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Regeneration in a Contested city: A Belfast Case Study

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Editorial note

This working paper relates to Research Module B1.2 'The Changing Built Environment and Socio-Economic Structures of Belfast', and to Module B4 'From Conflict Management to Conflict Resolution'. The paper queries the role of urban regeneration in modifying or transforming inter-communal divisions and their inscription into the spatial and physical fabric of the city.

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Regeneration in a contested city: A Belfast case study

Liam O'Dowd and Milena Komarova

Abstract

This paper looks at urban regeneration in Belfast as a stage on which the interaction between different structural dynamics (political, economic and cultural) are manifested in the city. The paper discusses how contested ideas of 'space', 'place' and 'territory' frame the ways in which Belfast has changed over recent years and asks if regeneration itself has the potential to transform the dynamic of deep-rooted ethno-national divisions. The research question is explored through a case study of a proposed urban regeneration in North Belfast. We find that while there is evidence of transition to less exclusivistic attitudes in types of spaces such as leisure and work, with respect to residential space North Belfast continues to fit the long-run historical pattern of division.

Key Words: urban regeneration, space, place, territory, shared space

Introduction

Does urban regeneration have the potential to transform the logic of deep-rooted ethno-national division in cities – in particular antagonistic ideas of place and territory which fuel such division? We pose this question in the context of the dramatic regeneration of the built environment of Belfast in the wake of the Good Friday Agreement, driven by property developers supported by state agencies, and presided over by a new power-sharing regional government (1).

There has been a visible transition in the urban fabric of Belfast from a city physically scarred by decades of violent conflict to a consumerist city characterised by renovated retail, office and recreational spaces in the city centre and along the waterfront. What is less clear, however, is whether this transition promises a transformation of the antagonistic ethno-national relationships so long inscribed in the material and social environment of the city.

From its origins, Belfast bore the imprint of political-religious division which was to materialise as sustained ethno-national violence in the late twentieth century. In his extensive comparative analysis of contested cities, Hepburn (2004: 158) singles out Belfast in arguing that nowhere has the pattern of ethnic conflict and violence over the past two centuries been so unchanging and unremitting despite the scale of constitutional and economic change. In this perspective, the deep embeddedness of coercive forms of ethnic, religious and national division in Belfast seems either impervious to cataclysmic economic and political change, or else, shows a remarkable capacity to adapt to, or feed off, the changing economic and political circumstances which has characterised the broader economic and geo-political context in which the city is located.

Yet, clearly, contemporary Belfast has experienced remarkable changes. Between the late 1960s and the mid-1990s it endured a historically unprecedented and sustained period of political violence. Its economic base has been transformed from manufacturing industry to a service-based, consumerist economy; and its political governance has been restructured from a devolved regional ethnocracy (1920-72) to a regional power-sharing administration, still heavily regulated by the central British state but now lodged within wider British-Irish structures. The size of the two communities (Nationalist/Catholic and Unionist/Protestant) in the Belfast City council area is finely balanced for the first time, even if the powers of the council remain limited pending an ongoing review of public administration.

Perhaps most visible of all, however, has been the physical regeneration of major parts of the city. Urban regeneration may be seen as shaped by three analytically distinct logics (a) economic change or capital accumulation (b) political governance and (c) cultural identity. In practice, of course, they are empirically interrelated and mutually constitutive. In the wake of the dramatic changes in Belfast and Northern Ireland generally, it is at least plausible that urban regeneration contains the potential to ameliorate and perhaps substantially modify the basis of ethno-national division (e.g. see Bollens, 2000,2007). Urban regeneration, however, by its very nature, also exposes, illuminates and often reproduces the very antagonisms that are materialised when space, place and territory are intensely contested.

In this paper, we explore these questions by researching a particular case of proposed urban regeneration in North Belfast – the Crumlin Road Gaol and Girdwood Regeneration Scheme (2). In the first section of the paper, we briefly outline our case study. In the second section we discuss how contested ideas of 'space', 'place' and 'territory' frame the ways in which Belfast (including North Belfast) has changed over recent decades. Section three focuses briefly on the urban policy framework of regeneration in Belfast and more extensively on the interview data: We present interviewees' views of the controversial question of residential development within the regeneration scheme. In particular, we consider what these views reveal about the link between community and place, about the role of 'shared space', and of regeneration, not just with respect to the immediate spatial and social environment of the research site but also, in a broader policy and city-wide context. Finally, in the conclusions (Section 4) we provide a preliminary answer to the question of whether regeneration has the potential to transform contested ideas of place and territory in Belfast.

1. The Case Study: Outline

The planned regeneration project studied here is located in North Belfast -a mosaic of loyalist and republican communities, fractured by walls and peace-lines (3). This area was

one of the key cockpits of conflict throughout the Northern Ireland Troubles. Together with West Belfast, it accounted for over one third of the total number of fatalities that took place during the Northern Ireland troubles (4); in the years since the Good Friday Agreement it has seen the most frequent and serious incidents of sectarian unrest and violence (OFMDFM, 2003). Additionally, North Belfast is notorious for its deprivation in employment, housing, health and education. While some parts of it are prosperous, the five electoral wards immediately surrounding the regeneration site in question all rank in the top 5% most deprived in Northern Ireland (NISRA, 2005). North Belfast remains firmly part of 'Troubles' or 'Interface' Belfast. Territoriality is arguably, the most contentious issue in this part of Belfast. It is particularly acute in the context of housing where overcrowded Catholic/Nationalist areas are juxtaposed with vacant dilapidated spaces in some Protestant/Unionist areas (Department of Social Development [DSD], 2002).

Our research site embraces the biggest regeneration project ever planned for North Belfast – an area that has benefited relatively little from the spate of new offices, apartments, leisure and cultural facilities concentrated in the Centre, South and East of Belfast (Gaffikin et al., 2008). The planned regeneration seems to offer a unique opportunity to address the chronic economic and social need in this part of the city. The site itself contains two buildings deeply intertwined with the conflict: The Crumlin Road Gaol (a Grade A listed building and iconic Victorian prison with over 100 years of penal history. In use until 1996, it has housed thousands of loyalist and republican prisoners); The site also contains the Courthouse opposite the prison, and Girdwood Barracks – a former Army site and a symbol, in the eyes of local Nationalist communities, of British Army occupation of Ireland. Given its location and composition, the site poses a particularly useful, if challenging, test of the proposition that urban regeneration, driven by the market, and influenced by the agreed changes in political governance, has the potential to modify or transform inter-communal divisions and their inscription into the spatial and physical fabric of the city.

Our research is based on documents and interviews with key actors associated with the public consultations on the regeneration project. In order to grasp the complexity of the debates surrounding the site, we interviewed members of the Advisory Panel established for the regeneration scheme. A total of 13 interviews have been conducted to date with community representatives and politicians who sat on the Panel, and with a representative of the Department for Social Development.

We have to stipulate at this point that if we were to map our analysis of interviews and documents onto Lefebvre's triadic theorisation of space (1991), then it would only address how urban space is '*conceived*' - i.e., how its meaning and interpretation varies among

organisations, government departments and communities involved. The other two elements of the triad: how urban space is 'perceived' (what kind of materiality it is given); and how it is 'lived' (how its very 'inhabitants' and 'users' seek to appropriate it) will be addressed in other modules of the wider research project (5). No actual physical regeneration has taken place on the research site to date in part because of the inter-communal disagreement.

In general, the interview data suggest that ethno-national divisions are sharpened when residential space is discussed, whereas a measure of cross-communal agreement is evident on the question of economic development which is seen to generate space with less determinate boundaries. However, the debate over the regeneration site also exposes the complex ways in which contested concepts of 'space, 'place' and 'territory' are embedded in the material fabric of Belfast. Before turning to the interview data, we briefly clarify these concepts and the relationship between them.

2. Space', 'Place' and 'Territory' in a Changing Belfast

The relationship between 'space' and 'place'

While the purpose of this paper does not permit a detailed exploration of wider social science debates on 'space' and 'place' it does necessitate a brief discussion of the relationship between these two concepts. Massey (1995) reiterates the notion that social spaces are formed out of 'stretched out' social relations and consist of variety of the networks and complexities of social interaction and interconnection, on a scale from the local to the global. Furthermore, she emphasises that in the notion of space the balance between settlement and movement is skewed towards the latter. Some more recent contributions specifically focus on networks and a variety of forms of interspatial connectivity (Amin, 2004; Jessop, Brenner and Jones, 2008).

Compared to space, a lot of what defines the concept of place is proximity and a kind of 'spatial embedding' (Jessop, Brenner and Jones, 2008) infused with feeling and meaning (Rose, 1995). Place is defined, among other things, by a 'sense of place' (Hillier and Rooksby, 2005). As Rose points out (1995) this connection between place and the sense that people give it is often made through thinking about identity. She outlines three different ways in which emotions about place can be connected to the notion of identity: (a) through a feeling of belonging to a place; (b) by identifying 'against' a place; and (c) by *not* identifying, *not* belonging. An emphasis is put here on the complexity of senses of place which find many resonances in Belfast. They can be articulated through many different media; draw on one or more geographical scales or make sense in relation to more than one other place;

And, finally, the same place may be meaningful to different people in different ways. Indeed, different senses of place may contradict each other and become sources of conflict (Jess and Massey, 1995).

'Place' and 'territory'

Sack writes that '[t]erritoriality for humans is a powerful geographic strategy to control people and things by controlling area' (1986: 5). He sees it as 'a primary geographical expression of social power'; as 'the means by which space and society are interrelated' (Ibid: 5). Sack considers it important, to distinguish between a territory as a place and other kinds of places since, unlike many ordinary places, territories require constant effort to establish and maintain. Like territoriality, a sense of place is about establishing boundaries through forms of (non)identification with area, and is often deeply implicated into the manner in which territories are established and maintained (Jess and Massey, 1995). Yet, while territoriality may establish a place, it also involves an attempt to enforce control over access, things and interactions (be it through a boundary, gesture or behaviour). The longevity of communal territories and their boundaries, and of the struggles to control them, is testimony to the enduring significance of sectarian territoriality in Belfast.

However, territoriality is not simply a matter of political and cultural control. Modern capitalism produces a specific form of territoriality which Sack (1986) draws attention to and which is evident in Belfast for two centuries: The development of industrial relations, the very logic of the production process in capitalism, the increasing importance of commercial interests, and the influx of population into the cities involved multiplication and intensification of territoriality. Cities became more and more economically differentiated and gradually took their modern form of residential areas, manufacturing and central businesses districts.

This multiplication of territory, was now becoming a factor in the constitution of urban communities and social relationships. As Tonkiss (2005) reminds us, two of the key themes emerging in urban studies in the first part of the twentieth century were: first, of the impersonality, anonymity and indifference produced by urban life (Simmel, 1903; Wirth, 1938), and second, of the formation of different urban subcultures; of local informal modes of urban order (Whyte, 1943). Tonkiss further emphasises (Ibid: 20) that, both early modern and contemporary cities make space for, and accommodate, different 'forms of sociality' and distinct 'versions of locality', the formations of which, we might add, is ultimately mediated by territoriality. Depending on what different types of spaces in the city one encounters, different types of urban order are at work; and in different types of spaces, territory has a different role to play.

Urban spatiality and social relationships

At some level then one has to account for how different types of spaces in the city allow for, (accommodate or militate against) specific types of urban social relations. For instance, Tonkiss (2005: 21) refers to the work of Jacobs (e.g. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 1964) in which she points out that the totalising environments of housing projects, serve to 'undiversify' the city through strategies 'of social and spatial segregation'. Spatial separation produced in this manner is linked to processes of community formation which includes making and holding place; place may become associated with a feeling of individual or communal belonging; it becomes an aspect of identity. In cases when such place is situated in a broader context of conflictual social relations, such as in Belfast, territory becomes an expression of, and a tool for, 'the search for purified identities... which results in a geography of rejection' (Massey, 1995, p. 74). The above is an indication of just one of the ways in which Belfast has been shaped by the processes of territorial multiplication driven by industrial development. In the case of our city these processes were also infused by popular sectarian divisions imported from the countryside into the city with urbanisation and industrialisation. Finally, ethno-national political struggles further crystallised communal antagonisms.

Yet, other types of spaces in the city – such as spaces of work and commerce – are in principle more open to, for instance, the late twentieth century geography of globalisation and world-flows, which Castells (1989) sees as having changed the social organisation of space and as having disrupted our existing forms of and concepts of place. In the emergence of the reconstructed logic of the 'space of flows', he maintains, 'social meaning evaporates from places, and therefore from society and becomes diluted and diffused' (Ibid: 349). While we may not agree that the networked qualities of certain urban spaces afforded by their particular economic function (or by their definition through instruments of government) leads as far as emptying them of social meaning, we may appreciate that these types of spaces allow for, or better accommodate, the counter-territorial logic of indifference in human interaction (6). Specific spaces in the city then may accommodate the emergence of places which are defined less in their relation to identity and more as an attempt to imagine a 'geography of acceptance' (Massey, 1995, p. 74) e.g. as more open to the differences among those who populate it; as tolerating 'a greater pluralism of identity and belonging' (Gaffikin et al., 2008). In the case of Belfast these types of spaces are represented by newly emerging multi-million pounds shopping malls, commercial and open air places in the city centre that feed into the new consumerist and 'post-troubles' face of the city. These, however, have not gone without their own problems, not least, the new types of exclusion (exclusive identities) that they maintain.

Whatever types of space and spatial divisions one encounters in the city, it is important to emphasise the mutually constitutive relationship between social relationships/action and urban spatiality. As Simmel argues (1997) divisions in space are sociological facts not simply physical realities. 'Modes of both separating and connecting spaces ... give objective form to a subjective understanding of space and then serve to conduct the subject in space' (Tonkiss, 2005: 31). The functional and the meaningful organisations of space interact in complex ways (ibid).

Territoriality in Belfast

The basic structure of industrial Belfast and its sectarian geography, established in the second half of the nineteenth century survived for almost fifty years after the establishment of Northern Ireland in 1920. During this period a quasi-ethnocratic local administration sought to protect a Protestant-unionist majority and by extension Northern Ireland's place within the UK. From the early 1960s, however, a series of interrelated political and economic developments laid the basis for unprecedented upheaval: the rapid contraction of traditional industries, the attraction of new industries, the decentralisation of population and employment from Belfast to new growth centres in the wider metropolitan area, and the mobilisation of Nationalists against what they perceived to be the modernisation of sectarian discrimination and Unionist monopoly power. The escalating 'Troubles' in the late 1960s led to significant population shifts within and around the city: Catholics became even more concentrated in overcrowded enclaves within the city. Protestants were more concentrated in the new suburbs and outlying growth centres and their suburbanisation left behind residual 'loyalist' working class communities, especially in West and North Belfast; communities which were committed to defending their territory against the perceived threat of encroachment by Catholics from their overcrowded enclaves.

The 'Troubles', including the paramilitary campaigns and the military containment policies of the British government, sharpened and extended the sectarian boundaries in Belfast. The 'City of the Troubles' was characterised by economic crisis, mass unemployment, especially in Catholic areas, a sustained bombing campaign and a central shopping area surrounded by a formidable metal barrier, though much of the lethal violence was concentrated in working class areas to its West and North. The city became disarticulated into a series of poorly connected districts and communities; and the city council area became more disconnected from the wider metropolitan region as its ethnic balance shifted to near parity between the two dominant ethno-national communities while surrounding metropolitan areas

remained heavily Unionist. Contrarily, with the decline of old segregated industrial workplaces and the gradual implementation of equality legislation, workplaces in general became   more   mixed.

Following the paramilitary ceasefires of the mid-1990s, popular ethno-national struggles to symbolically claim or re-claim territories paradoxically intensified, in the form of parades, marches, flag-flying, murals, and extending so-called 'peacewalls'. Throughout the torturous peace process, culminating in the Good Friday Agreement (1998) and its uncertain aftermath, concerted efforts were made to address the legacy of the conflict, to re-brand the city as a place for new investment, improved housing, infrastructure and tourism. Under Direct Rule from Westminster (1972-1998), the governance of Belfast had been characterised by a highly complex and unwieldy bureaucracy and a vibrant voluntary sector, but with the full implementation of the Agreement in 2007 hitherto marginalised elected representatives are now attempting to influence urban regeneration. While the economic base of the city remains heavily dependent on a consumer economy and public expenditure, the increased population of Belfast Urban Area (approx. 567,000 - of which 276,000 are in the Belfast City Council area), together with the dramatic rise of Greater Dublin (now 1.7 million) and the promotion of a Belfast-Dublin growth corridor, has encouraged a re-imagining   of   Belfast   within   a   wider   island   economy.

Visually, 'Consumerist Belfast', as represented by the Laganside, Titanic Quarter and large scale retail and leisure developments in the city centre, contrasts starkly with the persistence of 'Troubles Belfast' in areas still characterised by the 'peacewalls' and 'interfaces' between socially deprived working class communities, still deeply segregated along ethno-national lines.

3. The Urban Policy Framework and Interview Data

The urban policy framework

Following serious community conflict in North Belfast in 2001, government commissioned an independent review on community problems in this part of the city. The review (known as the Dunlop Report) was published in May 2002 (DSD, 2002). It recommended a large scale physical regeneration project to be developed in North Belfast, with the purpose of 'generating investment, increasing economic opportunity, improving the environment and lifting the spirits of the wider community' (2002: 83). The Crumlin Road Gaol, which was closed in 1996 (7) was seen as having the potential to meet the above described purposes.

In February 2005 the adjacent Girdwood Army Barracks were closed (8). In September 2005 it was announced that the development and regeneration of both sites would be taken forward through a masterplanning process (9). The draft Masterplan was published in October 2007. It was preceded by the formation of an Advisory Panel comprised of local politicians (DUP, SF, UUP and SDLP), community and statutory representatives. The Panel held a series of public consultations which considered the concept plans for the site prepared by the consultants. The draft Masterplan was launched in October 2007 and was open for a public consultation which concluded in January 2008 (10). In addition, the DSD published a draft Equality Impact Assessment document (11) which was itself subjected to a public consultation exercise, taking place from October 2008 until January 2009.

The Masterplan proposes that £320m are invested in the 27-acre site over a period of 15 years. It sets out a number of proposals for the scheme which include the adaptation of the Gaol into a museum and a "boutique" hotel and the development of residential space, of 'public realm' open space, and of a leisure centre complex. The mission statement of the Advisory Panel states that the objective of the plan is:

> 'To create a regeneration project of international significance which brings maximum economic, social and environmental benefits to the local and wider community and in doing so creates a vibrant, inclusive and diverse environment which attracts present and future generations of people to live, work and visit' (NBCAU, draft EQIA, 2008: 7).

Crucially, one of the main development principles for the site agreed by the Advisory Panel is for 'a transformational *Shared Future* Scheme (12), whilst also addressing pressing needs in the locality and wider area' (Ibid: 9).

Both the DSD and the consultants producing the Masterplan hold the view that mixed tenure housing (13) is a very important, if not crucial, aspect of the regeneration scheme, in order to make such site living and vibrant and to generate the finance required to pay for the costly infrastructure to develop the site. In addition, the Masterplan emphasises the potential of 'mixed tenure' development to rebuild 'sustainable and vibrant communities' (NBCAU, 2007). Yet, the proposal for a residential development on the site has without a doubt been the most controversial aspect of the Masterplan so far. While statistical data by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) shows that there is a huge demand for social housing and that there is a shortage of suitable development sites to meet that demand in North Belfast, neither the deliberations of the Advisory Panel for the Masterplan, nor the public consultation carried out on it have demonstrated a general cross-community support for the development

of social housing on the site. As the draft Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) of the Masterplan points out (DSD, 2008), the major reason for this failure to agree on the housing issue is the existence of two different social housing markets for Northern Ireland as a whole. It is emphasised that in North Belfast in particular Catholic housing need is characterised by a much longer waiting list which can only be met by the provision of additional social housing, while Protestant housing need is largely being met by the turnover of existing social housing. During the consultations for the draft Masterplan concerns were expressed that if the future housing development on the site becomes associated with one community in particular, that could have an adverse impact on the use of the leisure facility as well (DSD, 2008).

The draft EQIA published by the DSD (2008) acknowledges that the draft Masterplan proposal for housing is a sensitive issue; that the data provided by the NIHE underscores the level of housing stress in the Catholic community; and that new residential developments on the regeneration site will not have an adverse impact on the housing requirements of the Protestant community in this area. The Department's own position regarding the way to proceed with housing development on the site, as laid out in the draft EQIA, remains rather vague. While it states that the preferred option of the Department is shared housing (stemming from the Department's duty to promote good relations), it is also said that to the extent to which a tension is perceived between the two main Section 75 duties (14) – the promotion of equality of opportunity and the promotion of good relations, 'the good relations duty cannot be invoked to justify a failure or a refusal to comply with the equality duty' (NBCAU, 2008: 50) (15).

Analysis of Interviews

<u>Residential space and territory</u>

One way in which our interviewees argued for or against, the necessity to have a housing development on the site was through elaborating on their understanding of the proper aim and priorities of the regeneration scheme as a whole. The different views expressed in this respect, we suggest, define residential space as the ultimate territory for the 'two communities'. The first quote below comes from an interview with a local Sinn Fein representative who defines the purpose of the regeneration scheme as delivering on an 'objective need'. This latter notion is firmly embedded within Sinn Fein's political priority of addressing historical Unionist-maintained structural inequality between the Nationalist and Unionist communities in Northern Ireland:

'**The Advisory Panel was unable to reach an agreement on this [residential development] issue. Why not?**

... The DUP felt that they didn't want housing, particularly social housing on that site because the housing waiting list for North Belfast is one of the best examples you could use for structural and historical inequalities across the whole North. The housing waiting list for North Belfast goes from, I think from 70% to over 80% of Catholics all on the waiting list for a home. They didn't want social housing in Girdwood because it basically got down to the sectarian argument that Catholics would have got a home [...] [But] it's about a need that has been clearly identified by even the statutory bodies. So you can't have a big regeneration project and ignore objective need on the ground'. [interview06, Sinn Fein]

Unlike the above argument, DUP representatives prioritised economic development through other types of 'activity space' on the site, such as work, leisure, health and education:

'That site should be given over to economic development and job creation. The site is actually surrounded by some of the most deprived communities in Northern Ireland. The Shankill community – the Lower Shankill community which abuts the site is the most deprived community in Northern Ireland so therefore the issue of training, job creation, creation of jobs through tourism – that kind of activity, should be given paramount importance on the site and that residential development is not that important and would have meant that the site could not be shared'. [interview 11, DUP]

Clearly political views regarding the proper priorities of the regeneration scheme differ sharply. These priorities appear to be influenced by what the basic needs of the different communities are seen to be – respectively residential or housing need for Nationalists and economic development/job creation for Unionists. However, the last sentence in the latter quote suggests that Unionist rejection of residential development on the Crumlin Road Gaol site goes deeper than simply establishing priorities for the scheme that would make it most successful economically and least contentious politically. Indeed, later on the same interview, the DUP representative both contests the very physical boundaries covered by the consultation process that was led by the DSD and proposes that among Protestant communities surrounding the regeneration site there also exists an abject housing need which, however, has remained unacknowledged:

'[F]irst of all the draft EQIA is fundamentally flawed because it looks at housing need in every area of North Belfast but the Shankill which is across the road from it. So it completely and utterly ignores housing need in the Shankill and in the Crumlin areas. ... We are saying it's fundamentally and fatally flawed. It should be redone! **...** Now, can I suggest to you that the Housing Executive has two responsibilities in terms of housing: it has the responsibility to provide housing for housing need. It also has responsibility to provide housing that will regenerate communities… Now, I would suggest to you that it is not doing those'. [interview 11, DUP]

There is a certain contradiction in the above argument in that in the previous quote the same interviewee was seen to adamantly defend the idea that economic development should be prioritised over the development of residential space. Yet, later residential development is presented as important in addressing deprivation *but* in the communal space of Protestant communities living nearby the Crumlin Rd Gaol and Girdwood regeneration site. We would suggest then that the argument presented above is not so much about the importance of establishing actual need among communities and about whether or not economic development has a better regenerative potential than residential development (although these are undoubtedly seen as important) but about severing the implicitly present link between residential space and community or communal identity, e.g. on preventing the territorial expansion of Nationalist communities in North Belfast. Ultimately, the above discussion reveals a struggle over the preservation of a spatial territorial principle. Here contesting the 'proper' priorities for regeneration is a means to such preservation. But in order to develop this argument further we need to look at what is revealed in interviewees' discussion on the link between community and space in its different guises as 'activity space' – from residential to leisure and work space.

Space, place, community

Extracts from interviews with community representatives, discussing the importance and significance of having a residential development on the regeneration site, indicate a tight link between community and place. In the first extract below, which comes from an interview with a Nationalist community worker, this link is present not so much in what is actually said as in what is left unelaborated on, or implicitly understood:

'[W]hat we are trying to do is instil in people the immediacy of this you know: Girdwood might be considered to be a bit further down the road from Ligoniel but that is the opportunity, you know, for the safer housing. [...] We are simply

advocating that it's need, not greed. We have a high demand for housing. We are confined by interface walls and the lack of space and there is *nowhere else to go*'. [interview 01, community worker, Nationalist community organisation]

Of interest here is the fact that the respondent reveals he and his colleagues have had to persuade their Nationalist communities that the Crumlin Rd Gaol site is a viable opportunity for safe housing. The communities are also situated in North Belfast, about 2 to 3 miles away from the regeneration site and yet we understand that the two places mentioned are seen as being distinct by the communities themselves. And while this may be simply read as a sensible acknowledgement of the territorialist *status quo* in the communal geography of this part of Belfast, the expression 'there is nowhere else to go' indicates that the communities concerned define themselves in terms of this and no other place and therefore no other place is even theoretically registered as a possible living space. We would suggest this demonstrates a rigid link between community and place; a link which is further illuminated in the following quote from the same interview:

> '[W]hat is held as a model of integrated living are places like Ballynafeigh but it's not integrated. There is social affluence and people who live there work on a nine to five basis, come on and close their door and don't access the community, and that to me isn't integration'.

It seems from the above that community is not only understood in terms of place but that how that place is inhabited, how much it is actually lived in and immediately present in the daily lives of people defines belonging to community. The way of inhabiting place is a way of relating to others from the community and in this case is inextricable from social class. That in some cases this link is also territorialist, i.e. that it depends on establishing, maintaining and controlling an overlap between cultural identity and place is suggested in another interview with a Nationalist community representative:

> 'Well, actually, there's probably a feeling that the Girdwood site should automatically have... because it was the Nationalist community that suffered the occupation of that site by the British Army throughout the conflict ..., it was effectively seen as Nationalist land that was occupied so I mean I suppose if you are going into the territory thing then people are sorta saying, 'Oh, if Girdwood becomes available then New Lodge will move in and Cliftonville will move in' and that's what will happen'. [interview 04, Nationalist community representative]

This latter extract clearly demonstrates that the claim to belong to a particular place is linked to a broader dynamic of power or unequal social relations and is to some extent even defined by the very understanding of the place occupied by the communities the participant speaks of within a broader set of social and political relations. Yet, while a clearer and direct link between discourses of community and of place is demonstrated in interviews with Nationalist representatives, extracts from Protestant/Unionist interviews rather highlight the role of 'the other' (and of what 'the other' says or does) as a mediator in this link. Some concentrate on attributing active agency in the establishment of a territorialist link between community and place to Nationalist communities only and proceed to describe Protestant/Unionist territorialism as simply reactive:

> 'Basically, the Advisory Panel split straight on community background on the housing issue, in part because ... some of the people on the panel were winding up pressure on the outside. So people were going giving interviews to the press saying 'we demand housing on the Girdwood site'. And ... there was an immediate equal and opposite reaction in the Unionist community where people were saying, right, we've talked about this as a shared site and something that everybody can buy into and suddenly there are these people who are saying, right, we want our houses on that and housing equals ownership'. [interview 02, Unionist community representative]

> 'They [Nationalists] will say that there is a need for housing and there is. I moved house a year ago. I needed a house. I wanted a house in a particular area. I couldn't get it. There wasn't one on the market. I had to move to another area. Everyone has the right to a house. But I don't have the right to a house on that particular bit of ground. ... The difficulty is that some folk in Nationalist areas demand 'I must live within a hundred yards of where I was born!' [interview 07, DUP]

An extract from another interview with a Unionist community representative illuminates territory as defined by 'fear of the other' rather than as an active identification with a place. Fear in this case is clearly the basis for accepting and actively propagating a 'geography of rejection':

> '[F]or us the housing thing is contentious because it's all about territory and you know there's still walls up in North Belfast. [...] It's about fear; from both communities point of view it's about fear. If it was great we would be taking the walls down! [...] if you're talking to people that live with the wall, those people feel secure, that gives them that security. [...]

Save for having a wall put through the housing development, are there any other conditions from a Unionist perspective that if met you could consider moving in?

No. I actually don't think coz that's not gonna happen. I mean that is not gonna happen! I mean my own personal thing would be, take a piece off towards the Antrim Rd. If there is a need, and I am not denying that there is a need, but I want a wall built around it! Have your houses! But then don't say to me, you know, that will be closed off from what's gonna be called 'shared space'.
[Interview 05, Unionist community representative]

As we see from the above extract the respondent's emphasis in the description of the contentious issue of residential development on the regeneration site is on 'the wall' rather than on 'place'. We would say that in the particular context of the case study interviews with Unionists tended to emphasise not so much the importance of actual places as the importance of the boundaries surrounding those places. While the above interview openly recognises a real and existing housing need among the Catholic/Nationalist community, the possible development of residential space within the regeneration site is made conditional upon the building of a wall around it.

How can space be shared? The problem of territorial 'contamination' of space.

The previous sub-section demonstrated the impossibility, from a Unionist-community perspective, of seeing residential space in terms other than territorial. Here we would like to compare participants' discussion of the territorialist exclusivity of residential space with their views on the role of other types of 'activity spaces' on the regeneration site, such as leisure and work space. In interviews these other types of space appear to be understood in more open terms by all participants across the political and communal spectrum.

Here is how a Unionist community representative talks about the possibility of having a leisure centre built on the regeneration site:

'Now, people were more willing to support the leisure centre coz it wasn't houses and you were in a situation where the Belfast City Council were going to be running that. BCC has strict policies and procedures to do with neutrality so it could be managed and used [...]

**What requirements would your people have had towards this leisure
centre in order for it to be used by everyone?**

Single access point shared between the two communities in an area that was
safe, I think, would be the first one. The second thing would be that people
were sensitive to the need to manage it, and thirdly that things that would be
regarded as sectarian symbols like identifiable sporting tops would not be
allowed...' [Interview 02, Unionist community representative]

From the above quote it seems that, unlike the issue of residential space, there exists a
certain degree of support for having a leisure space on the regeneration site that can be
used by both the Nationalist and Unionist communities. However, particular conditions are
necessary for leisure space to be shared. One of those is that it needs to be carefully
managed. Specifically, most interviewees were of the opinion that, in order to work in a
shared way, leisure space would need to be entirely detached from any political or cultural
identity. In fact, the expression 'shared space' was often used interchangeably with the term
'neutral space'. In addition, the above quote also highlights the requirement that a certain
spatial equality be established in the manner in which the leisure centre is accessed. In
further interviews, this reciprocity of access, which is undoubtedly important in terms of
safety, is seen to extend to the vicinity of the leisure centre (as much as to what happens in
it) and is understood as a measure of neutrality, e.g. of clearing the surrounding space from
specific expressions of cultural and political identity:

'It's largely around access to the site rather than what happens in the site itself
because the City Council, if it is a publically run leisure centre, will ensure that
nobody is putting paramilitary slogans or graffiti around the place or is putting
up paramilitary flags. The building will have to be accessible to people from
the community. It's the travelling to it and the location of it...' [Interview07,
DUP].

Here, the importance of the space outside the leisure centre is emphasised rather than the
activities in the leisure centre itself. While the expectation that the space surrounding the
leisure centre should be free of paramilitary symbols is obviously reasonable if the centre is
to be used in a shared way, a quote from a Unionist interview below demonstrates that it is
by no means enough; it is felt that this type of neutrality is vulnerable to the presence of 'the
other' and that the very possibility of having residential space (which as we saw is only
conceived of in territorial terms) in the vicinity of leisure space risks projecting territorial

expansionism onto surrounding space, i.e., there is a certain fear of *contamination* of space by adjacent housing territory:

> '[I]f we're having... 200 social houses in an area... and...we've a leisure centre beside it and maybe access to the hospital but you have people who live there so they will right away take ownership of that for then other people to come in... from Lower Oldpark and the Shankill to want to use the leisure centre – right away it's a form of intimidation because if we live here we have a right: 'This is ours!'' [Interview 05, Unionist community rep]

If we return for a moment to the earlier conceptual discussion of 'space' and 'place', we might observe that interviewees' idea of leisure space as shared has little to do with some contemporary attempts to reconceptualise place as based on a type of identity which is more open and interactive. If anything, interviewees' idea of shared space aims to detach identity from place. One might say that in this sense participants are trying to imagine the would-be leisure centre not so much as a particular place (as something that they would 'own') but as a space devoid of the social meaning otherwise attached to places. But would this be an entirely correct impression? As the following quotes demonstrate, participants are nevertheless actively looking to attach a certain social meaning to leisure space albeit not one directly related to leisure:

> '**So how can a leisure centre on this site develop as a shared space?**
> That there's no housing on the site and that it is used – everybody has access to it; and also I think that people from the areas actually take up, you know, are employed – are allowed to come in and I don't mean the cleaning jobs, I am talking about the pool attendants and the leisure attendants that have the well paid jobs, in the administration or whatever...'. [interview 05, Unionist community representative]

> 'We need to ensure that they don't actually create something on the site that most people drive into and the locals are the cleaners or the security guards. So, we will be looking for jobs there, for opportunities for a career progression. Obviously, access for the local community. We need this to be a publically owned leisure facility'. [interview 03, Nationalist community representative]

The creation of job opportunities that local communities can avail of was unanimously seen to be a crucial aspect of the regeneration scheme. In the extract below the role of 'work space' is elaborated on in terms of creating the capacity to extract oneself from the grip of territory (which is the 'ghetto' of communal living space) not only because it literally generates the financial capital for people to 'move on' but because it has the capacity to stretch the existing mould of social relationships by fostering new relationships and by the physical use of space:

> '**And you will be happy enough to be working alongside the Nationalist community?**
>
> That's happening. I mean that is happening! The contentious thing is the housing. ... [Y]ou know to me employment is a big thing –...and I think that's why a lot of people's attitudes maybe starting to change because up to their teens a riot is like a recreational thing for them. It's fun! .... But then you get kids who go into the employment market and then they get a job and they are mingling and they are socialising and then it's like those kids then move on. The kids that don't have the jobs, don't have the money, don't have access to it and don't get socialising will always get stuck in a ghetto in either community'. [Interview 05, Unionist community representative]

One of the upshots of the discussion so far is that shared space is conceivable in terms of work and leisure space. Even so the particular meaning of shared space is defined as much by its content – by what and how happens in it, as by its context – by activities around it, and by how equilibrium between the two is achieved. What this means is that both the very process of regeneration, (and how the different participants in it perceive it), and how the wider political, economic and cultural context is understood and brought into the dynamics of the redevelopment process define the meaning of sharing. On the one hand, as a type of activity, work (employment) is important in and of itself because of its capacity to 'stretch social relationships' (e.g. to create new bonds and encourage a different view of existing bonds by putting them in a different context). This is all the more significant given the growth of sharing work spaces throughout Northern Ireland since the 1980s - a consequence of 'fair employment' legislation. The workplace has emerged as a type of social space with more permeable boundaries. Yet, as a physical space (the material space in which that type of social space is materialised) shared work space is rarely, if at all, found in areas such as North Belfast, heavily coloured by territorialism. If workplace sharing is eventually realised on the research site, it will be a powerful positive precedent. However, the process employed will determine whether or not this happens in reality.

<u>Spatial and policy context of the Regeneration Scheme</u>

Interviews demonstrate that the connection between the plans for the regeneration site and the broader policy and spatial context of the regeneration scheme is problematic. With the exception of two interviews with Nationalist representatives, (see excerpts below), other participants did not engage with this question from a non-sectarian perspective. Thus, territorialism as a principle of spatial organisation is not contested through this regeneration scheme.

Some Nationalists were adamant to point out that the attempts to develop the regeneration site as shared space are obstructed by a lack of wider spatial policy vision that is able to relate the task of progressive urban development to the specific context of interface areas with their particular compounds of political, social, economic and relational problems:

> '[O]ne of the big issues I have with the masterplan is that it doesn't set itself within the context of where it is – it's right on the site of one of the most contentious and lively interfaces in North Belfast... Now, there's been no commitment by government, the DSD or others involved in the redevelopment of the site to address the interface issues. Well, if you don't address that then you are operating in a spirit of isolation. It's not safe for me to visit the Mater Hospital during the summer months, so it's a bit nonsensical to turn around and say that this 'social heart' and this all new Arc Rd system will then do anything... like challenging those perceptions, and the relationship of 'us', 'those' and the 'other''. [Interview 01, community worker, Nationalist community organisation];

> '[Y]ou can't have this huge development and then at the border – one of the most deprived areas in the whole of the six counties, you know. And the access into the whole Girdwood should be treated as one big footprint. So you take then as well Cliftonville, Cliftonpark Avenue, Brucefield, Antrim Rd, Crumlin Rd – ... Because you can't have this, you know, multi-million pound investment in the heart of a community that's fighting - is not at ease with itself – on the border or in it. So, you know, the potential to reduce any conflict within the site will certainly be dealt with if you developed the border of the site in conjunction with Girdwood'. [Interview06, Sinn Fein].

The above two quotes see the problem as lack of will (or competence) on the part of government (and the DSD in particular) to understand and address the wider and at the

same time specific social and economic context in which the redevelopment takes place. Unionist politicians also see a problem in the relationship between the regeneration scheme and its context but define this problem rather as a necessity to first regenerate Protestant communities in the vicinity of the site; a step which, in their argument, will create a potential to reconceptualise the existing balance of communal relationships with respect to the site:

> 'If you looked at the surrounding area there are four communities around the Girdwood site: There is Antrim Rd which is a Nationalist area; Cliftonville which is a Nationalist area; Lower Oldpark which is a Protestant-Unionist area and Lower Shankill – Protestant-Unionist area. The two Nationalist areas around Girdwood are thriving communities. The two Protestant-Unionist areas are quite run down communities. Many empty houses, a lot of- I say empty houses – houses that have been boarded up, high levels of social disadvantage, high levels of unemployment, so- . And their concern is – if you develop a site in the middle, the two adjacent Nationalist communities which are quite vibrant will just spill onto the site. The two Unionist communities need regeneration. And if this is going to be developed as a shared site, they need to be regenerated before you develop the Girdwood site so that the context of it is one where it is surrounded by vibrant communities'. [Interview 07, DUP]

A look at statistical data for the levels of multiple deprivation in all of the communities mentioned by the participant in the above quote shows in fact (see note 16) that none of the Nationalist communities he mentions can reasonably be seen as any more 'vibrant' than the two Protestant communities described above, from the point of view of their socio-economic status. Clearly, the relevance of the socio-economic context of the regeneration site is interpreted and used in this quote from a specifically Unionist perspective.

Further quotes demonstrate that the wider policy context represented by *A Shared Future. Government Policy for Good Relations [ASF] (2005)* is treated by all political representatives from a strictly party-political point of view. In the first quote below a Sinn Fein representative entirely rejects the validity of the only current government policy on Good Relations. In her analysis, this government strategy sacrifices equality and social justice to inter-communal harmony. Yet, it is this government policy, we are reminded, that informs the main developmental principle for the site, as agreed by the Advisory Panel for the Masterplan (see discussion in part III):

> 'I believe that the biggest problem here has been around the building of a shared future and good relations, and equality and objective need have been total afterfacts. So what do you do – do you not give a Catholic a house on the

basis that you keep everybody else happy? [...] The A Shared Future agenda is one of the residues from direct rule. The Shared Future agenda doesn't look at equality. The Shared Future agenda looks at building good relations as a way of delivering harmony. It looks at the symptoms of conflict rather than the causes of conflict. ... So what do you do?... Do you build away community where people can live together and leave aside people whose homes are now occupied by three generations of one family? I lack the social justice here'. [interview06, SF]

The next couple of extracts demonstrate the Democratic Unionists' representatives' point of view with respect to the *A Shared Future Government Policy on Good Relations*. While, in contrast to the position expressed in the previous extract, they openly embrace this government strategy and even adamantly defend the need to embed it in every policy context, the argument is built in a way that rhetorically undermines the importance of the *Strategy* with respect to residential space. The first DUP quote does that by both focusing on how the *A Shared Future* policy context is applied to the city centre rather than to the case study area and by accepting from the outset the *status quo* of housing segregation as something that no-one is in a position to do anything about in the immediate future. In this way the ability of the *Shared Future* (ASF) strategy to produce or inspire any change is in effect sidelined in the type of spaces where conflict and segregation are most embedded:

'**What does shared space mean to you in terms of housing, residential space in particular?**
Well, let's be practical about this in terms of Belfast. Virtually 95% of all social housing is segregated in the city so we have a long, long way to go before we actually get to a sense where we have housing estates that are 50:50 or anything like that. Now, ... we need to ... have *A Shared Future* enshrined and embedded in policy context. If that's [the case] then that will filter down to the way that we do things. Can I also say that A Shared Future and shared space not only applies to residential housing. It also applies to the city centre. We do not want a city centre that emulates the city centre in Londonderry where many Protestant families in Londonderry continue to shop in Coleraine rather than shop in the city centre itself because they do not feel welcome or that it is accessible to them'. [interview11, DUP]

The other quote from an interview with a DUP representative further illuminates a party-political understanding of the *ASF* agenda as most useful when applied to the context of

using public roads for marches and public gatherings. Again, how the Good Relations strategy can be usefully applied to cases of dispute over residential space or for developing shared residential space is not discussed and sharing is defined as the right to use public space for peaceful assembly by different communities at different times:

> '[T]he DUP are very much committed to a shared and better future.... For me [it] is a future where you respect equality, you respect diversity and you respect interdependence. ...I see it as working out in different ways in different situations now. It's something that needs to be applied to education, it needs to be applied to housing and it needs to be applied to open space. And I think that's the most difficult area for Sinn Fein because no longer would you be able to say that the Springfield Rd is a Nationalist road. If it's a main road – it's a shared road and it should be accessible for people to use. And come a particular day in June of members of the Orange Order want to use that road they have every right to use it just as anybody else has on any other day of the year. ... [A] shared space ...should be used in some cases by one community for peaceful assembly and on other occasions by another community for peaceful assembly and in some cases by both communities together'. [interview 07, DUP]

Based on the above we can argue that the ASF policy discourse, in the context of the case study, is at the very least not used or applied in a way that would contribute to transforming territorialism.   The principle aspiration for developing 'A Shared Future transformational scheme' agreed by the Advisory Panel for the research site is used by interviewees (see earlier sections of paper) as a rhetorical device to argue against a residential development on the site altogether. Unionist participants in particular emphasised that they are against any houses being built on the site since by definition housing cannot be shared and will therefore go against the main developmental principle of the site of building shared space. Most interviewees also attributed blame for the current impasse over residential development on the site to the actions of the Department for Social Development. The Department were accused of not having been earnest enough in the way they had devised and led the consultation process for the site; of not being eager to address the really difficult questions of socio-economic deprivation and division at the interface; and of not being open enough in explaining to communities how an would-be residential development on the site can be shared in reality. Yet, our interviewee from the DSD feels that the department's hands are tied by the lack of political and communal will for sharing:

'[T]he Protestant community are maintaining that unless we can demonstrate how this can be shared housing then there should be no housing on the site.

Do you feel you can demonstrate that?

Well, only with the good will of the communities. It's like a Catch 22. ...[I]f we felt that there was a desire we could come up with some memorandum of understanding between both communities that if you live in this space no flags, no emblems, no painting the kerbstones, have a group committee for dealing with grievances... but from what we've seen there's just no appetite for that ... This has been debated in the Assembly. Our politicians in the Assembly are saying the exact same thing. ... Well, without blaming anybody, there's definitely a lack of confidence in both communities about having shared space!'

When the regeneration plans are addressed via their relationship to the Shared Future Policy, our interviewees provide little evidence that changes in political governance in Northern Ireland undermine territorialism as a principle of spatial and social organisation. However, beyond the question of whether the ASF policy is discursively used for the purpose of contesting territorialism, the interview data raise wider questions such as who will have most power in matters of urban regeneration once the current review of public administration is complete. Arguably at present no government department can in effect carry out policy decisions that have not been agreed upon in the Northern Ireland power-sharing Executive. Hence, the ultimate decision about whether, when, where and in what form there will be any residential development on the site bears on the question of whether regional consociationalism is capable of effecting social transformation. The fragmented form of bureaucratic governance which operates beside the Executive seems resigned to what they claim is the mutual veto of the local communities *vis a vis* housing. As the interview data so far shows, neither has cultural change in Belfast in the last decade managed to produce a more open and less territorialist discourse among the very communities surrounding the study site or among the two main political parties, Sinn Fein and DUP.

A big question remains to be addressed through the study: how will economic transformation interact with communal territorialism in this part of Belfast? Again, political representatives and especially DUP participants were adamant to stress the importance of economic development and creation of jobs through tourism as both an important resource and an effect of the regeneration scheme. But can a purely economic logic change the context for people to agree on a shared future?

4. Conclusions

At first glance, our case study data suggests a rather pessimistic picture of communities and politicians entrenched in established territorial boundaries in North Belfast who feel compelled to defend them against the 'other'. Respondents' views demonstrate a territorialist link between community and place that threatens to preclude the development of 'shared' residential space as a part of the overall regeneration scheme.

In contrast, however, all our interviewees also expressed a commitment to economic development through the possible building of a leisure/well-being complex, and through attracting investment, tourism and related job opportunities potentially accessible to the adjacent communities. This measure of agreement would seem to mark a significant change from the segregationist attitudes which reached their zenith in North Belfast during the Troubles and some willingness to embrace a new system of agreed governance in Northern Ireland. And while the value of such a generic commitment to economic development might be questioned, support for the development of 'shared' leisure and work space on the site arguably has the *potential* to alter the context of the negotiations over residential space, and to involve local communities in a way that gives them mutual ownership of space. Whether or not this potential is realised however, depends in part, we would suggest, on how the very process of negotiating, planning and decision-making is perceived by the various actors involved.

Rather more problematical, however, is the laissez-faire attitude implicit in the bureaucratic management of the regeneration project, which seems willing to accept the mutual vetoes of both communities. Combined with the recent economic recession, these vetoes may have the effect of paralysing any development on the site (17). In this context, the degree of agreement over jobs and economic investment may be rendered meaningless. The inability to transcend the territorialism and the sharply defined interfaces separating both working class communities in North Belfast, makes the area less attractive for capitalist investment. It has tended to concentrate either in the city centre or in middle class areas of South and East Belfast. Similarly, territorialist divisions, limit the prospects of mobilising political pressure on the British and Northern Ireland governments to promote the socio-economic and physical regeneration in the area.

The question that we address through this paper is how the different logics of the organisation of spatial and social difference, are enabled or constrained by physical transformation in the city of Belfast? The evolution of the physical environment of the city

may be usefully seen as both a tool for, and a stake in, broader economic, political and cultural change. Clearly, our interest in regeneration is not just from the point of view of what it does to physical space but also from the point of view of the process that it represents – essentially a process of governance but in a mutually constitutive relationship with the other two broad dynamics of structural change – economic and representational (cultural). Urban regeneration is a stage on which the interaction between these different structural dynamics of change is manifested. The particular case study of regeneration examined in this paper does reflect some elements of transition to less exclusivistic attitudes on ethno-national division. There is evidence, also, however, that North Belfast continues to fit the long-run historical pattern identified by Hepburn (2004) – the capacity of Belfast's ethno-national divisions to accommodate themselves to successive and substantial forms of constitutional and economic change.

Notes:

(1) The authors sincerely thank the two referees for their constructive comments and suggestions on the draft of this paper.
(2) This case study is a part of one of the modules within our current 'Conflict in Cities and the Contested State' ESRC research project (2007-2012), ESRC RES-060-25-0015.
(3) North Belfast has many interfaces, 12 of which are physical barriers or 'peace-walls' (Jarman, 2008) and among those one particular wall – in Cliftonpark Avenue (the interface between Lower Oldpark and Manor Street) is situated right on the western edge of the Crumlin Road Goal and Girdwood Barracks regeneration site.
(4) As maintained by the Community Relations Council (2009) based on statistics produced by NISRA (2005). Also, Gaffikin et al. (2008) quoting Morrissey and Smith (2002) point out that, compared to all other parts of Belfast, North Belfast accounts for the single largest number of fatalities for the period of 1969 – 1999.
(5) Other modules in the research will address perceived and lived space more directly, e.g. B5: 'Public space in Belfast city centre'.
(6) Wirth (1938) sees indifference as a tacit, typically urban and enabling relationship which makes mutual tolerance possible and which is a sign of non-antagonistic or even co-operative urban sociality, or – in the words of Young (1990) 'side-by-side particularity'.
(7) The ownership of the gaol was transferred to the OFMDFM in August 2003.
(8) The barracks were then acquired by Department for Social Development (DSD) in early 2006.
(9) The 'Masterplan for Crumlin/Girdwood is a strategic document. Its content illustrates in varying degrees of detail how the development principles could be implemented' (NBCAU, 2007: 49).
(10) Having generated over 900 written responses.
(11) An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is a tool/process that enables public bodies/authorities to check out how an existing or new policy affects (or promotes equality of opportunity between) groups of people covered by equalities legislation. In the case of Northern Ireland there are nine groups specified in section 75 of the NI Act of 1998: persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; men and women generally; persons with disability and persons without; and person with dependants and persons without.
(12) 'A Shared Future' is the government's strategic policy on Good Relations in Northern Ireland, published in 2005.
(13) E.g. housing of a mixed type – both private and social - reflecting the needs of different segments of the community.
(14) Section 75 (a) of The Northern Ireland Act (1998) requires each public authority, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need of promoting equality of opportunity between individuals and groups from nine different categories (see

note 10). In addition to the above, Section 75 (b) stipulated that, without prejudice to these obligations, public authorities are also to have regard to the desirability of promoting *good relations* between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group.

(15) Reading through the sheer volume of documents produced for the purposes of the two public consultations carried out on the proposed regeneration scheme, it became obvious that the word limit for this paper cannot accommodate a lengthier dealing with the variety and abundance of material that these documents present. We hope to revisit some of them in future working papers relating to the changing built environment in Belfast.

(16) Census data (2001) from NISRA shows the following ranking for multiple deprivation: New Lodge and Cliftonville (Nationalist), respectively 5 and 79; Crumlin and Shankill (Unionist), respectively 4 and 1 (out of 582 electoral wards in NI, where 1 is most deprived).

(17) One of the features of peace initiatives in Northern Ireland has been the emphasis on 'economic development' as a relatively 'easy' and 'neutral' choice bypassing as it does complex matters of societal and cultural transformation and often leaving aside questions of social justice and inequality inscribed in class relations, ethno-national conflict and the specifics of locality. The case study indicates how ethno-national conflict which is most overt in working class areas, has the potential to further marginalise these areas economically.

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