagation*, and *cyclical participation* are outlined below.

1) Rhythmic spatial provision

Activities, supported and repeated over the long-term, enable community identification and the formation of senses of place. A key practice for new institutions is therefore the regular, repeated, and long-term provision of institutional space for local community use. In central urban areas and elsewhere, this is an extended notion of community beyond just residential groups to include 'communities of interest'. To engage with a broader socio-cultural and political aspects of place, this should extend beyond the everyday operation and activities of being a museum to support specific groups and cohorts, and advocate for diverse and sustained inclusive local participation.

When 'approaching' a new location, this provision could include temporary venues, and/or the procurement of regular space within existing local premises at times and intervals that equate to the rhythms of prospective audiences. As part of 'maintaining' engagement with a local sense of place, this means providing dedicated, regular, unprogrammed space-times for regular and repeated social practice. Setting aside dedicated space in this way can be seen as the slow release of social value from the capital investment in material space; a provision which subverts the logic of urban development that conventionally prioritises capital spend over operational expenditure. Through regular provision over time, this also supports the formation of senses and spaces of community, safety (Gurian, 2006) and alterity (Butler, 1993).

2) Cultural propagation

Cultural propagation is the long-term seeding of future-oriented forms of cultural production and the equitable transformation of place. This is achieved through multi-stage and/or multi-year activity strands that:

- develop capacity in local people and organisations
- cumulatively build artistic and cultural production over time
- establish a reciprocal local presence within the museum

The ‘Next Gen Creatives’ project, part of London Museum’s *Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme*, can be seen as an example of this: in the first two years local young people progress through a sequence of free creative skills sessions, then paid work placements, and ultimately having their work shown to the public as part of London Museum events. In the third year, participants may be offered apprenticeships or traineeships into the new Museum. This combines local continuity with iterative change.

3) Cyclical participation

Cyclical participation describes institutions taking part in longstanding ritual or ‘rhythmic’ events or traditions, whether anniversaries, commemorations, or ceremonies. As part of ‘approaching’ a local area, this supports the continuation of existing local events as an element of place. Rather than setting the agenda and asserting dominance, this instead respects what is already in process. Within this, institutions can also support other organisations and groups to participate. As part of its capacity to work *within* a changing sense of place however, over time an institution can also support the acknowledgement of previously overlooked or uncelebrated events or counter histories recognised by varied local communities and cohorts.

Challenges to *temporal practices* include staff turnover on long-term projects and the resulting loss of continuity and institutional knowledge; and the short (i.e. 1 year) timespan of many cultural funding streams compared to the long (i.e. 10 year) timespan of urban development timelines, or even longer-term generational timescales of some community spaces and groups. An ideal scenario would see museums, developers and funders all recognise the longer-term programmatic needs of institutions as a component of, rather than separate, from capital costs (see *Policy Recommendations* section below).

Narrative practices

Places are made of stories, whether individual memories, historic events, fictional representations, or narratives that describe – and affect – the identity and experience of places as a whole. Museums instinctively engage with senses of place through efforts to research and interpret local stories and lived experience, and through involvement in local promotion and place branding. The latter is amplified in processes of culture-led development and museum relocation through efforts to explain and rationalise their relationship to a new context. By framing this interaction with stories as *narrative practices*, museums can acknowledge not only the power of stories to affect change and provide representation within senses of place, but also to share this power. This is an approach that many museums, including the London Museum, already use, for example in co-production and co-curation of exhibitions and installations, and forms of participation that enable the sharing or even dismantling of museum power hierarchies (See Simon, 2010, Janes & Sandell, 2019). Its positioning within this *blueprint* provides a local sense of place-centric paradigm to such practices.

These practices are based on conceptions of place as heterogenous, polyvocal, and composed of multiple ongoing trajectories or ‘stories so far’ (Massey, 2005). In addition, they recognise that experiences of local ‘storyscapes’ mediate senses of place, suggesting an active role for museums in supporting various degrees of recognition among visitors and communities, and the increased visibility of diverse local stories. Lastly, they acknowledge that stories mediate people’s senses of place at multiple scales and through different modes (i.e. public interpretation, installations, memorials and monuments, and digital maps and guides), narratives which are not neutrally given but constructed. This underscores the importance of institutional reflection on the repetition of dominant place narratives. Three types of narrative practice – *open narrative frames*, *polyvocal authorship*, and *contextual storytelling* – are outlined below.

1) Open narrative frames

The construction of place narratives is one aspect of preparing the ground for urban development. As part of this, new or relocating museums have a role in how change is conceived and communicated either as part of broader organisational partnerships or independently. This can be done in a way that is nuanced, inclusive and respectful of existing uses and stories while also being open and clear about change. In doing so, these influential narratives can engage with diverse stories of place rather than homogenous development narratives, helping to counter experiences of uncertainty and the totalising effects of a singular market-led vision. Such an approach could enhance the visibility of local social actors by vocalising their impressions of place and aspirations for change. These could also reciprocally shape the museum’s own aims and ambitions within a changing sense of place.

2) Polyvocal authorship

A second *narrative practice* is the use of participatory approaches that support others to tell their stories both within the museum, and in the wider local area. As part of a heterogenous and polyvocal understanding of place, these activities – such as the development of in-person or virtual tours, geo-tagged storytelling platforms, thematic events, or public interpretation – can platform those with experiences that subvert or challenge dominant and potentially exclusionary place narratives and perspectives. This approach also reflects the “internal differences and conflicts” of place (Massey, 1993: 67), within which the museum is one of many agents of change. Rather than a universalising or making-public of stories and experience, these could also support more intimate acts of recognition or remembrance.

3) Contextual storytelling

Museums should be informed not only by an area’s stories, but the ways that they are communicated. These various modes – and the narratives they carry – already mediate local senses of place, ranging from interpretation panels, memorials, tour guides, street maps, and digital assets. When ‘approaching’ a new location, institutions can engage with and echo existing ways of storytelling, and re-use or evolve them in due course. This might range from public interpretation or walking tours, to murals or digital screens. These also have a temporal effect, building a diverse set of imaginative prompts that inform place experience and identity over time. Rather than co-opting and or occupying what is already there, however, such interventions can sit alongside what is already in place. In this way, museums can communicate alternative or progressive narratives that are accommodated within a changing rather than restrictive or static sense of place.

Challenges to *narrative practices* include resistance to complicating centralised narratives of urban change, for those established by developers, local authorities or within the museum itself. Likewise, there may be institutional inertia to the decentring of traditionally authoritative museum voice. Lastly, a lack of institutional diversity in staff and leadership will undermine meaningful representation and misconceptions of museum neutrality or impartiality may also inhibit action (Johnson-Cunningham, 2018; Murawski, 2021).

Convening practices

Museums at the centre of culture-led development processes are more than an anchor around which to define a new sense of place and centre economic activity: they are a formative agent that affects how that place is experienced, and who is there. This set of *convening practices* focuses on understanding and shaping the power structures that enable or inhibit people's experiences of a place. They also acknowledge a museum's potential to bring people together both spatially and philosophically, and to do so for mutual benefit.

Museums are congregant spaces (Gurian, 2005) that can reach beyond their walls to affect local senses of place. As such, institutional values and ethics are inherently intertwined with the politics of place. Within an open, changing, and polyvocal place, museums therefore have an important role in supporting debate and even enabling activism in ways that places which are bounded, aesthetically controlled, or highly-regulated do not.

These practices are based on a recognition of the multiplicity of place, and the acknowledgement that places are not neutral but experienced in diverse ways as a result of uneven power structures and social hierarchies (Massey, 1991; Puwar, 2004; Giesecking, 2020; Savage, 2015). Likewise, they are founded on an understanding of the openness of place, its latency to change, and its inherently political capacity (Massey, 2005). These practices also reflect that inclusive and shared institutional spaces must extend beyond a museum's walls. This is part of an institution's meaningful 'moral agency' (Sandell, 2017) within how a sense of place changes, and to avoid isolation within an exclusionary non-place. Three sets of convening practices are outlined below: creating *inviting boundaries*, *generating affective place networks*, and *meeting safely*.

1) Inviting boundaries

A key *convening practice* is for a museum to affect who feels welcome. This is in part achieved through consultation on masterplans, design frameworks, and placemaking strategies, and by supporting interventions that account for people's varied relations to local identity and both its tangible and intangible cues. These cover both the space of the institution, and the wider place within which it sits. Examples could include the retention of existing materials, pathways, and unprogrammed social spaces, extending to support for existing 'third places' (Oldenburg, 1999) through complementary commercial provision or procurement. In addition, public realm strategies should accommodate diverse groups, including those who are absent, for example through play areas, retail mix, or accessible infrastructure. These can also be supported through *temporal practices*, such as regular programmed activities and events at times that accommodate working rhythms or school hours. At a strategic level, this is informed by determining meaningful boundaries as an institutional agent: rather than purely spatial boundaries, these are pervasive aspects of local senses of place that an institution can meaningfully engage with, either to help maintain or develop, for example 'affordability' or 'accessibility'.

2) Generating affective place networks

A second set of *convening practices* is to bring local social actors, groups, and organisations together, both when approaching a new location and once in situ, for example through networks, forums, debates and events. Rather than seeking to be didactic or dominant, such forums could provide a basis for mutual discussion and support. Yet, within this, there is value in recognising and using institutional privilege as trusted civic institutions (Janes, 2024) to act as a convenor and supporter of other local institutions and organisations. These might be linked by their geographic relationship to a local place but which may have limited resources and agency. Institutional agents here can reciprocally support each other's local aims and ambitions. Over time this could build into an alternative to business-centred or residential groups to share resources and foster and maintain collaboration.

3) Meeting safely

The final set of *convening practices* relates to the creation of safe and non-discriminatory shared spaces and senses of place within a changing context. This is achieved through both supportive action, such as diverse representation, co-production, partnerships and accessible facilities, and through advancing policies and initiatives that promote social equity and human rights both within and outside the organisation. These may extend from existing museum values and ethics. However, within an ongoing reciprocal relationship with a local area, these could be co-created in partnership with local groups, ensuring that decision-making processes are inclusive, transparent, and responsive to diverse perspectives.

Challenges to *convening practices* include internal institutional appetite to embrace a more activist stance across an organisation, and the potential political and media response. Organisational scale will also affect the resources available to both convene others and participate in wider networks.

Policy recommendations

The research that underpins this *blueprint* also points to three specific improvements in the policies and strategies that guide culture-led development processes and the operating practices of their many stakeholders, including museums. These are outlined below.

1) Adaptive collaboration for sustainable development

Local authorities, planners, and cultural institutions should work together to understand the long-term impacts of culture-led development schemes in terms of both economic and social sustainability, and for ongoing institutional relevance. This should be based on navigating senses of place as an ongoing and emergent process rather than creating static or discordant alternatives. Within this, museums can also recognise the opportunity that a new location provides to change how they operate, based on the dynamics of that location. Likewise, operational practices should differ from business-as-usual, with programmes and practices needed to ‘grow’ in place rather than ‘land’ from elsewhere.

2) Engagement as a component of capital funding

Funders should recognise and redress the disparity in scale between capital funding and programmatic funding to instil the longer-term propagation of culture, and to support a museum’s meaningful embeddedness in a local context before it even opens. A memorandum of understanding between funding bodies, institutions, local organisations, and planners could include the funded provision for involvement by local social actors and groups on an ongoing basis, as an extension of Section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy arrangements, and as an alternative to ad hoc consultation. Likewise, museums should be resourced to sustain the longer-term programmatic needs of relocation or opening as a component of, rather than separate from, capital costs.

3) Novel research strategies for more equitable development

Research strategies for local areas undergoing change should expand from geographically- or materially-centred studies and reports to include a fuller spectrum of local senses of place, including imagined, socio-cultural, temporal, and political dimensions. This fuller understanding, alongside statutory heritage, topographical, and ecological considerations, would inform holistic material and programmatic public realm strategies to accommodate diverse groups, including those who are as yet absent. This could extend to support for existing ‘third places’ or informal community spaces through complementary commercial provision (i.e. avoiding encroaching on existing providers) or targeted local procurement strategies rather than accepting – or encouraging – displacive market dynamics.

References

- Abdulameer, Z. A., and Sati' Abbas, S. (2020) 'Adaptive reuse as an approach to sustainability', *IOP Conference Series: Materials Science and Engineering*, (881) 012010
- Ballatore, A. and Candlin, F. (2023) 'A geography of UK museums', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 48 (1) pp. 213-229
- Butler, J. (1993) *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*. London: Routledge
- Candlin, F. and Ballatore, A. (2018) *Mapping Museums*. Birkbeck, University of London. Available online: <https://mapping-museums.bbk.ac.uk/2018/11/06/museum-visitor-numbers/>
- Giesecking, J. J. (2020) *A Queer New York*. New York: New York University Press
- Gurian, E. H. (2006) *Civilising the Museum*. Abingdon: Routledge
- Halberstam, J. (2005) *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*. New York: New York University Press, 2005
- Janes, R. R. (2024) *Museums and Societal Collapse*. London: Routledge
- Janes, R. R. and Sandell, R. (eds.) (2019) *Museum Activism*. Abingdon: Routledge
- Johnson-Cunningham, S. (2018) 'Beyond gallery walls and performance halls: five essential steps museums and other cultural institutions must take to center people, communities, and cultivate effective societal change', *Museums & Social Issues*, 13 (1), pp. 2–7
- Lefebvre, H. (2004) *Rhythmanalysis: Space, time and everyday life*, Elden, S. and Moore, G. trans.) London: Continuum
- Massey, D. (1991) 'A Global Sense of Place'. *Marxism Today*, June, pp. 24-29
- Massey, D. (1993) 'Power geometry and a progressive sense of place', in Bird, J., Curtis, B., Putnam, T., Robertson, G., and Tickner, L. (eds.) *Mapping the Futures*. London: Routledge, pp. 60–70
- Massey, D. (2005) *For Space*. London: Sage
- Miles, S. (2005) 'Our Tyne': Iconic Regeneration and the Revitalisation of Identity in NewcastleGateshead', *Urban Studies*, 42, (5/6), pp. 913-926
- Murawski, M. (2021) *Museums as Agents of Change*. London: Rowman & Littlefield
- Oldenburg, R. (1999) *The Great Good Place*. 2nd edn. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press
- Patterson, M. (2016) 'The Global City versus the City of Neighbourhoods: Spatial Practice, Cognitive Maps, and the Aesthetics of Urban Conflict', *City & Community*, 15 (2), pp. 163-183
- Puwar, N. (2004) *Space Invaders: Race, Gender and Bodies Out of Place*. London: Berg Publishers
- Sandell, R. (2017) *Museums, Mortality and Human Rights*. Abingdon: Routledge
- Savage, M. (2015) *Social Class in the 21st Century*. London: Pelican Books
- Sharma, S. (2014) *In the Meantime: Temporality and Cultural Politics*, London: Duke University Press
- Simon, N. (2010) *The Participatory Museum*, Santa Cruz: Museum 2.0

This document, further examples, and other supporting information is available on:

placingmuseums.co.uk

(launching late 2025)

For more information please contact:

Tom Butler

tom.butler@brunel.ac.uk

References

- Abdulameer, Z. A., and Sati' Abbas, S. (2020) 'Adaptive reuse as an approach to sustainability', *IOP Conference Series: Materials Science and Engineering*, (881) 012010
- Ackroyd, P. (2018) *Queer City: Gay London from the Romans to the Present Day*. London: Vintage
- Adam, B. (1998) *Timescapes of Modernity*. London; Routledge
- Adam, B. (2004) *Time*. Cambridge: Polity Press Ltd
- Adam, B. (2008) *Of Timescapes, Futurescapes and Timeprints* [lecture] Lüneburg University, 17 June
- Agapito, D., Valle, P. and Mendes, J. (2014) 'The sensory dimension of tourist experiences: Capturing meaningful sensory-informed themes in Southwest Portugal', *Tourism Management*, 42, pp. 224-237
- Ahmed, S. (2004) *The Cultural Politics of Emotions*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press
- Ahmed, S. (2012) *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*, London: Duke University Press
- Alan Baxter Associates (2022) *Smithfield Public Realm Statement of Significance*. Available at:
https://democracy.cityoflondon.gov.uk/documents/s172930/Appendix%205%20Smithfield_Statement%20of%20Significance-.pdf (Accessed: 10 September 2024)
- Anderson, B. (2010) 'Preemption, precaution, preparedness: Anticipatory action and future geographies', *Progress in Human Geography*, 34 (6) pp. 715-862

Anderson, J. (2004) 'Talking whilst walking: a geographical archaeology of knowledge', *Area*, 36 (3), pp. 254-261

Anderson, M., and Arms, Z. (2022) 'Business improvement districts, class turf war and the strategic weaponisation of class monopoly rent', *Urban Studies*, 60 (2), pp. 238-255

Animal Rebellion (2021) 'Why We Are Marching From Smithfield Market', *Animal Rebellion Blog*, 24 August. Available at: <https://animalrebellion.org/why-we-are-marching-from-smithfield-market/> (Accessed: 19 April 2024)

AOC (2024) *Young V&A, Bethnal Green, London, 2018–23*. Available at: <https://www.theaoc.co.uk/projects/young-v-a/> (Accessed: 18 September 2024)

Aoki, J. and Yoshimizu, A. (2015) 'Walking Histories, Un/making Places: Walking Tours as Ethnography of Place', *Space and Culture* 18 (3), pp. 1-8

Arantes, P. (2018) *The Rent of Form: Architecture and Labor in the Digital Age*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

Arts Council England (ACE) (2020) *Let's Create: Strategy 2020-2030*. Available at <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/lets-create/strategy-2020-2030/accessing-lets-create> (Accessed: 30 November 2023)

Arts Council England (ACE) (2024) *Creative People and Places*. Available at <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/creative-people-and-places-0> (Accessed: 20 March 2024)

Ashworth, G. J., and Graham, B. (2005) 'Senses of Place, Senses of Time and Heritage', in Ashworth, G. J. and Graham, B. (eds.) *Senses of Place, Senses of Time*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, pp. 3-11

Attitude (2017) 'A brief history of TRADE, London's first gay after-hours club', *Attitude*, 7th September. Available at: <https://www.attitude.co.uk/uncategorised/a-brief-history-of-trade-londons-first-gay-after-hours-club-286623/> (Accessed: 17 April 2023)

Augé, M. (2008) *Non-Places: An Introduction to Supermodernity*. 2nd edn. Howe, J. (trans.). London: Verso

Augoyard, J-F. (2007), *Step-by-Step*. Curtis, D. A. (trans.). London: University of Minnesota Press

Austin, T. (2020) *Narrative Environments and Experience Design*. Abingdon: Routledge

Bachelard, G. (1994) *The Poetics of Space*. Jolas, M. (trans.). Boston: Beacon Press

Bærenholdt, J. O. and Simonsen, K. (2016) *Space Odysseys: Spatiality and Social Relations in the 21st Century*. Abingdon: Routledge

Barber, L. B. (2019) 'Heritage tours and trails on foot in Hong Kong: towards a typology that crosses the tourist-local divide', *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 14 (4), pp. 295-307

Barthes, R. (1977) *Image Music Text*. Heath, S. (trans.). London: Fontana Press

Barts Health NHS Trust (2024) *Fast facts*. Available on: <https://www.bartshealth.nhs.uk/fast-facts> [Accessed: 18 May 2024]

Bastian, M. (2013) 'Political Apologies and the Question of a 'Shared Time' in the Australian Context', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 30 (5), pp. 94-121

Bazuń, D. and Kwiatkowski, M. (2022) 'Exploratory walk and local cohesion – the concept and application', *Mobilities*, 17 (4) pp. 565-584

Beauregard, R. A. (1986) 'The Chaos and Complexity of Gentrification', in Lees, L., Slater, T., Wyly, E. (eds.) (2010) *The Gentrification Reader*. London: Routledge, pp. 11-23

Bennett, O. (2023) 'Two stops from Paris', *Ec1 Echo*, 16 February. Available on: <https://www.ec1echo.co.uk/two-stops-from-paris> (Accessed: 5 December 2023)

BBC News (2023) *City of London statue linked to slavery gets explanatory plaque*, 15 September. Available on: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-66806354> (Accessed: 9 May 2024)

Belkouri, D., Bendix Lanng, D. and Laing, R. (2022) 'Being there: capturing and conveying noisy slices of walking in the city', *Mobilities*, 17 (6), pp. 914-931

Bell, V. (2014) 'Photo-image', in Lury, C. and Wakeford, N. (eds.) *Inventive Methods: The Happening of the Social*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 145-162

Bergson, H. (2005) *Matter and Memory*. Paul, N. M. and Palmer, W. S. (trans.). New York: Zone Books. (Original work published 1908)

Bergson, H. (2013) *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*. Pogson, F. L. (trans.). Abingdon: Routledge. (Original work published 1910)

Bille, T. and Schulze, G. (2006) 'Culture in Urban and Regional Development', in Ginsburg, V. A. and Throsby, D. (eds.) *Handbook of the Economics of Art and Culture*. Amsterdam: Elsevier, pp. 1051-1099

Blunden, M. (2014) 'Police get new power to clear Paternoster Square of protesters... with no order from court', *The Independent*, 8 August. Available at: <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/police-get-new-power-to-clear-paternoster-square-of-protesters-with-no-order-from-court-9655850.html> (Accessed: 5 December 2023)

Böhme, G. (2018) *The Aesthetics of Atmospheres*. Thibaud, J-P. (ed.). Abingdon: Routledge

Bostock, M. (2021) 'The City of London's planning process is rigged in favour of developers', *Architects Journal*, 28th May. Available at: <https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/the-city-of-londons-planning-process-is-rigged-in-favour-of-developers?tkn=1> (Accessed: 15 June 2021)

Bourdieu, P. (1977) *Outline of a Theory in Practice*. Nice, R. (trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Brenner, N. and Theodore, N. (eds.) (2002) *Spaces of Neoliberalism: Urban Restructuring in North America and Western Europe*. Oxford: Blackwell

Brook, O., O'Brien, D. and Taylor, M. (2020) *Culture is bad for you: Inequality in the cultural and creative industries*. Manchester: Manchester University Press

Brown, C., Raymond, C. M. and Corcoran, J. (2015) 'Mapping and measuring place attachment', *Applied Geography*, 57, pp. 42-53

Brown, K. E., and Mairesse, F. (2018) 'The definition of the museum through its social role', *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 61 (4), pp. 525-539

Burford, E. J. (1990) *London: The Synfulle City*. London: Robert Hale

Burges, J. and Elias, A. J. (2016) 'Introduction: Time Studies Today', in Burges, J. and Elias, A. J. (eds.) *Time: A Vocabulary of the Present*, New York: New York University Press, pp. 1-27

Butcher, M. and Dickens, L. (2016) 'Spatial Dislocation and Affective Displacement: Youth Perspectives on Gentrification in London', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 40, pp. 800-816

Butler, J. (1993) *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*. London: Routledge

Butler, J. (2004) *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. London: Verso

Butler, T. with Robson, G. (2003) *London Calling: The Middle-Classes and the Remaking of Inner London*. Oxford: Berg

Buttimer, A. (1980) 'Home, Reach and the Sense of Place', in Buttimer, A. and Seamon, D. (eds.) (2015) *The Human Experience of Space and Place*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 166-187

Buxton, P. (2020) 'Rethink: The post-pandemic view for galleries and museums', *The RIBA Journal*, 9th July. Available at: <https://www.ribaj.com/culture/post-pandemic-design-museums-and-galleries-nissen-richards-stanton-williams-aoc-jamie-fobert-natural-history-museum> (Accessed: 17 September 2024)

Calabi, D. (2009) 'Memory, narrative and display – city museums in recent initiatives and debates', *Planning Perspectives*, 24 (3), pp. 385-390

Campkin, B. (2013) *Remaking London: Decline and Regeneration in Urban Culture*. London: I. B. Tauris

Campkin, B. (2022) 'The London Lesbian and Gay Centre', in Furman, A. N. and Mardell, J. (eds.) *Queer Spaces: An Atlas of LGBTQIA+ Places and Stories*. London: RIBA Publishing

Campkin, B. (2023) *Queer Premises: LGBTQ+ Venues in London Since the 1980s*. London: Bloomsbury Academic

Casey, E. (1987) *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press

Casey, E. (1998) *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*, London: University of California Press

Casey, E. (2001) 'Body, Self and Landscape', in Adams, P. C., Hielscher, S. and Till, K. E. (eds.), *Textures of Place: Exploring Humanist Geographies*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 403-425

Castells, M. (1983) *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements*. Berkley: University of California Press

Charmaz, K. (2014) *Constructing Grounded Theory*. London: Sage

Chatman, S. (1978) *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*. London: Cornell University Press

Cheshire, L. (2023) 'London museums struggling to regain visitors after Covid closures, our survey shows', *The Art Newspaper*, 17 March. Available at:

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2023/03/17/london-museums-struggling-to-regain-visitors-after-covid-closures-exclusive-survey-shows> (Accessed: 22 January 2024)

Children North East (2023) *Supporting inclusive access to arts, museums and heritage*.

Available at: <https://children-ne.org.uk/how-we-can-help/poverty-proofing-services/poverty-proofing-cultural-organisations/> (Accessed: 29 November 2023)

Childs, M. C. (2008) 'Storytelling and urban design', *Journal of Urbanism*, 1 (2), pp. 173-186

City of London Corporation (2016) *Cultural Hub Identity & Marketing/Communications Strategy: Summary*. Available at:

<https://democracy.cityoflondon.gov.uk/documents/s64375/Cultural%20Hub%20Identity%20-%20Marketing%20Communications%20Strategy.pdf> (Accessed: 17 September 2024)

City of London Corporation (2017) 'Culture Mile: A major destination for culture and creativity in the heart of the Square Mile', *Newsroom City of London*, 21 July. Available at:

<https://news.cityoflondon.gov.uk/culture-mile--a-major-destination-for-culture-and-creativity-in-the-heart-of-the-square-mile/> (Accessed: 23 October 2023)

City of London Corporation (2018) *Proposed final version of Culture Mile Strategy, 2018-28*.

Available at:

<https://democracy.cityoflondon.gov.uk/documents/s98313/PR%20July%202018%20-%20CM%20Strategy%20Paper%20Final%20Version.pdf> (Accessed: 23 May 2024)

City of London Corporation (2019) *Cultural & Creative Learning Strategy 2019-2023*.

Available at: <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/assets/Services-DCCS/city-of-london-cultural-and-creative-learning-strategy-2019-23.pdf> (Accessed: 18 September 2024)

City of London Corporation (2020) *Markets Co-location Programme*. Available at:

<https://wholesalemarkets.co.uk/smithfield-market-public-realm/> (Accessed: 18 September 2024)

City of London (2022a) 'Destination City: Spectacular immersive theatre event will transform the Square Mile', *Newsroom City of London*, 3 August. Available at:

<https://news.cityoflondon.gov.uk/destination-city-spectacular-immersive-theatre-event-will-transform-the-square-mile/> (Accessed: 18 September 2024)

City of London Corporation (2022b) *City of London (Markets) Bill*. Available at:

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/assets/Business/city-of-london-markets-bill.pdf> (Accessed: 22 May 2024)

City of London Corporation (2023a) *Barbican Estate history*. Available online:

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/barbican-estate/barbican-estate-history> (Accessed: 18 September 2024)

City of London Corporation (2023b) 'City of London set for a spectacular September as new landmark cultural event launched', *Newsroom City of London*, 18 July. Available at:

<https://news.cityoflondon.gov.uk/city-of-london-set-for-a-spectacular-september-as-new-landmark-cultural-event-launched/> (Accessed: 15 August 2024)

City of London Corporation (2023c) *Bartholomew Fair*. Available on:
<https://www.thecityofldn.com/bartholomew-fair> (Accessed: 23 October 2023)

City of London Corporation (2023d) *City of London blue plaques*. Available at:
<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/planning/historic-environment/city-of-london-blue-plaques> (Accessed: 13 May 2024)

City of London Corporation (2023e) *Destination City Update - Member City Envoy Network Appointment and the Evaluation of the Golden Key*. Available at:
<https://democracy.cityoflondon.gov.uk/documents/s180629/> (Accessed: 10 May 2024)

City of London Corporation (2024a) *Your Councillors*. Available at:
<https://democracy.cityoflondon.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?bcr=1> (Accessed: 6 April 2023)

City of London Corporation (2024b) *City Plan 2040*. Available at:
<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/assets/Services-Environment/City-Plan-2040.pdf>
(Accessed: 25 May 2024)

City of London Corporation (2024c) *Destination City*. Available at:
<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/about-us/plans-policies/destination-city#:~:text=What%20is%20the%20Destination%20City,the%20Policy%20Chairman%20Chris%20Hayward> (Accessed: 6 April 2024)

City of London Corporation (2024d) *Museum of London*. Available at:
<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/attractions-museums-entertainment/museum-of-london> (Accessed: 28 May 2024)

City of London Corporation (2024e) *City of London Guides*. Available at:
<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/education-and-learning/adult-skills-and-education-service/city-of-london-guides> (Accessed: 18 September 2024)

Classen, C. (1993) *Worlds of Sense: Exploring the senses in history and across cultures*.

London: Routledge

Cocks, H. G. (2010) *Nameless Offences: Homosexual desire in the 19th century*. London: I. B.

Tauris

Colin, C. (2021) 'Nostalgic neighbourhood belongings: theorizing the interrelationship

among nostalgias, belonging and neighbourhood changes', *The Sociological Review*, 69 (6),

pp. 1244-1259

Collins, P. H. and Bilge, S. (2020) *Intersectionality*. 2nd edn. Cambridge: Polity Press

Committee for the Collections and Activities of Museums of Cities (CAMOC) (2024) *About*

CAMOC. Available at: <https://camoc.mini.icom.museum/about/about-camoc/> (Accessed 6

September 2024)

Coney (2022) *The Golden Key*. Available at: <https://coneyhq.org/project/the-golden-key/>

(Accessed: 23 July 2024)

Counted, V. (2016) 'Making Sense of Place Attachment: Towards a Holistic Understanding of

People-Place Relationships and Experiences', *Environment, Place, Space*, 8 (1), pp. 7-32

Creswell, J. W. and Poth, C. N. (2018) *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. London: Sage

Cresswell, T. (1996) *In Place/out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression*.

Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

Cresswell, T. (2015) *Place: An Introduction*. 2nd edn. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons

Cresswell, T. and Merriman, P. (eds) (2011) *Geographies of Mobilities: Practices, Spaces,*

Subjects. Farnham: Ashgate

Crook, L. (2020) 'Hassell and OMA complete top-heavy WA Museum Boola Bardip in Perth', *dezeen*, 26 November. Available on: <https://www.dezeen.com/2020/11/26/oma-hassell-wa-museum-boola-bardip-perth/> (Accessed: 18 September 2024)

Culhane, D. (2017a) 'Sensing', in Elliott, D. and Culhane, D. (eds.) *A Different Kind of Ethnography*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, pp. 45-68

Culhane, D. (2017b) 'Imagining: An Introduction', in Elliott, D. and Culhane, D. (eds.) *A Different Kind of Ethnography*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, pp. 1-22

Culture Mile (2018) *Culture Mile: Look and Feel Strategy*. Available at: <https://democracy.cityoflondon.gov.uk/documents/s103549/Look%20and%20Feel%20Strategy%20Final%2031.08.pdf> (Accessed: 16 April 2024)

Culture Mile (2020) *Culture Mile Annual Report 2019-20*. Available at: [gsmd.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/Culture Mile Annual Report 2019-20.pdf](https://gsmd.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/Culture%20Mile%20Annual%20Report%202019-20.pdf) (Accessed: 25 May 2024)

Culture Mile BID (2024) *Culture Mile Business Improvement District: Inspiring Places*. Available at: <https://culturemilebid.co.uk/about-us/four-key-strategic-themes/> (Accessed: 16 April 2024)

Curran, W. (2004) 'Gentrification and the nature of work: exploring the links in Williamsburg, Brooklyn', *Environment and Planning A*, 36, pp. 1243-1258

Curran, W. (2018) "'Mexicans love red' and other gentrification myths: Displacements and contestations in the gentrification of Pilsen, Chicago, USA', *Urban Studies*, 55 (8), pp. 1711-1728

Dameria, C., Roos, A., Indradjati, P. N. and Tjokropandojo, D. S. (2020) 'A Conceptual Framework for Understanding Sense of Place Dimensions in the Heritage Context', *Journal of Regional and City Planning*, 31 (2), pp. 139-163

Darling, J. (2014) 'Emotions, Encounters and Expectations: The Uncertain Ethics of 'The Field', *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, 6 (2), pp. 201–212

Davidson, M. (2009) 'Displacement, Space and Dwelling: Placing Gentrification Debate', *Ethics Place and Environment*, 12 (2), pp. 219-234

Dean, C., Donnellan, C. and Pratt, A.C. (2010) 'Tate Modern: pushing the limits of regeneration', *City, Culture and Society*, 1 (2), pp. 79-87

de Certeau, M. (1984) *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Rendell, S. F. (trans). London: University of California Press

DeMiglio, L. and Williams, A. (2008) 'A Sense of Place, A Sense of Well-being', in Eyles, J, and Williams, A (eds.) *Sense of Place, Health and Quality of Life*. Aldershot: Ashgate, pp. 15-30

De Nardi, S. (2021) *Visualising Place, Memory and the Imagined*. London: Routledge

Degen, M. (2003) 'Fighting for the global catwalk: formalizing public life in Castlefield (Manchester) and diluting public life in El Raval (Barcelona)', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 27 (4), pp. 867-880

Degen, M. (2008) *Sensing Cities: Regenerating Public Life in Barcelona and Manchester*. Abingdon: Routledge

Degen, M. (2010) 'Consuming Urban Rhythms: Let's Ravelajar', in Edensor, T. (ed.) *Geographies of Rhythm: Nature, Place, Mobilities and Bodies*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 21-31

Degen, M. (2014) 'The Everyday City of the Senses', in Paddison, R. and McCann, E. (eds.) *Cities and Social Change*. London: Sage, pp. 92-111

Degen, M. (2018) 'Timescapes of urban change: The temporalities of regenerated streets', *The Sociological Review*, 66 (5), pp. 1074-1092

Degen, M. and Garcia, M. (2012) 'The Transformation of the 'Barcelona Model': An Analysis of Culture, Urban Regeneration and Governance', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 36, pp. 1022-1038

Degen, M. and Lewis, C. (2020) 'The changing feel of place: the temporal modalities of atmospheres in Smithfield Market, London', *Cultural Geographies*, 27 (4), pp. 509-526

Degen, M., Melhuish, C. and Rose, G. (2017) 'Producing place atmospheres digitally: Architecture, digital visualisation practices and the experience economy', *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 17 (1), pp. 3-24

Degen, M. and Rose, G. (2012) 'The Sensory Experiencing of Urban Design: The Role of Walking and Perceptual Memory', *Urban Studies*, 49 (15), pp. 3271-3287

Degen, M. and Rose, G. (2022) *The New Urban Aesthetic: Digital Experiences of Urban Change*. London: Bloomsbury

Degen, M. and Rose, G. (2024) 'Conceptualising aesthetic power in the digitally-mediated city', *Urban Studies*, 61 (11), 2176-2192

Degen, M. and Ward, I. (2021) 'Future Urban Imaginaries: placemaking and digital visualizations' in Rose, G. (ed.) *Seeing the City Digitally: Processing Urban Space and Time*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, pp. 109-137

Della Lucia, M. and Trufino, M. (2018) The role of the private actor in cultural regeneration: Hybridizing cultural heritage with creativity in the city, *Cities*, 82, pp. 35-44

DeLyser, D, and Sui, D. (2012) 'Crossing the qualitative quantitative chasm I: Hybrid geographies, the spatial turn, and volunteered geographic information (VGI)', *Progress in Human Geography*, 36 (1), pp. 111–124

Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) (2022) 'DCMS Sectors Economic Estimates: Monthly GVA (to June 2022)' [dataset], 18 August 2022. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/dcms-sectors-economic-estimates-monthly-gva-to-june-2022> (Accessed: 1 August 2024)

Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) (2017) *The Mendoza review: an independent review of museums in England*. London: DCMS

Dickens, C. (2000) *Oliver Twist*. Ware: Wordsworth Editions (Original work published 1837-1839)

Dobson, S. (2011) 'Remembering in the City: Characterising Urban Change', *Town Planning and Architecture*, 35 (2), pp. 104-109

Doka, K. J. (1989) *Disenfranchised grief: Recognizing hidden sorrow*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books

Dowling, R., Lloyd, K., and Suchet-Pearson, S. (2018) Qualitative methods 3: Experimenting, picturing, sensing', *Progress in Human Geography*, 42 (5), pp. 779-788

Dugan, E. (2022) 'Black social worker Tasered by City of London police treated like 'wild animal'', *The Guardian*, 21 May. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/may/21/black-social-worker-tasered-by-city-of-london-police-treated-like-wild-animal> (Accessed: 28 May 2022)

Dwyer, L., Chen, N. and Lee, J. (2019) 'The role of place attachment in tourism research', *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 36 (5), pp. 645–652

Ebbensgaard, C. L. and Edensor, T. (2021) 'Walking with light and the discontinuous experience of urban change', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 46, pp. 378–391

Edelman, L. (2004) *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*, London: Duke University Press

Edensor, T. (2010a) 'Walking in rhythms: place, regulation, style and the flow of experience', *Visual Studies*, 25 (1), pp. 67-79

Edensor, T. (ed.) (2010b) *Geographies of Rhythm: Nature, Place, Mobilities and Bodies*, Abingdon: Routledge

Edensor, T. (2012) 'Vital urban materiality and its multiple absences: the building stone of central Manchester', *Cultural Geographies*, 20 (4), pp. 447-465

Elabor-Idemudia, P. (2011) 'Ch. 9: Identity, Representation and Knowledge Production', in *Counterpoints, 2011, Vol. 379, Indigenous Philosophies and Critical Education: A Reader*, pp. 142-156

Ernwein, M. and Matthey, L. (2019) 'Events in the affective city: Affect, attention and alignment in two ordinary urban events', *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 51 (2), pp. 283-301

Evans, G. (2005) 'Measure for Measure: Evaluating the Evidence of Culture's Contribution to Regeneration', *Urban Studies*, 42 (5/6), pp. 959–983

Falanga, R. (2022) 'Understanding place attachment through the lens of urban regeneration. Insights from Lisbon', *Cities*, 122, pp. 1-5

Featherstone, D. and Painter, J. (2013) 'Introduction: There is no point of departure: The Many Trajectories of Doreen Massey', in Featherstone, D. and Painter, J. (eds) *Spatial Politics: Essays for Doreen Massey*. Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, pp. 1-17

Florida, R. (2005) *Cities and the Creative Class*. New York: Routledge.

Forshaw, A. (2015) *Smithfield: Past Present and Future*, London: Robert Hale

Foucault, M. (1984) 'Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias', Miskowiec, J. (trans.) *Architecture /Mouvement/ Continuité*, pp. 1-9

Foucault, M. (1996) "Friendship as a Way of Life" in Lotringer, S. (ed) *Foucault Live: Collected Interviews, 1961 – 1984*. Hochroth, L. and Johnston, J. (trans.). New York: Semiotext(e), pp. 204-312

Fraser, N. (1990) 'Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy', *Social Text*, 25/26, pp. 56-80

Fraser, N. (2009) *Scales of Justice: Reimagining Political Space in a Globalizing World*. New York: Columbia University Press

Freeman, E. (2010) *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories*. London: Duke University Press

Freeman, L. (2006) *There Goes The 'Hood: Views of Gentrification from the Ground Up*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press

Freidus, A. (2019) "'A Great School Benefits Us All': Advantaged Parents and the Gentrification of an Urban Public School', *Urban Education*, 54 (8), pp. 1121-1148

Ganga, N. R., Davies, L. and Wilson, K. (2022) *Arts & Wellbeing: A review of the social value of place-based arts interventions*. Liverpool: Liverpool John Moores University / Institute of Cultural Capital

Genette, G. (1983) *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*. Lewin. E. J. (trans.). Ithaca: Cornell University Press

Giddy, J. K. and Hoogendoorn, G. (2018) 'Ethical concerns around inner city walking tours', *Urban Geography*, 39 (9), pp. 1293-1299

Gieseeking, J. J. (2020) *A Queer New York*. New York: New York University Press

Glaser, B. G. and Strauss, A. L. (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. Chicago: Aldine

Glass, R. (1964) 'Introduction: Aspects of Change', in Centre for Urban Studies (ed.) *London: Aspects of Change*. London: MacKibbon and Kee

Glennie, P. and Thrift, N. (1996) 'Reworking E. P. Thompson's 'Time, Work-discipline and Industrial Capitalism', *Time and Society*, pp. 275-299

González, S. and Dawson, G (2018) 'Resisting gentrification in traditional public markets' in González, S. (ed.) *Contested Markets, Contested Cities*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 54-71

Gottschall, J. (2013) *The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human*. New York: Mariner

Greater London Authority (GLA) (2023) *Mayor announces funding for new permanent HIV/AIDS memorial*. Available at: <https://www.london.gov.uk/media-centre/mayors-press-release/Mayor%20announces%20funding%20for%20new%20permanent%20HIV-AIDS%20memorial> (Accessed: 19 September 2024)

Greater London Authority (GLA) (2024a) *London Borough of Culture*. Available at: <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/arts-and-culture/current-culture-projects/london-borough-culture> (Accessed: 19 August 2024)

Greater London Authority (GLA) (2024b) *The Commission for Diversity in the Public Realm*. Available at: <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/arts-and-culture/commission-diversity-public-realm> (Accessed: 2 May 2024)

Greater London Council (GLC) Gay Working Party (1982) *London Lesbian and Gay Centre, concept note*, July 1982, HCA/Ephemera/262, quoted in Campkin, B. (2023) *Queer Premises LGBTQ+ Venues in London Since the 1980s*. London: Bloomsbury Academic

Greenberg, M. (2008) *Branding New York*. Abingdon: Routledge

Guerzoni, G. (2015) 'The Museum Building Boom', in Lord, G. D. and Blankenberg, N. (eds) *Cities, Museums and Soft Power*. Washington: AAM Press

Gurian, E. H. (2006) *Civilising the Museum*. Abingdon: Routledge

Halberstam, J. (2005) *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*. New York: New York University Press, 2005

Halberstam, J. (2007) 'Keeping time with Lesbians on Ecstasy', *Women and Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture*, 11, pp. 51-58

Halbwachs, M. (1992) *On Collective Memory*. Coser, L. A. (trans.), London: University of Chicago Press

Harms, E. (2013) 'EVICTION TIME IN THE NEW SAIGON: Temporalities of Displacement in the Rubble of Development', *Cultural Anthropology*, 28 (2), pp. 344-368

Harvey, D. (1990) *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Oxford: Blackwell

- Harvey, D. (1996) *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*. Oxford: Blackwell
- Harvey, D. (2005) 'Spacetime and the World', in Gieseking, J. J. and Mangold, W. (eds) (2014) *The People, Place and Space Reader*. Abingdon: Routledge
- Harvey, D. (2006) *The Limits to Capital*. London: Verso
- Harvey, D. (2012) *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution*, London: Verso
- Hastings, C. (2016) 'Remembering the 1980s UK Lesbian and Gay Center That Died Too Soon', *Vice*, 27th August. Available at: <https://www.vice.com/en/article/dpk7xj/london-lesbian-gay-centre-30-years> (Accessed: 17 April 2023)
- Hawkins\Brown (2019) *Smithfield Public Realm*. Available at: <https://www.hawkinsbrown.com/projects/smithfield-public-realm/> (Accessed: 17 April 2023)
- Hayden, D. (1996) *The power of place: urban landscapes as public history*, London: MIT Press
- Hebbert, M. (2020) 'Memory, narrative and display: city museums revisited', *International Planning History Society Conference – Moscow, July 2020*, EasyChair PrePrint, No. 3073
- Heidegger, M. (1962) *Being and Time*. Macquarrie, J. and Robinson, E. (trans.). New York: Harper & Row (Original work published 1927)
- Henriques, J., Tainen, M., and Valiaho, P. (2014) 'Rhythm Returns: Movement and Cultural Theory', *Body & Society*, 20 (3&4) pp. 3-29
- Herman, D. (1997) 'Toward A Formal Description of Narrative Metalepsis', *Journal of Literary Semantics*, 26 (2), pp. 132-152

Herman, D. (2009) 'Narrative ways of worldmaking', in Heenan, S., and Sommer, R. (eds.) *Narratology in the age of cross-disciplinary narrative research*. Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, pp. 71–87

Higgins, J., Nairn, K. and Sligo, J. (2007) 'Peer research with youth' in Kindon, S., Pain, R. and Kesby, M. (eds.) *Participatory Action Research Approaches and Methods*. London: Routledge, pp. 104-111

Hill, S. (2016) 'Constructive conservation – a model for developing heritage assets', *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development*, 6 (1), pp. 34-46

Historic England (2024) *Building the Brutal: the Barbican Redevelopment*. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/archive/collections/photographs/building-the-barbican/> (Accessed: 18 June 2024)

Holmes, H. (2020) 'NYC Performance Spaces Have Stepped Up to Help Protesters, and Museums Should Too', *Observer*, 16 June. Available on: <https://observer.com/2020/06/open-your-lobby-initiative-protesters-brooklyn-museum/> (Accessed: 5 December 2023)

Hooper-Greenhill, E. (2000) *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture*. Abingdon: Routledge

Hourston Hanks, L. (2018) 'The Museum and Multivalences of Place', in MacLeod, S., Austin, T., Hale, J. and Ho Hing-Kay, O. (eds.) *The Future of Museum and Gallery Design*, London: Routledge, pp. 86-99

Hoy, D. C. (2009) *The Time of Our Lives: A Critical History of Temporality*. London: MIT Press

Imrie, R., Lees, L. and Raco, M. (2009) 'London's regeneration', in Imrie, R., Lees, L. and Raco, M. (eds.) *Regenerating London: Governance, Sustainability, and Community in a Global City*. Abingdon: Routledge

ING Media (2024) *Investment and Housing Ministers head strong UK delegation to MIPIM 2024* [press release] 28 February. Available on:
<https://www.mipim.com/content/dam/sitebuilder/rm/mipim/2024/pdf/Investment%20and%20Housing%20Ministers%20head%20strong%20UK%20delegation%20to%20MIPIM%2024.pdf.coredownload.091144013.pdf> (Accessed: 15 May 2024)

Ingold, T. (2002) *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill*. London: Routledge

Ingold, T. (2007) *Lines: A Brief History*. Abingdon Routledge

Ingold, T. (2008) 'Bindings against boundaries: entanglements of life in an open world', *Environment and Planning A*, 40, pp. 1796-1810

Ingold, T. (2011) *Being Alive: Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description*. Abingdon: Routledge

International Council of Museums (ICOM) (2022) *Museum Definition*. Available at:
<https://icom.museum/en/resources/standards-guidelines/museum-definition> (Accessed: 1 August 2024)

Islington Council (2019) *Trade often copied, never equalled: Celebrating 25 years of after-hours clubbing in Islington*. Available at: https://www.islington.gov.uk/~/_media/sharepoint-lists/public-records/leisureandculture/information/factsheets/20192020/20190624tradenightclubclerkenwell.pdf (Accessed: 17 April 2023)

Islington Council (2024) *Imagine Islington: Vision and priorities*. Available at:
<https://www.islington.gov.uk/libraries-arts-and-heritage/arts/imagine-islington/imagine-islington-vision-and-priorities> (Accessed: 17 September 2024)

Islington's Pride (2021) *Collecting and Celebrating Islington's LGBTQ+ Heritage*. Available at: <https://islingtonspride.com/humap/> (Accessed: 17 April 2023)

Jacobs, J. (2020) *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. London: The Bodley Head
(Original work published 1961)

Jacobs, J. M. (1996) *Edge of Empire: Postcolonialism and the City*. London: Routledge

Jager, M. (1986) 'Class definition and the esthetics of gentrification: Victoriana in Melbourne', in Lees, L., Slater, T., Wyly, E. (eds.) (2010) *The Gentrification Reader*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 153-160

Janes, R. R. (2013) *Museums and the Paradox of Change*. 3rd edn. Abingdon: Routledge

Janes, R. R. (2022) 'The Value of Museums in Averting Societal Collapse', *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 65 (4), pp. 729–745

Janes, R. R. (2024) *Museums and Societal Collapse*. London: Routledge

Janes, R. R. and Sandell, R. (eds.) (2019) *Museum Activism*. Abingdon: Routledge

Jenkins, B. (2023) 'Poverty Proofing Museums', *MuseumNext*, 28 March. Available at: <https://www.museumnext.com/article/poverty-proofing-museums/> (Accessed: 29 November 2023)

Jensen, O. B. (2007) 'Culture Stories: Understanding Cultural Urban Branding', *Planning Theory*, 6 (3), pp. 211-233

Jensen, O. B. and Richardson, T. (2004) *Making European Space: Mobility, Power and Territorial Identity*. London: Routledge

Jimenez, J. (2015) 'The Economics of Museums and Cities' in Lord, G. D., and Blankenberg, N. (eds.) *Cities, Museums and Soft Power*. Washington: AAM Press

Johnson-Cunningham, S. (2018) 'Beyond gallery walls and performance halls: five essential steps museums and other cultural institutions must take to center people, communities, and cultivate effective societal change', *Museums & Social Issues*, 13 (1), pp. 2–7

Julier, G. (2005) 'Urban Designsapes and the Production of Aesthetic Consent', *Urban Studies*, 42 (5/6), pp. 869-887

Kendall-Adams, G. (2019) 'Rift emerges over ICOM's proposed museum definition', *Museums Association*, 22 August. Available at: <https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/2019/08/22082019-rift-over-icom-definition/> (Accessed: 30 November 2023)

Kitchin, R. (2023) *Digital Timescapes: Technology, Temporality, and Society*. Cambridge: Polity Press

Knowles, C. (2023) *Serious Money: Walking Plutocratic London*, London: Penguin Books

Kusenbach, M. (2003) 'Street phenomenology: The go-along as ethnographic research tool', *Ethnography*, 4 (3), pp. 455-485

Lamond, I. R., and Platt, L. (eds.) (2016) *Critical Event Studies: Approaches to Research*. London: Palgrave Macmillan

Lang, R. (2022) *Building for Change: The Architecture of Creative Reuse*. Berlin: gestalten

Langegger, S. (2016) 'Right-of-way gentrification: Conflict, commodification and cosmopolitanism', *Urban Studies*, 53 (9), pp. 1803-1821

Law, L. (2005) 'Sensing the city: urban experiences', in Cloke, P., Crang, P. and Goodwin, M. (eds.) *Introducing Human Geographies*. London: Hodder Arnold, pp. 439-450

Lee, J. and Ingold, T. (2006) 'Fieldwork on foot: Perceiving, routing, socialising', in Coleman, S. and Collins, P. (eds.) *Locating the Field: Space, Place and Context in Anthropology*. Oxford: Berg, pp. 67-85

Lees, L. (2000) 'A Reappraisal of Gentrification: Towards a 'Geography of Gentrification'', in Lees, L., Slater, T., Wyly, E. (eds.) (2010) *The Gentrification Reader*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp 382-395

Lees, L. (2003) 'Policy (Re)Turns: Gentrification Research and Urban Policy – Urban Policy and Gentrification Research', *Environment and Planning A*, 35 (4), pp. 571-574

Lees, L. (2014) 'The Urban Injustices of New Labour's "New Urban Renewal": The Case of the Aylesbury Estate in London', *Antipode*, 46 (4), pp. 921-947

Lees, L. and Hubbard, P. (2020) 'The emotional and psychological impacts of London's 'new' urban renewal', *Journal of Regeneration & Renewal*, 13 (3), pp. 241-250

Lees, L. and Hubbard, P. (2022) "'So, Don't You Want Us Here No More?" Slow Violence, Frustrated Hope, and Racialized Struggle on London's Council Estates', *Housing, Theory and Society*, 39 (3), pp. 341-358

Lees, L., and Phillips, M. (2018) *Handbook of Gentrification Studies*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar

Lees, L., Slater, T. and Wyly, E. (2008) *Gentrification*. Abingdon: Routledge

Lefebvre, H. (1991) *The Production of Space*. Nicholson-Smith, D. (trans.). Oxford: Blackwell

Lefebvre, H. and Régulier, C. (1996) 'Rhythmanalysis of Mediterranean Cities', in Kofman, E. and Lebas, E. (trans. and eds.) *Writings on Cities: Henri Lefebvre*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 228-240

Lefebvre, H. (2004) *Rhythmanalysis: Space, time and everyday life*, Elden, S. and Moore, G. (trans.). London: Continuum

Lefebvre, H. (2014). *Critique of Everyday Life, The One-Volume Edition*. London: Verso

Levin, A. K. (2012) 'Unpacking gender: creating complex models for gender inclusivity in museums', in Sandell, R. and Nightingale, E. (eds.) *Museums, Equality and Social Justice*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 156-168

Levine, J. R. (2017) 'The Paradox of Community Power: Cultural Processes and Elite Authority in Participatory Governance', *Social Forces*, 95 (3), pp. 1155-1179

Ley, D. (1980) 'Liberal Ideology and the Post-Industrial City', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 70 (2), pp. 238-258

Ley, D. (1996) *The New Middle Class and the Remaking of the Central City*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Liamputtong, P. (2011) *Focus Group Methodology: Principles and Practice*. London: Sage

Lin, C-Y. and Hsing, W-C. (2009) 'Culture-led Urban Regeneration and Community Mobilisation: The Case of the Taipei Bao-an Temple Area, Taiwan', *Urban Studies*, 46 (7), pp. 1317-1342

Lindner, C., and Meissner, M. (2019) 'Introduction: urban imaginaries in theory and practice' in Lindner, C. and Meissner, M. (eds) *The Routledge Companion to Urban Imaginaries*, Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 1-20

London Museum (2016) 'History of Smithfield Part One – a new museum', [video] *London Museum youtube channel*, 11 February. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ytk1cjtEfWw> (Accessed: 29 August 2024)

London Museum (2021a) *Engagement Framework Summary*. Available at: <https://le.ac.uk/-/media/uol/docs/research-centres/rcmg/publications/museum-of-london-engagement-framework-summary2.pdf> (Accessed: 18 September 2024)

London Museum (2021b) *Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme (2022-2025): Detailed Proposal Prepared for the Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund Application* [internal document] October 2021

London Museum (2023a) *London Museum Strategic Plan 2023-2028*. Available at: https://media.londonmuseum.org.uk/documents/London_Museum_Strategic_Plan_2023-28_FINAL_8uNcLJv.pdf (Accessed: 16 September 2024)

London Museum (2023b) *Governors' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023*. Available at: <https://media.londonmuseum.org.uk/documents/Annual-report-2023.pdf> (Accessed: 17 September 2024)

London Museum (2023c) *Foundation stone unveiled for the new London Museum as principal construction works begin* [press release], 16 October. Available at: <https://www.londonmuseum.org.uk/about/press/press-releases/foundation-stone-unveiled-for-the-new-london-museum-as-principal-construction-works-begin/> (Accessed: 9 January 2024)

London Museum (2023d) *Project Initiation Document: Activities 2 & 4 – Smithfield Neighbourhood Programme & London in Our Time* [internal document]

London Museum (2023e) *Flourishing Neighbourhoods Key Info Jun 24* [internal document]

London Museum (2024a) *A New Museum for London*. Available at: <https://museum.london/> (Accessed 18 June 2024)

London Museum (2024b) *Community Associates: Funding Flourishing Partnerships* [internal document]

Lord, G. D., and Blankenberg, N. (2015) 'Introduction: Why Cities, Museums, and Soft Power', in Lord, G. D., and Blankenberg, N. (eds) *Cities, Museums and Soft Power*, Washington: AAM Press

Low, K. E. Y. (2013) 'Sensing cities: the politics of migrant sensescapes', *Social Identities*, 19 (2), pp. 221–237

Low, K. E. Y. (2015) 'The sensuous city: Sensory methodologies in urban ethnographic research', *Ethnography*, 16 (3), pp. 295-312

Low, S. and Smith, N. (2006) *The Politics of Public Space*. Abingdon: Routledge

Lowe, T. (2023) 'Cost of Museum of London's Smithfield scheme jumps by £100m', *Building Design*, 10 May. Available at: <https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/cost-of-museum-of-londons-smithfield-scheme-jumps-by-100m/5123086.article> (Accessed: 11 June 2024)

Lury, C. and Wakeford, N. (eds.) (2014) *Inventive Methods: The Happening of the Social*. Abingdon: Routledge

Lushey, C. (2017) 'Peer Research Methodology: Challenges and Solutions' [online]. SAGE Research Methods Cases. Available at: <https://methods.sagepub.com/case/peer-research-methodology-challenges-and-solutions> (Accessed: 18 September 2023)

Lynch, B. T., and Alberti, S. J. M.M. (2010) 'Legacies of prejudice: racism, co-production and radical trust in the museum', *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 25 (1), pp. 13-35

Lynch, K. (1960) *The Image of the City*. Cambridge: M.I.T. Press

Lyon, D. (2016) 'Doing Audio-Visual Montage to Explore Time and Space: The Everyday Rhythms of Billingsgate Fish Market', *Sociological Research Online*, 21 (3), pp. 1-12

Lyon, D. (2021) *Rhythmanalysis: Research Methods*. London: Bloomsbury

Malcom Reading Consultants (2016) *Relocation Project Objectives*. Available on: <https://competitions.malcolmreading.com/museumoflondon/project.html> (Accessed: 29 March 2023)

Malpas, J. E. (2008) 'New Media, Cultural Heritage and the Sense of Place: Mapping the Conceptual Ground', *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 14 (3), pp. 197-209

Malpas, J. E. (2018) *Place and Experience: A Philosophical Topography*. 2nd edn. Abingdon: Routledge

Manzo, L. and Devine-Wright, P. (eds.) (2013) *Place Attachment: Advances in Theory, Methods and Applications*. Abingdon: Routledge

Marcuse, P. (1996) 'Of Walls and Immigrant Enclaves', in *Immigration and Integration in Post-Industrial Societies*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 30-45

Marstine, J. (2006) 'Introduction', in Marstine, J. (ed.) *New Museum Theory and Practice*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 1-36

Massey, D. (1991) 'A Global Sense of Place', *Marxism Today*, June, pp. 24-29

Massey, D. (1993) 'Power geometry and a progressive sense of place', in Bird, J., Curtis, B., Putnam, T., Robertson, G., and Tickner, L. (eds.) *Mapping the Futures*. London: Routledge, pp. 60–70

Massey, D. (2005) *For Space*. London: Sage

McRae, I. (2023) 'What is a warm bank and why are they needed this winter?', *Big Issue*, 14 November. Available on: <https://www.bigissue.com/news/social-justice/warm-banks-winter-cost-of-living-crisis-energy-bills/> (Accessed: 17 September 2024)

Mendoza, C. and Morén-Alegret, R. (2012) 'Exploring methods and techniques for the analysis of senses of place and migration', *Progress in Human Geography*, 37 (6), pp. 762-785

Merleau-Ponty, M. (2012) *Phenomenology of Perception*, Landes, D. A. (trans.). Abingdon: Routledge. (Original work published 1945)

Meskell-Brocken, S. (2020) 'First, second and third: Exploring Soja's Thirdspace theory in relation to everyday arts and culture for young people' in Ashley, T. and Weedon, A. (eds.) *Developing a Sense of Place*. London: UCL Press, pp. 240-254

Middleton, D. and Brown, S. D. (2011) 'Memory and Space in the Work of Maurice Halbwachs' in P. Meusburger, Heffernan, M. and Wunder, E. (eds.), *Cultural Memories*. New York: Springer, pp. 29-50

Mikunda, C. (2004) *Brand Lands, Hot Spots & Cool Spaces*. Blumen, A. (trans.). London: Kogan Page

Miles, M. (2000) *The uses of decoration: essays in the architectural everyday*. Chichester: Wiley

Miles, S. (2005) 'Our Tyne': Iconic Regeneration and the Revitalisation of Identity in NewcastleGateshead', *Urban Studies*, 42, (5/6), pp. 913-926

Miles, S. (2020) 'Consuming culture-led regeneration: the rise and fall of the democratic urban experience', *Space and Polity*, 24 (2), pp. 210-224

Miles, S. (2021) *The Experience Society: Consumer Capitalism Rebooted*. London: Pluto Press

Miles, S., and Paddison, R. (2005) 'Introduction: The Rise and Rise of Culture-led Urban Regeneration', *Urban Studies*, 42 (5/6), pp. 833-839

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2014) *Business Improvement Districts*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/business-improvement-districts> (Accessed: 17 September 2024)

Mitchell, D. (1995) 'The End of Public Space? People's Park, Definitions of the Public and Democracy', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 85 (1), pp. 108-133

Monbiot, G. (2011) 'The medieval, unaccountable Corporation of London is ripe for protest', *The Guardian*, 31st October. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/oct/31/corporation-london-city-medieval> (Accessed: 17 September 2024)

Monstadt, J. (2022) 'Urban and Infrastructural Rhythms and the Politics of Temporal Alignment', *Journal of Urban Technology*, 29:1, 69-77

Moore-Cherry, N., and Bonnin, C. (2020) 'Playing with time in Moore Street, Dublin: Urban redevelopment, temporal politics and the governance of space-time', *Urban Geography*, 41 (9), pp. 1198-1217

Moretti, C. (2008) 'Places and Stages: Narrating and Performing the City in Milan, Italy', *Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies*, 4 (1), pp. 1-46

Moretti, C. (2017) 'Walking', in Elliott, D. and Culhane, D. (eds.) *A Different Kind of Ethnography*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, pp. 91-111

Munoz, J. E. (2019) *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. New York: New York University Press

Murawski, M. (2021) *Museums as Agents of Change*. London: Rowman & Littlefield

Museums Association (2021) *Supporting decolonisation in museums*. Available at: <https://media.museumsassociation.org/app/uploads/2021/11/02155426/Supporting-decolonisation-in-museums.pdf> (Accessed: 10 October 2023)

Museums Association (2023) *Museums Change Lives Awards 2023*. Available at: <https://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/museums-change-lives/awards-2023/> (Accessed: 23 August 2024)

Museum of Homelessness (2024) *We fight injustice*. Available at: <https://museumofhomelessness.org/we-fight-injustice> (Accessed: 23 August 2024)

Myers, D. and Kitsuse, A. (2000) 'Constructing the Future in Planning: A Survey of Theories and Tools', *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 19, pp. 221-231.

Nash, L. (2020) 'Performing Place: A Rhythmanalysis of the City of London', *Organizational Studies*, 41 (3), pp 301-321

Nash, L. (2022) *The Lived Experience of Work and City Rhythms*. Bingley: Emerald Publishing

Nelson, T. (2019) 'Why Icom postponed the vote on its new museum definition', *Museums Association*, 2 October. Available at <https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/opinion/2019/10/01102019-definition-just-start-of-conversation/#> (Accessed: 15 June 2021)

Nightingale, E. and Sandell, R. (2012) 'Introduction', in Sandell, R. and Nightingale, E. (eds.) *Museums, Equality and Social Justice*. Abingdon: Routledge

Nora, P. (ed.) (1984-1992) *Les lieux de mémoire*, Paris: Gallimard

Goldhammer, A. (trans.) Kritzman, L. D. (ed.) (1996-1998) *Realms of Memory: The Construction of the French Past*. New York: Columbia

Office for National Statistics (ONS) (2011) *Census 2011 Resident Population by 5-year age group, UK district, country and region* [dataset]. Available at: <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/census-2011-population-age-uk-districts> (Accessed: 29 Apr 2024)

Oldenburg, R. (1999) *The Great Good Place*. 2nd edn. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press

Oliver, M. (2022) 'They have a fight on their hands': Butchers claim Royal Charter to stay in the City of London', *The Telegraph*, 19 February. Available at: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2022/02/19/have-fight-hands-butchers-claim-royal-charter-stay-city-london/> (Accessed: 17 September 2024)

O'Neill, M. and Hubbard, P. (2010) 'Walking, sensing, belonging: ethno-mimesis as performative praxis', *Visual Studies*, 25 (1), pp. 46-58

O'Neill, M. and Roberts, B. (2020) *Walking Methods: Research on the Move*. Abingdon: Routledge

O'Reilly, K. (2012) *Ethnographic Methods*. Abingdon: Routledge

Ostrom, E. (1996) 'Crossing the great divide: Coproduction, synergy and development', *World Development*, 24 (6), pp. 1073–1087

Pallasmaa, J. (2005) *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons

Papachristos, A., Smith, C., Scherer, L. and Fugiero, M. (2011) 'More Coffee, Less Crime? The Relationship between Gentrification and Neighborhood Crime Rates in Chicago, 1991 to 2005', *City & Community*, 10 (3), pp. 215-240

Patterson, M. (2016) 'The Global City versus the City of Neighbourhoods: Spatial Practice, Cognitive Maps, and the Aesthetics of Urban Conflict', *City & Community*, 15 (2), pp. 163-183

People's History Museum (2024) *Migration: a human story*. Available at: <https://phm.org.uk/programme/migration/> (Accessed: 23 August 2024)

Pink, S. (2008) 'An urban tour: The sensory sociality of ethnographic place-making', *Ethnography*, 9 (2), pp. 175-196

Pink, S. (2015) *Doing Sensory Ethnography*. 2nd edn. London: Sage

Plevoets, B. and Van Cleempoel, K. (2019) *Adaptive Reuse of the Built Heritage: Concepts and Cases of an Emerging Discipline*. Abingdon: Routledge

Porteous, J. D. (1985) 'Smellscape', *Progress in Physical Geography: Earth and Environment*, 9 (3), pp. 356-378

Porteous, J. D. (1990) *Landscapes of the mind: worlds of sense and metaphor*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Porteous, J. D., and Mastin, J. F. (1985) 'Soundscape', *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research*, 2 (3), pp. 169-186

Porter-Abbott, H. (2008) *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*. 2nd edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Potteiger, M. and Purinton, J. (1998) *Landscape Narratives*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons

Pow, C. (2009) Neoliberalism and the aestheticization of new middle-class landscapes. *Antipode*, 41(2), pp. 371–390

Prakash, G., and Kruse, K. M. (eds.) (2008) *The Spaces of the Modern City: Imaginaries, Politics, and Everyday Life* (Vol. 2). Princeton: Princeton University Press

Pratt, A. C. (2008) 'Creative cities: the cultural industries and the creative class', *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*, 90 (2), pp. 107-117

Pratt, A.C. (2018) 'Gentrification, artists and the cultural economy' in Lees, L. and Philips, M. (eds.) *Handbook of Gentrification Studies*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, pp. 346-362

Pred, A. (1983) 'Structuration and place: On the becoming of sense of place and structure of feeling', *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* (13), pp. 45-68

Pred, A. R. (1984) 'Place as historically contingent process: Structuration and the time-geography of becoming places', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 75, pp. 279-297

Preece, J., McKee, K., Robinson, D. and Flint, J. (2021) 'Urban rhythms in a small home: COVID-19 as a mechanism of exception', *Urban Studies*, pp. 1-18

Price, P. L. (2004) *Dry Place: Landscapes of Belonging and Exclusion*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press

Proteau, J. (2018) 'Reducing risky relationships: criteria for forming positive museum-corporate sponsorships', *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 33 (3), pp. 235-242

Purcell, M. (2022) 'Theorising democratic space with and beyond Henri Lefebvre', *Urban Studies*, 59 (15), pp. 3041-3059

Puren, K., Roos, V. and Coetzee, H. (2017) 'Sense of place: using people's experiences in relation to a rural landscape to inform spatial planning guidelines', *International Planning Studies*, pp. 1-21

Puwar, N. (2004) *Space Invaders: Race, Gender and Bodies Out of Place*. London: Berg Publishers

Raco, M., Durrant, D. and Livingston, N. (2018) 'Slow cities, urban politics and the temporalities of planning: Lessons from London', *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, 36 (7), pp. 1176-1194

Raco, M., Henderson, S. and Bowlby, S. (2008) 'Changing times, changing places: urban development and the politics of space-time', *Environment and Planning A*, 40, pp. 2652-2673

Rancière, J. (2004) *The Politics of Aesthetics: the Distribution of the Sensible*. Rockhill, G. (trans.). New York: Continuum

Rankin, K. N., and McLean, H. (2015) 'Governing the Commercial Streets of the City: New Terrains of Disinvestment and Gentrification in Toronto's Inner Suburbs', *Antipode*, 47 (1), pp. 216–239

Rebelo, C., Mehmood, A., and Marsden, T. (2020) 'Co-created visual narratives and inclusive place branding: a socially responsible approach to residents' participation and engagement', *Sustainability Science*, 15, pp. 423-435

Relph, E. (1976) *Place and Placelessness*. London: Pion

Remøy, H. T., and Wilkinson, S. J. (2012), 'Office building conversion and sustainable adaptation: a comparative study', *Property Management*, 30 (3), pp. 218-231

RIBA (2024) "*The Partners*": Seely and Paget. Available at: <https://www.architecture.com/explore-architecture/inside-the-riba-collections/the-partners-seely-and-paget> (Accessed: 18 March 2024)

Ricoeur, P. (1984) *Time and Narrative Vol. 1*, McLaughlin, K. and Pellauer, D. (trans.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Rodaway, P. (1994) *Sensuous Geographies*. Abingdon: Routledge

The Rookery (2024) *History & Heritage*. Available at:
<https://www.rookeryhotel.com/neighbourhood/history-and-heritage> (Accessed: 11 May 2024)

Ross, C. (2021) 'Not any old iron: Historian Cathy Ross tracks the extraordinary wandering bollards of EC1', *EC1 Echo*, October. Available online: https://www.ec1echo.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/EC1_OctNov21_ForWeb.pdf (Accessed: 7 May 2022)

Ryan, M-L. (2004) 'Metaleptic machines', *Semiotica*, 150 (1/4), pp. 439–469

Ryan, M-L., Foote, K. and Azaryahu, M. (2016) *Narrating Space / Spatializing Narrative*. Columbus: The Ohio State University Press

Rydin, Y. (2005) 'Geographical knowledge and policy: the positive contribution of discourse studies', *Area*, 37 (1), pp. 73-78

Sacco, P., Ferilli, G., and Tavano Bessi, G. (2014) 'Understanding culture-led local development: A critique of alternative theoretical explanations', *Urban Studies*, 51 (13) pp. 2806-2821

Saito, Y. (2017) *Aesthetics of the Familiar: Everyday Life and World-Making*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Samuel, R. (1994) *Theatres of Memory, Volume 1: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture*. London: Verso

Sandell, R. (2017) *Museums, Mortality and Human Rights*. Abingdon: Routledge

Sandell, R. and Nightingale, E. (2012) *Museums, Equality and Social Justice*. Abingdon: Routledge

Sandell, R., Lennon, R., and Smith, M. (2018) *Prejudice and Pride: LGBTQ heritage and its contemporary implications*. Leicester: Research Centre for Museums and Galleries, School of Museum Studies, Leicester University

Sassen, S. (2005) 'The Global City: Introducing a Concept', *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, 11 (2), pp. 27-43

Savage, M. (2015) *Social Class in the 21st Century*. London: Pelican Books

Save Britain's Heritage (SAVE) (2014) *Press Release: Smithfield General Market is saved!*
Available from: <https://www.savebritainsheritage.org/campaigns/article/318/Press-Release-Smithfield-General-Market-is-saved> [Accessed 15 June 2021]

Scannell, L. and Gifford, R. (2010) 'Defining place attachment: A tripartite organizing framework', *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 30 (1), pp. 1-10

Seamon, D. (1980) 'Body-Subject, Time-Space Routines, and Place-Ballets', in Buttimer, A. and Seamon, D. (eds.) (2015) *The Human Experience of Space and Place*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 148-165

Serafini, P. and Garrard, C. (2019) 'Fossil Fuel Sponsorship and the Contested Museum', in Janes, R. R., and Sandell, R. (eds.) (2019) *Museum Activism*. London: Routledge, pp. 69-79

Shamai, S. (1991) 'Sense of Place: an Empirical Measurement', *Geoforum*, 22 (3), pp. 347-358

Shariatmadari, D. (2023) 'You'll have more empathy, you'll have more fun': the man who wants to transform our relationship with sleep', *The Guardian*, 15 July. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2023/jul/15/sleep-empathy-russell-foster> (Accessed: 16 May 2024)

Sharma, S. (2014) *In the Meantime: Temporality and Cultural Politics*, London: Duke University Press

Shaw, K. S., and Hagemans, I. W. (2015) 'Gentrification Without Displacement and the Consequent Loss of Place: The Effects of Class Transition on Low-income Residents of Secure Housing in Gentrifying Areas', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 39 (2), pp. 323-341

Shubotz, D. (2020) *Participatory Research: Why and how to involve people in research*. London: Sage

Simmel, G. (1973) *On Individuality and Social Forms*. Levine, D.N. (ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Simon, N. (2010) *The Participatory Museum*, Santa Cruz: Museum 2.0

Simonsen, K. (2005) 'Bodies, sensations, space and time: the contribution from Henri Lefebvre', *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*, 87 (1), 1-14,

Simpson, P. (2008) 'Chronic Everyday Life: Rhythmanalysing Street Performance', *Social & Cultural Geography*, 9 (7), pp. 807-829

Simpson, P. (2012) 'Apprehending everyday rhythms: rhythmanalysis, time-lapse photography, and the space-times of street performance', *Cultural Geographies*, 19 (4), pp. 423-445

Smith, N. (1979) 'Toward a Theory of Gentrification: A Back to the City Movement by Capital, not People', in Lees, L., Slater, T., and Wyly, E. (eds.) (2010) *The Gentrification Reader*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 85-96

Smith, N. (1996) *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the revanchist city*. London: Routledge

Soja, E. W. (1989) *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. London: Verso

Soja, E. W. (1996) *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Somers, M. R. (1994) 'The Narrative Constitution of Identity: A Relational and Network Approach', *Theory and Society*, 23 (5), pp. 605-649

South West Museum Development (2023) *Annual Museum Survey 2023: National Report*, published 30 October 2023. Available at: <https://southwestmuseums.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Annual-Museum-Survey-2023-National-Report-Accessible-format.pdf> (Accessed: 17 June 2024)

Stevens, Q. (2007) *The Ludic City: Exploring the Potential of Public Spaces*. Abingdon: Routledge

Stoughton, I. (2023) 'Museum of London relocation hit by spiralling costs', *Arts Professional*, 4 May. Available at: <https://www.artsprofessional.co.uk/news/museum-london-relocation-hit-spiralling-costs> (Accessed: 18 June 2024)

Sudjic, D. (2021) 'Inside London's Docklands: 40 years of ambition, politics and financial wrangling', *Financial Times*, 11 June. Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/aa485ae2-c48d-47ee-8c9c-a21b697ef5eb> (Accessed: 18 June 2024)

Summers, B. T. (2019) *Black in Place: The Spatial Aesthetics of Race in a Post-Chocolate City*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press

Swenson, A. (2021) 'Contesting Sensory Memories: Smithfield Market in London' in Capdepon, U. and Dornhof, S. (eds.) *Contested urban spaces: monuments, traces, and decentred memories*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 53-63

Szántó, A (2020) *The Future of the Museum: 28 Dialogues*. Berlin: Hatje Cantz

Tallon, A. (2021) *Urban Regeneration in the UK*. 3rd edn. Abingdon: Routledge

Tavin, C. (2019) *West Smithfield Area Public Realm and Transportation project: Committee Project Proposal Paper*. Available at:
https://democracy.cityoflondon.gov.uk/documents/s162685/Issue%20Report_Smithfield%20Public%20Relam%20Project.pdf (Accessed: 18 September 2024)

Thrift, N. (2004) 'Intensities of feeling: towards a spatial politics of affect', *Geografiska Annaler: Series B Human Geography*, 86, pp. 57-78

Thompson, E. P. (1967) 'Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism', *Past & Present*, 38 (Dec., 1967), pp. 56-97

Thompson, E. P. (2013) *The Making of the English Working Class*, London: Penguin. (Original work published 1963)

Torres, C. and Garcia-Hernandez, A. M. (2016) 'From Violation to Voice, From Pain to Protest: Healing and Transforming Unjust Loss Through the Use of Rituals and Memorials', in Harris, D. L., and Bordere, T. C. (eds.) *Handbook of Social Justice in Loss and Grief: Exploring Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 202-210

Transparency International UK (2021) *Briefing: Managing Corruption Risks in the Planning Process at the City of London*. Available at:
<https://www.transparency.org.uk/sites/default/files/pdf/publications/City%20of%20London%20areas%20for%20improvement%2020201215%20%28final%29%20%281%29.pdf>
(Accessed: 17 September 2024)

Truman, S. E. and Springgay, S. (2019) 'Queer Walking Tours and the affective contours of place', *Cultural Geographies*, 26 (4), pp. 527-534

Tschumi, B. (1997). *Architecture and Disjunction*. London: MIT Press

Tuan, Y. (1974) *Topophilia: a study of environmental perception, attitudes, and values*. New York: Columbia University Press

Tuan, Y. (1977) *Space and Place*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

Turner, L. (2023) 'Why I'm campaigning for the £1 cuppa to be available all around Britain', *The Guardian*, 6 November. Available at:
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/nov/06/tea-prices-museum-cafe-britain-biscuits-high-street-chains> (Accessed: 29 November 2023)

UK Government (2023) *Office for Place – Our vision and principles*. Available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/office-for-place-our-vision-and-principles> (Accessed: 21 Mar 2024)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2024) *Sustainable Development Goals*. Available at: https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQiA5rGuBhCnARIsAN11vgSkkusWuVy1NMUy53SUHG4Y3uKDyKkW4NUtuwWwpLMltKx3VqFoFowaAkclEALw_wcB (Accessed: 13 February 2024)

University of Portsmouth (2024) 'GB Historical GIS / City of London District through time: Population Statistics', *A Vision of Britain through Time*. Available at: https://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10076924/cube/TOT_POP (Accessed: 18 June 2024)

Vafaie, F., Remøy, H., and Gruis, V. (2023) 'Adaptive reuse of heritage buildings; a systematic literature review of success factors', *Habitat International* (142), pp. 1-18

van Duppen, J. and Spierings, B. (2013) 'Retracing trajectories: the embodied experience of cycling, urban sensescales and the commute between 'neighbourhood' and 'city' in Utrecht, NL.', *Journal of Transport Geography*, 30, pp. 234-243

Vergunst, J.-L. and Ingold, T. (eds) (2008) *Ways of Walking: Ethnography and Practice on Foot*. Aldershot: Ashgate

Wall, E. (2022) *Contesting Public Spaces: Social Lives of Redevelopment in London*. Abingdon: Routledge

Ward, K. (2007) 'Business Improvement Districts: Policy Origins, Mobile Policies and Urban Liveability', *Geography Compass*, 1 (3), pp. 657-672

Warde, A. (1991) 'Gentrification as Consumption: Issues of Class and Gender', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 9 (2), pp. 223-232

Waterton, E. and Smith, L. (2010) 'The Recognition and Misrecognition of Community Heritage', *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 16 (1-2), pp. 4-15

Watts, P. (2018) 'Inside the David and Goliath battle to save Smithfield's General Market, one of London's greatest treasures', *The Telegraph*, 2 September. Available at: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/money/property/inside-david-goliath-battle-save-smithfields-general-market/> (Accessed: 27 November 2023)

Weber, R (2015) *From Boom to Bubble*. Chicago: Chicago University Press

Westerholt, R., Acedo, A. and Naranjo-Zolotov, M. (2022) 'Exploring sense of place in relation to urban facilities – evidence from Lisbon', *Cities*, 127, pp. 1-13

White, N. (2022) 'Muslim Londoner sues police for discrimination after car boot blown up', *The Independent*, 15 June. Available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/london-police-racial-discrimination-car-b2100657.html> (Accessed: 15 June 2022)

Whyte, W. H. (1980) *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*. New York: Project for Public Spaces

Winchester, O. (2012) 'A book with its pages always open?', in Sandell, R. and Nightingale, E. (eds.) *Museums, equality and social justice*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 143-155

Wirth, L. (1938) 'Urbanism as a Way of Life', *American Journal of Sociology*, 44 (1), pp. 1-24

Wolff, T. (2010) *The Power of Collaborative Solutions: Six Principles and Effective Tools for Building Healthy Communities*, Hoboken, NJ: Jossey Bass

Yi'En, C. (2014) 'Telling Stories of the City: Walking Ethnography, Affective Materialities, and Mobile Encounters', *Space and Culture*, 17 (3), pp. 211-223

Zukin, S. (1995) *The Cultures of Cities*. Oxford: Blackwell

Zukin, S. (2010) *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Zukin, S. (2014) *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press