**Foreclosing Futures: A Case Study of Urban Regeneration in Central Salford**

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# Abstract

This thesis provides an exploration of urban regeneration in the City of Salford, Greater Manchester. It is a detailed empirical case study drawing on interviews with regeneration policy makers in Salford to provide an understanding of the decisions that were taken and the results that emerged. In particular this thesis highlights the entrepreneurial forms of governance enacted by Salford City Council to acquire private investment and development opportunities, and explores the Council's method of reducing its statutory requirements and democratic controls and increasing its financial risk-taking in order to secure these opportunities. Drawing on the post-political literature, this thesis questions the 'no alternative' discourse that accompanies these measures.

This thesis also explores the wider changes to urban regeneration policy by the Coalition Government under conditions of economic austerity, considering the ways in which regeneration can be said to have moved from attempting to alleviate social problems via focused policies targeted at spaces of deprivation towards an urban policy based on delivering incentivised economic growth. It raises questions about the potential impact of this change for those places in Salford that continue to suffer from high levels of deprivation and are therefore less likely to secure financial investment under the new policy regime.

This thesis contributes to the urban studies literature through a discussion of the concept of foreclosure. Principally the thesis considers how the re-envisioning and reordering of the City forecloses it as a space of engagement for those residents who are 'out of place' within this newly designed space. It highlights how the designated vision for Salford's future forecloses alternative ways of progressing, setting it on a singular linear trajectory. It also considers how the Council's quest to regenerate means that it commits in the present to something which forecloses its ability to exercise change in the future.

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# Acknowledgements

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## Author's Declaration

In accordance with University regulations, I hereby declare that the contents of this thesis are based entirely on my original research and analysis and have not been presented or submitted for any other degree or qualification to this or any other institution, or to external sources for publication. All sources are acknowledged as references.

# 1. Introduction

Salford is Schizophrenic.

Or so I was told by a public sector policy maker involved in Salford's urban regeneration. This person was using the term to convey its commonly assumed definition of a split personality. He was suggesting that there was a split in Salford. A dichotomy of two contrasting parts. In particular, this participant was comparing areas that had been 'successfully' regenerated like Salford Quays – a mixed use waterfront development - to those spaces that were still suffering from high levels of deprivation. The differences referred to were social, economic and cultural. For this participant, the idea of Salford (in particular he was referring to inner city Central Salford) as a duality had positive connotations as it represented to him not the unevenness between the two parts or the growing separation this might bring, but a tangible demonstration that improvements in some parts of the city were being made.

This was not the only time during my research that somebody proposed that Salford was split, or consisted of separate, oppositional parts. Participants referred to Central Salford as "split in half", with Salford Quays consisting of one (much smaller, in geographical terms) 'half', and the rest of Central Salford making up the other (much smaller, in economic terms) 'half'. Central Salford is the inner city part of the city nearest to Manchester. It contains the most deprived wards in the city and has been subject to the majority of the urban regeneration that has taken place, including Salford Quays. Another participant described Salford as a "chameleon". It could appear to be different things to different people, depending on their wants and needs. The disjuncture was conceived of as so profound that the short physical distance between Salford Quays and the rest of Central Salford (four miles as the crow flies) was described as "unbelievable", as "mind boggling", that it "beggars belief". Some of these descriptions were conveying excitement at the possibility of what this might all mean for the future of Salford. For others, there was an element of uncertainty and wariness about the scale of transformation and their own changing relationships to it. There were also those who expressed their anger and frustration about what was perceived as unfavourable

treatment for some parts of the inner city over others. To one participant, this difference in treatment was "a disgrace".

It is not hard to see, when spending time in the inner city of Salford, why it incites people to describe it in these ways. Parts of the city have been redeveloped to a point where there are no remaining features identifying its not-so-distant past. Salford Quays demonstrates this well. In Salford Quays, we find MediaCityUK, home to parts of the BBC. I can barely imagine, standing in Salford Quays, that it was once Salford *Docks*, an active port for cargo and passengers into Manchester (see figure 1). Salford Quays (see figure2) is now a 'unique waterfront destination' boasting world-class cultural and leisure attractions along with waterfront apartments and office complexes. 'The Quays' as it has been remarketed has dropped the 'Salford' label and is now pitched as 'Greater Manchester's waterfront'. The identity of the site as Salford's working docks has been wholly replaced by one of affluent modern urban living under a quest to rebrand the city in this image. But it is important to consider what the effects of this large scale redevelopment have been.



*Figure 1: Salford Docks. Source - Unlocking Salford Quays*

*Figure 2: Salford Quays. Source - Manchester Gazette*

Within a few miles of the Quays are inner city neighbourhoods with severe levels of deprivation and unemployment. Many of them have experienced state-led regeneration and renewal which, whilst positive for some, has stood accused of causing displacement and gentrification for others (Jeffery & Jackson 2012). Since the economic crash in 2008 funding opportunities for urban development have collapsed and many investments have failed to deliver on initial promises. The result in Salford is a stark departure from the designer buildings of the Quays. There is only empty space where streets of houses once were. These dwellings were demolished to give way for replacements that were not built (see, for example, figure 3). In some cases, the spaces are not empty. Rather, houses and shops stand boarded up waiting as if in limbo for something that may no longer happen, something which Wallace (2015) has referred to as 'gentrification interrupted'.

*Figure 3: Housing clearance site – Author's own photo*

The sense of unevenness in Salford is exacerbated by the close proximity of these different spaces. Jeffrey and Jackson note, for example, that in Salford 'islands of gentrified affluence exist in a sea of relative poverty' (2012: 18). And whilst 'islands' like the Quays and MediaCityUK receive continual public and private financial investment, the economic impact of the financial collapse has seen not only financial investment withdrawn from the deprived areas but the curtailment of crucial welfare and public service support too. The election of a Conservative-led coalition government in 2010 followed by a wholly Conservative government in 2015 has amplified these differences. There is now what Peck (2012) has termed 'Austerity Urbanism' in which urban policy incorporates significant cuts to public services. It has been suggested that under austerity urbanism, regeneration is no longer aimed at ameliorating spatially concentrated levels of deprivation but is solely about targeting sites already expected to deliver economic growth (Goodchild & Hammond 2013). For writers such as Southern, these changes signify a 'terminal prognosis for regeneration' wherein any

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attempts at reducing structural inequalities have been removed from the process (2013: 400).

In this thesis I unpack how Salford has come to exhibit such spatial unevenness through its experience of urban regeneration. By analysing policy and planning documents and interviewing decision makers I explore the design, implementation, negotiation and legitimisation of regeneration and its outcomes. Ultimately I seek to uncover the journey that Salford has taken already and where it intends to go next under conditions of austerity and a political commitment to economic growth. I will explore what future is being created for Salford, who is included in that future and who will benefit from it.

## 1.1 Situating Salford

People may not know the City of Salford but for many of those who do their impression has been shaped by the many representations of the city in popular media. These popular representations that I shall highlight below have helped to created one of Salford's more dominant images, that of working class culture and poverty. It is these images that Salford Council has attempted to move away from through a period of urban redevelopment. Perhaps one of Salford's most famous historical depictions is in Friedrich Engels' *The Conditions of the Working Class in England*. In this 1845 book, written during his two year visit to Manchester, he described Salford as being so dirty, overcrowded and unsanitary that 'only inhuman, degraded and unhealthy creatures would feel at home' (1971: 75). Walter Greenwood's *Love on the Dole* written in the 1930s continued to chart the poverty of Salford's working classes, highlighting the struggles of one family suffering unemployment during the great depression. Robert Roberts' 1974 *The Classic Slum* provided greater insight to one of the districts Engels had initially written about. Roberts described working class Salford life during the first quarter of the twentieth century from his perspective as the son of a shopkeeper living in a Salford slum. Reflecting on Engels' visit back in the 1840s, Roberts wrote,

> He died in 1895 having seen that little world change, develop, 'prosper'
> even, yet stay in essence the same awful paradigm of what a free
> capitalist society could produce. By 1900 the area showed some

improvement; his 'cow-stable' had doubtless been demolished together with many another noisome den, but much that was vile remained (1973: 14).

Visually, industrial Salford life features heavily in the mid-twentieth century work of artist L. S. Lowry. Lowry's famous 'matchstick people' were intended to represent the worn-out workers of the Salford poor at that time (Thompson 2013). Lowry presented Salford people as thin, malnourished and barefoot against the smoky industrial landscape. From Manchester, the band Oasis entered in to a Lowryesque world for their 1995 *Masterplan* music video in which they reaffirmed Lowry as the go-to depiction of Northern working class culture. Similar scenes are created in Ewan MacColl's song *Dirty Old Town* in 1949 in which he described his home town of Salford as in need of demolition to solve the problems of poverty and decay. In more popular culture, this iconography of industrial Northern Britain has been played out in Britain's longest running soap opera *Coronation Street* which began life in the 1960s. Set in a fictional street in Salford, Coronation Street portrays northern working class existence through the lives of the street's residents, living in traditional terraced housing with smoky chimneys, working in the local factories and attending the local pub. The dominating image of Salford incorporates many of these old class tropes.

As part of a tongue-in-cheek marketing campaign which recognised and aimed to tackle these images, Salford Council's *One Shocking City* advertising campaign attempted to challenge the stereotypes associated with Salford by promoting its positive assets instead. For example, the poster stating "Public hangings are back" was used to highlight the local art exhibitions. "There's tons of grass in Salford" and "Salford's full of pond life" were not intended to promote provision of cannabis and offend local residents, but to highlight their green space and natural parks.

*Figure 4: One Shocking City advertising campaign. Source – BBC News 2005*

Most recently there has been a high profile focus on inner city Salford due to the relocation of parts of the BBC to the regenerated Salford Quays area. Initial media reports claimed that staff was concerned to move to the area for fear of crime. It was reported that the BBC were spending large sums of money so that staff could commute from London instead of moving to Salford. There were claims that additional security was being hired to escort staff members around the area (Carter 2012). Most famously the presenter and columnist Jeremy Clarkson claimed he would "resign in a heartbeat" if he were expected to move to Salford (BBC News 2011b). But whilst these stories added to the negative imagery of crime-ridden Salford, the BBC move more broadly represented the other side of the split inner city; the new ambition and vision of becoming a "modern global city" that Salford City Council is now striving to achieve.

I should pause here to clarify a few terms for those unfamiliar with Salford. It is a city in the North West of England, situated immediately to the West of Manchester City Centre and contains about half of the population of neighbouring Manchester (ONS, 2011). The two cities are separated by the River Irwell that runs between them, creating a natural

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boundary. The city forms part of the wider Greater Manchester Conurbation along with nine other Local Authorities. Along with this, Salford is a post-industrial city. It has experienced both the boom and bust of the industrial revolution that took Salford from a rural hinterland to a fully industrial city and on again to post-industrial decline (Catalani & Panas 2012). It received city status in 1926, not long after the opening of the ship canal, which at its height was the third busiest port in England. The Borough of Salford comprised the inner city wards until 1974 when administrative changes saw it incorporate the westerly areas. Still today the west and east of Salford are often treated separately, particularly in planning terms. One side is referred to as West Salford whilst the inner city eastern areas are referred to as Central Salford or 'Old Salford' by its inhabitants (Walklate & Evans 1999).



*Figure 5: Salford Docks 1981. Source - Matthew Wilkinson*

Salford itself is not a 'World City' or 'Global City' (Massey 2007) and has not reached the same status as Manchester has, having most often been cast in its shadow. The two cities have a reportedly long historic rivalry which has prevented early cross boundary working because of a level of scepticism and mistrust between the two (Carley et al.

2000). When the ship canal at Salford declined, it did so rapidly. Within ten years it went from moving an annual two million tons of cargo to moving almost nothing (Struthers 2003). What followed in the 1980s is a familiar pattern of industrial decline, unemployment and entrenched poverty. After the closure of the docks, deprivation levels were high as was unemployment. The areas within Central Salford suffered the most with unemployment levels up at 32% (Henderson et al. 2007). However, whilst the Labour-run Council of neighbouring Manchester was initially rejecting the neoliberal reforms of the Thatcher government that were emerging at that time, Salford's Labour Council were reportedly much more ready to work with them on their urban reforms. Particularly they were keen to acquire the government grants necessary to deliver the regeneration of the Salford Docks, a source of tension between the two cities (Robson 2002).

## 1.2 Governance and Regeneration in Salford

What has occurred in Salford since this time has been the gradual urban transformation of the inner city, one in which Salford Council has adopted and embraced many of the neoliberal reforms that have attempted to place cities as the driving force of the national economy. Across the globe over the last four decades has been a radical transformation of cities all following roughly the same trajectory: namely, deprived inner cities being reimagined and reshaped; consumer and luxury centres of apartment blocks, office buildings, city plazas and leisure spaces; large scale flagship developments of stadiums and arenas in which to host national and international mega events; the 'renaissance' of deindustrialised places like docklands and old industrial spaces in to mixed-use tourist attractions, heritage centres, cultural quarters and gentrified living spaces (MacLeod 2011). Creating these 'spaces of spectacle' has been key to regenerating cities since the 1980s in the quest to bring back investment, economy and interest to deindustrialised inner cities through a market led approach (Raco 2003: 1869). In an increasingly globalised world where government funding is restricted, cities are expected to compete with one another to attract investment opportunities and reverse the decline experienced by the loss of manufacturing and industry. These flagship spectacles, then, are crucial to attracting and retaining fleetingly mobile capital.

Salford has followed these patterns of urban restructuring which have been referred to as the 'new urban politics' (MacLeod 2011). These are distinguishable from the old urban politics by drawing on a wider range of private actors to deliver public services and urban infrastructure, in particular private developers and non-governmental elites into public private partnerships and growth coalitions. The transition to *new* urban politics is also marked by the transformation of the public state in to a more business-like entrepreneurial form of governance which includes speculative risk taking with public finances, a practice that is no longer undertaken solely by private organisations, and a retreat away from more Keynesian commitments to redistribution and welfare towards a neo-liberal commitment to generating economic growth (MacLeod 2011). This shift has been most famously characterised by David Harvey (1989) as a move from managerial to entrepreneurial governance, a shift that Peck argues has today become so normalised into '"everyday" entrepreneurialisms' that the ubiquity of these competitive city redesigns have lost their uniqueness: 'the spectacles,' he writes, 'no longer seem that spectacular' (2014: 397).

Many cities have taken on this familiar spectacular approach to urban renewal, for example the transformation of Liverpool's docklands, London's *Tate Modern*, the *NewcastleGateshead* quayside and Cardiff bay, to the extent that they have been noted to exhibit a strong similarity (Swyngedouw 2010). In Salford, the most 'spectacular' of developments has been the transformation of the dockland area. As I have already begun to touch upon, capitalising on the waterfront location and its immediate proximity to Manchester city centre, Salford Quays has seen considerable investment and regeneration. It is now a modern mixed-use development of waterside apartments, a cultural arts centre called *The Lowry*, a shopping centre, a water sports centre, office blocks and the aforementioned MediaCityUK housing the BBC and ITV amongst others. Just across the bridge is the Trafford side of the Quays, which also includes the *Imperial War Museum* and is a walk away from Manchester United's *Old Trafford* football stadium.

Salford Quays forms part of a new spatialisation in Salford called the Regional Centre. The Regional Centre consists of parts of Salford and the Manchester City Centre and is

Greater Manchester's focal point for investment, economic growth, leisure and tourism now and in the future. The Regional Centre is of "European-wide importance" and will be subject to significant continual development (Salford City Council 2004). The figure below (figure 6) depicts Salford and its compartmentalised spatialities; West Salford (in Green circles), Central Salford (in red circles) and the Regional Centre (in the blue circles). As can be seen, the Regional Centre includes Salford Quays, the Ordsall riverside that runs from the Quays alongside Manchester City Centre and up to Chapel Street, one of Salford's other strategic regeneration sites. What we have in this instance is the 'summoning up' of a newly defined space which is then fed back into the imaginations of those who experience this place and which does not align to previous administrative boundaries but is defined instead by its competitive assets (Healey 2009). The Regional Centre in Salford includes all waterfront development opportunities, Salford's Grade 1 listed Tudor manor house *Ordsall Hall*, the University of Salford, the museums on Chapel Street and the majority of new apartment and leisure opportunities. All of these are also within walking distance of Manchester city centre.



*Figure 6: Salford Spatial Framework. Source - Salford City Council*

As these spaces are being reimagined, it is crucial to consider the impact of this that is experienced by the people who reside within this changing landscape. One of the core features of regeneration is intended to be the amelioration of economic and social problems that an area and its inhabitants face. According to Roberts, regeneration is a 'comprehensive and integrated vision and action which leads to the resolution of urban problems and which seeks to bring about a lasting improvement in the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of an area that has been subject to change' (in Pugalis & McGuinness 2013: 342). The term regeneration itself is a loaded and contested term which draws on discourses of revival and regrowth in the physical and moral fabric of deprived and low-income areas (Southern 2013). For writers such as Lees (2014) regeneration – particularly the form taken under New Labour's Urban Renaissance which I will explore shortly – is state-led gentrification initiated as a response to government policy-making which caused deprived inner city areas and concentrated spaces of poverty to occur in the first instance.

New Labour's Urban Renaissance continued the efforts created under the preceding Conservative Government of tackling area-based decline. However, instead of focusing purely on economic interventions they also attempted to incorporate issues of social welfare in their efforts (Ginsburg 1999). For New Labour, these areas had become economically and also socially excluded from the mainstream, a diagnosis that ushered in a moralising and responsibilising discourse aimed at placing the majority of the blame for decline on those who resided within the areas themselves (Atkinson 2003b). The solution proffered by the government was to bring people and thus capital (both economic and social) back to the city. However, doing so required the physical transformation, securitisation and increasing privatisation of previously rundown high crime areas. Changing the image and perception of a place through regeneration programmes and extensive safety measures to protect those returning was crucial to the renewal of an area (Raco 2003). But it has been argued that this process has served to create *further* exclusion of those who are considered out of place or disorderly within these newly designed and sanitised spaces. In these transitions, then, both physical and symbolic boundaries are erected that define who is (and is not) included in that space (Coleman 2003).

## 1.3 Framing Foreclosure in Salford

Since the regeneration of Salford Quays, there have been publicised stories of local residents expressing a sense of exclusion from the area. Perhaps Salford Council's harshest critic is the *Salford Star* that cited an instance in which local children has been turned away from *The Lowry* centre as a form of discrimination against local residents (The Salford Star n.d.). For numerous years, Salford Quays was subject to a dispersal order, meaning that anyone suspected of causing anti-social behaviour could be removed from the site. It has been reported that the majority of the visitors to the tourist sites like *The Lowry* are mostly from outside of Salford (New Economy 2013). It has also been reported that local people have not benefited from the employment opportunities created by MediaCityUK. A report on the success of the BBC stated that of the 1,800 jobs created there only 24 of them went to residents of Salford, indicating the lack of Salford residents within the economic base of this space (Carter 2012). In 2013, two original cargo cranes that had been on the docks since 1966 were removed. These landmarks were the last remaining physical feature on the Quays that betrayed its history as a working dock (Brooks-Pollock 2013a). Their removal was fiercely contested by local residents who argued that the destruction of the cranes constituted the destruction of their local heritage (The Salford Star 2013).

*Figure 7: Cargo Cranes, Salford Quays. Source - The Salford Star, 2013*

It is important to consider how the redevelopment of spaces like Salford Quays redefines the boundaries of what histories and which people are permitted. In other words, it can be useful to think around the question of who a space is being redesigned for. One of the ways that we can think about this is by taking account of the identity that is at one point being changed and at another point being created. For Amin et al (2000), cities are full of multiplicity and dynamism. They are not consensual and harmonious places. They are constantly changing through the various networks that govern them and exist within them. For these authors, there needs to be place for democratic engagement and contestation of what a city will look like and what it will become. Having a future which is open to debate is the crux of democratic politics. For Lefebvre, this entails being able to 'multiply the readings of the city' (in Edensor 2005a: 4) creating the space for it to mean different things to different people. However, in the reordering of a city these multiple readings can be foreclosed so that only one particular narrative of that place becomes dominant. It is in this reordering that some groups are included and others are not.

This process of foreclosure serves to limit the democratic engagement of those who advocate for a future that is at odds with the one designated by the people in a position to do so. As Massey (2001) has argued, space is the dimension in which there are multiple coexistences of difference. However, when we think of space as *temporal*, i.e. as being on a trajectory of development and change, as becoming a 'modern global city', then all space is forced onto a single linear timeline. Places are then viewed as in 'decline', needing to be 'modernised' and 'developed' towards the same progressive future. So how much can it be argued that Salford is following this trajectory of progress which forecloses other alternatives? How much of Salford's future is open to democratic engagement and contestation? Is Salford being reordered in a way that reduces this multiplicity to the point of the exclusion of some residents and their histories and identities? These are all questions that are important to consider throughout this thesis.

This notion of foreclosure speaks to accounts of urban policy which highlight that regeneration programmes and redevelopment projects claiming to improve 'the city' are actually normalising processes that are working to privilege particular groups' interests over others. 'Common sense' assumptions which assert that cities need to be competitive and secure in order to attract mobile investment in a globalised economy exemplify these normalising processes (Davidson & Iveson 2014).

Many writers are equating these changes with the move to a post-political consensus where democratic decision-making is foreclosed (see Swyngedouw 2010, Dikeç 2006, Deas 2013, Allmendinger and Houghton 2012). As private organisations take over public welfare contracts more and more of the governance of these services is undertaken by private professionals. The public sector is entering into financial contracts for public services delivered by the private sector for long periods of time. It has been argued that these long-term contracts limit the choices and responsiveness of the public sector. They also transfer public funds to private organisations but also transfer the risks from the private sector onto the public (Raco 2015b). These 'everyday entrepreuneurialisms' enforce financial risk-taking by public sectors to smooth the way for private investors (Peck 2014). They usher in what Zizek (2009)calls 'borrowing from the future', a process of committing in the present what will hopefully pay off at a future date. Raco (2014)

calls this a 'post-political rigidity' which narrows the scope for alternative actions and serves to 'take the politics out of welfare' (2014: 35).

This foreclosure of alternatives is said to have intensified under the Coalition government elected in 2010 and the subsequent Conservative government elected in 2015. Pessimistically, Southern has claimed that 'We may well look back and lament the golden years of regeneration under New Labour' (2013: 400). Deas (2013) has argued that a consensus has been reached around urban regeneration as a method of delivering economic growth over anything more socially redistributive. Policy programmes aimed at fuelling economic growth have been implemented, for example the Regional Growth Fund, Enterprise Zones, Local Economic Partnerships and City Deals. However, there seem to be no policies created that focus specifically on areas of deprivation or need. As Pugalis and McGuinness state, under the Coalition government 'for the first time in several decades, England was left bereft of a genuine regeneration strategy and accompanying dedicated resources' (2013: 347). They argue that in its place is a toolkit of incentives that encourage and reward economic growth, or a 'growth at any cost' mantra. Accompanying this toolkit is an austerity agenda that is concurrently eroding the supports for those neighbourhoods that are still suffering from deprivation and inequality (Levitas 2012). This fundamental change to the role of regeneration and its associated funding mechanisms raises important questions about the responsibility of the local state to their publics and those publics' associated needs. What will the local Council prioritise within a curtailed financial landscape? And what will happen to the gap between the 'Islands of affluence' and the 'seas of poverty' if investment is concentrated in the economic growth areas rather than those experiencing decline?

## 1.4 Contextualising the private/public landscape of Salford

In Salford, we can see elements of this post-political consensus and the increasing involvement of private actors in political decision-making. We can also see expressions of a move to a growth agenda. There are examples that suggest that on this trajectory, alternatives and democratic engagement are being foreclosed in an attempt to become a 'modern global city'. But how far can we argue that this is occurring and to what extent

is Salford an exemplification of this process? One recent situation highlights some of these issues for consideration. In 2012, Salford Council presented its Core Strategy to the Secretary of State for approval. This strategy had been five years in the making and consolidated all previous planning documents to create one core spatial vision and framework for planning and land use in Salford over the next 15 years. The Secretary of State provided an independent Inspectorate to determine whether or not the strategy was 'sound', meaning that it complied with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) established under the Coalition government.

Over 200 documents were submitted for consideration and, after three weeks of hearings, the Inspectorate failed to approve the strategy (Salford City Council 2012b). The main concern the Inspectorate had was that Salford Council was not planning for enough growth in the city. The main points of contention were that the Council had not planned to build enough houses to meet the requirement as set out in the NPPF. There was, according to the Inspectorate, a shortfall of at least 300 houses a year. Nor had the Council allocated enough land within Central Salford to be developed. There was suggestion that the Council's requirements for dwelling size and specification might be overly prescriptive, acting as a barrier to house builders, for which they were advised to liaise with the building industry for guidance (Hollox 2012). In response, Salford Council withdrew the strategy indefinitely (Salford City Council 2012e).

This Core Strategy story highlights the prescription of a growth agenda that a local Council is expected to adhere to. The NPPF sets out the governments agenda for sustainable development. Sustainable, as defined in the NPPF, means 'ensuring that better lives for ourselves don't mean worse lives for future generations' (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012b). Development in the NPPF is synonymous with "growth". Without growth the consequence will be to "stagnate" (*ibid:* pi). The discourse here reflects Massey's (2001) singular timeline of development as described above, promoting stagnation as the opposite to development. "Sustainable development" as employed by the NPPF is about *positive economic growth*. The strategy created by Salford Council was thus thought to be not positive enough in growth terms. What we can see here is a challenge to Salford Council's ability to either retain publicly

owned assets or to determine how they are used. What the Council's Core Strategy posited as the appropriate scale of developments was, for the inspectorate, insufficient to satisfy the requirements of the pro-growth NPPF. This speaks to a point made by Raco (2014) that when growth is taken as the default, planners are in a position of having to justify instances in which growth should *not* occur, defending their ability to decide. What authority, then, does the Council have of being able to determine its own acceptable levels of growth? What powers do they retain to be able to resist the prescription of the NPPF as a legally binding policy? More broadly, it is important to consider whether this is a demonstration of the post-political logic that forecloses any options other than market growth.

Salford Council's Core Strategy story also highlights the increasing prominence of private actors within the planning and decision-making forum. Throughout the hearings for the Core Strategy there was considerable involvement from the representatives of Peel Holdings, a major landowner in Salford. Peel's developments across the region include MediaCityUK, *The Lowry Outlet* (a shopping centre, not to be confused with *The Lowry* arts centre), *Salford City Stadium*, and *The Trafford Centre* to name a few. One of Peel's biggest developments is *Port Salford*, a National Logistics Hub situated in the west of Salford. Phase one of *Port Salford* has been planned and approved but Peel is seeking to treble the size of the port, arguing that it will deliver economic competitiveness, growth and upwards of 10,000 jobs (The Peel Group 2012a). Peel argues that without this expansion there will be a missed opportunity to meet long-term economic need and to make a return on private and public investors' capital expenditure (*ibid*). Salford Council itself granted Peel £4 million to supplement a loan of £11 million to the private corporation (Salford City Council 2012c). However, the expansion would require the release of 100 acres of greenbelt land, something only to be considered under exceptional circumstances, which Peel determined this to be.

One of Peel's main requirements was that this land release be written into the Core Strategy (The Peel Group 2012a). Without this, Peel argued, the Council was acting against the positive growth position of the NPPF. Peel provided what they referred to as a 'suite of documents' on their response to the Core Strategy. Before the hearings

commenced, Peel requested that the Core Strategy be withdrawn. They also requested a separate hearing just to discuss the issue of *Port Salford*, which was granted. In attendance at the hearing on that day the Core Strategy aide-memoire identifies three Salford Council representatives, two local residents and eleven representatives of Peel Holdings (Salford City Council 2012d). The Peel-dominated discussion revolved around the perception that Salford Council was not simply insufficiently pro-growth but that they were hindering growth, thus acting against the requirements of the NPPF. Salford Council's response was that it *was* pro-growth, as evidenced by its track record of supporting Peel's developments across Salford. The Council's argument here was that the situation was not exceptional enough to require the release of greenbelt land (*ibid*).

The purpose of highlighting the Core Strategy story is not to assert that it was Peel's involvement in the process that caused the withdrawal of the strategy. However, it *is* important to consider how much of a presence Peel has in discussions such as these, what influence such private actors are able to exert during these processes, and what that may represent more broadly. Peel set out fundamental challenges to Salford Council's planning, challenges that required substantial resources to make. Arguably, this could have only been done by an organisation of Peel's size and wealth. Peel's considerable land ownership in Salford places it in a strategically prominent position to be able to question and shape the direction that those assets take. As Harrison has argued,

> The extent of Peel's existing portfolio, which sees them control many of
> the region's prime economic assets (across the real estate, transport and
> infrastructure, leisure, retail, media and energy sectors), the fact they
> are now one of the major landowners in the area and the proposed level
> of investment into this urban area have all made Peel one of the most
> powerful political voices in the region (2014: 2322)

Thus, by the very nature of its asset portfolio which includes many of the developments that are crucial to Salford's growth plans, Peel is *politically* as well as financially invested in the decision-making process. As the Council has become more closely aligned and more reliant on Peel to deliver growth, jobs and regeneration, to what extent is the

Council able to make decisions outside of Peel's influence? This speaks not only to the land acquisition that has already been made by Peel but also the increasing encouragement for local authorities to sell more of their land and thus open up the possibility of this situation manifesting further. Put differently, what happens to the decision-making process when the majority of land and asset ownership is in the hands of private institutions?

With the Council providing funding for Peel ventures and also placing them as strategically central to the delivery of Salford's regeneration strategies in delivering jobs and growth, the Council become (as Peel knowingly demonstrated during the hearings described above) both reliant on and compliant in ensuring the positive outcome of private development, making it difficult to make choices that work against these outcomes. Both parties thus have an interest in the successful delivery of these programmes and the Council is required to facilitate their successful realisation. This represents, to use Raco's term from earlier in the chapter, a 'post-political rigidity' (2014). The financial commitment to certain strategic development projects means that the Council is locked into a process which makes it difficult for it to respond in a dissenting manner. The language used by Peel to encourage Salford Council to extend the greenbelt invokes a discourse of necessity. Whilst Salford Council did not acquiesce to Peel's discourse in the case of the Core Strategy, an issue is raised regarding Salford Council's ability to act with democratic accountability when it relies upon such companies to deliver regeneration objectives and growth.

Could it be, then, that we are witnessing the emergence of a post-political condition in Salford? It may be that Salford Council's resistance to Peel's demands suggest not. However, we might argue that what the Council is resisting is the *method* of delivery, not the delivery itself. As Baeten (2009) argues, it does not follow that there has been an exercise of politics just because conflicting powerful interests have had to negotiate. Rather, something is post-political when an overall consensus has been reached, within which details are debated. For Salford Council, then, its argument was that it did not want to extend into the greenbelt, but the Council was adamant that it *was* committed to a pro-growth agenda, something it was keen to reinforce to the NPPF's independent

Inspectorate (Salford City Council 2012d). One of the objectives of this thesis then will be to explore some of the themes arising from this incident in more detail. It will aim to identify the relations between Salford Council and the private developers that it is increasingly reliant upon to deliver regeneration objectives. It will explore the implications of this for democratic decision-making and accountability and the possibility that what results is a post-political condition in which a growth consensus is enforced whilst other possible alternatives are foreclosed.

## 1.5 The aims and objectives of the thesis

The overarching aim of this thesis is to understand, from the experiences of those involved in making the decisions, how Salford has developed in the way that is has and how the uneven spatialities have been created. I am interested in the purpose of regeneration in Salford according to those responsible for making the decisions and who it is intended to benefit. I am also keen to explore the discourses used to legitimise such regeneration outcomes. In particular, I am interested in the role of the local government and its relationship with non-state actors in urban regeneration. From this, I explore the impact on democratic accountability and engagement and consider the implication of changes in urban policy for delivering urban improvements and ameliorating urban problems.

The overall aims of the research project were to;

- Understand, from the experiences of those involved in making the decisions, how the regeneration in Salford had come to be materially manifest in the ways that it had, and to explore the ways in which the regeneration outcomes were designed, implemented, negotiated and legitimised by those same people.
- To draw on this case study to develop an understanding of the wider changes taking place within the politics of urban economic development

The specific research questions that underpinned these aims are as follows:

- What is the purpose of regeneration in Salford according to those responsible for making the decisions?
- What role does the local government play in urban regeneration and what does it tell us about its priorities?

- How do state and non-state actors engage to deliver regeneration at a local level and what is the impact of this for democratic accountability?
- In what ways can we see regeneration moving away from a process based on spatially targeted need towards the delivery of economic growth?
- Does a growth consensus within the urban political landscape foreclose alternative options for development?
- How can we conceptualise the politics that take place behind urban economic development?

## 1.6 Chapter outlines

The next chapter in this thesis is a history of urban policy and an exploration of the academic literature that discusses the changes that have taken place since the Second World War. This chapter outlines the major urban policy initiatives that have been put in place and the reasoning behind them. Most importantly, it traces the changes that have transformed regeneration from having a primary focus on areas of concentrated poverty and deprivation, to an explicit focus on economic growth. It considers the emergence of a neoliberal ideology that has taken shape in urban policy, and the broader political project articulated by Thatcher's Conservative Government in which the deregulation of markets, increasing privatisation of public services and competition for resources began to replace Keynesian welfare provision and notions of redistribution and equality. In this discussion, I highlight the governmental changes that were enacted and which caused local government to take on entrepreneurial forms in which they were increasingly expected to act in a more business-minded manner alongside private organisations. Ultimately it considers the suggestion that there is no longer a regeneration policy under the Coalition and Conservative governments that were elected after the economic crash. It explores the post-political literature that has emerged from this and the implication that we are now experience an urban policy characterised by a post-political consensus.

The third chapter is a case study of Salford where I outline Salford as a city and the urban regeneration that had taken place there up until the point at which I began my research. This chapter can be considered as 'desk research' or preliminary research based on the

analysis of prior academic research, media outlets and secondary sources of publicly accessible documentation. In it, I outline how the national policies discussed in chapter two have been enacted and experienced in Salford. I focus particularly on Central Salford as the site that has experienced the majority of the national regeneration programmes and as the area identified as the most deprived and thus most in need of regeneration. I explain the demographics of Salford and the urban problems that regeneration is intended to relieve. The chapter describes the role of the Local Authority in Salford and their initial engagement with private actors in delivering regeneration, tracing the transition from a managerial to entrepreneurial governance through the partnerships that were made and the investment strategies taken. In particular, I argue that the regeneration that had so far been carried out had increased the divide between existing Salford residents and incoming residents to Salford which has created tensions in the area. Further to this, I argue that the increasing popularity of Salford has led to a spatial reorganising of Salford in which successes are increasingly being thought of as for the region rather than for the residents.

The fourth chapter of this thesis outlines the methodology undertaken to deliver the empirical part of the thesis, detailing more explicitly what the research aims are and the research questions that underpin them. It then documents the process through which the data were collected to answer these research questions. It takes a reflexive approach to this method, considering why this approach was taken and its implications. In this chapter I explain why I chose to focus on Salford as a case study area, highlighting what makes the city of particular importance. I will also explain why I chose to focus primarily on urban policy decision makers and practitioners. The methodology chapter discusses who was interviewed, why they were chosen, how access was gained and how the interviews were conducted. I will also discuss the method I used to analyse my data including drawing on both thematic analysis and discourse analysis. Ultimately it identifies how I approached my data and how this led to the themes that I located in the interviews conducted and the documentation analysed. I conclude by discussing limitations to my methodology and the ethical considerations of my study.

In chapter five, I begin the exploration of my empirical data. This chapter is mostly focused on the vision for Central Salford as designed by the local Council. It highlights the direction that Salford is intended to take and the transition it is expected to make through the urban regeneration that has been taking place and will continue to take place. This chapter explores the expectation that decision makers have for Salford and the residents of Salford as the city is modernised. It focuses on the way in which local residents are described and positioned in relation to these changes and highlights the discursive frames that are used to construct Salford as stagnating and in decline, to which modernisation and development is then posited as the solution. It also draws out the way in which the regeneration is legitimised as something local residents can aspire to in the future as opposed to something they are actually benefiting from in the present. Importantly, I argue here that the shifting focus on economic growth as a measure of success challenges local residents' 'right to dwell' in the city (Davidson 2009), challenging their right to experience *living* in Central Salford without *contributing* to its economic base. It argues that the reordering and redesigning of the city requires an influx of people to the city who are financially able to sustain its regeneration efforts, the result of which are a growing group of residents who are increasingly seen to be 'out of place'.

The sixth chapter focuses directly on the decision making and partnership working that has regenerated Salford Quays. In this chapter the regeneration of Salford Quays is analysed from its initial closure as a working dockland. It traces the emerging visions of the area and the need to secure investment and private developers to allow those visions to materialise. It explores the entrepreneurial strategies Salford Council took by highlighting the narratives of those responsible for its development, both from the public and private sector. Whilst Salford Quays could be seen to have a strategy of sorts, it is argued that there was no master plan. The effects of this is the creation of a space that has moved further and further away from the necessities of the residents that are intended to benefit from the opportunities created there. The chapter also highlights the increasing influence of the private sector within urban redevelopment and the role of Salford Council in working with these developers. The chapter argues that is through the construction of a discourse that sees investment as being difficult to obtain that a

situation is created in which the Council is forced to waive its rights and statutory controls in order to secure investors. This is done by drawing on Davidson and Iveson's (2014) notion of the 'invocation of necessity' in which action has to be taken over deliberation. Post-political sentiments begin to emerge through these invocations of investment as a necessity.

The final empirical chapter focuses on interviews but also planning documentation and meeting minutes to consider the form that regeneration is taking and *will* take in Salford under conditions of 'austerity urbanism' (Peck 2012). In this chapter, issues of growth and post-politics are central. Here, I am keen to highlight the changes to urban regeneration under the Coalition and the Conservative government that followed it, and how Salford has responded to these. It argues that Salford Council is normalising a process of financial risk-taking in which urban development projects undertaken by private developers are being partially financed by the Council in order to secure their investments. This finance is occurring through unsupported borrowing and financial commitments in which decisions are made in the present that will inevitably have to be repaid in the future. Drawing on Zizek's (2009) concept of 'borrowing from the future' and Raco's (2014) idea of 'post-political rigidity' the chapter argues that the Council is undertaking risky forms of capital development in order to secure additional growth to the area that at once places them at increasing financial risk and narrows their ability to conduct democratic politics in the future. It is a strategy, I argue here, that forecloses their ability to divert from this course if they should choose to.

The chapter also argues that the grants offered for urban regeneration under the Conservative government are based on a 'payment by results' system (O'Brien & Pike 2015) that incentivises growth by making funding conditional on the creation of economic returns. This encourages investment into those areas that are most likely to deliver returns rather than those that are most in need. This fundamentally signifies a move away from redistribution and equity and stands to perpetuate the creation of a divide between areas of affluence and of deprivation. It argues that the Council is actively managing the redevelopment of some spaces whilst actively *not* managing

others. These spaces, then, are continually undeveloped as sites where gentrification has been interrupted, indefinitely.

The final chapter will be a discussion of the arguments made in the previous empirical chapters. It will consolidate the final arguments, drawing out some of the key themes that emerge out of the analysis chapters. Primarily it will engage with the concept of foreclosure, considering how the regeneration strategies and entrepreneurial forms of governance have foreclosed the space for local residents to engage in, have foreclosed the future in which some are now left out of and foreclosed the potential for the Council to exercise proper politics; that being the ability to contest and disagree with dominant political consensus (Swyngedouw 2009). It will also highlight the change that urban regeneration has undergone and the changing role that the Council now operates within the financial market and urbanisation. It will also discuss limitations of the thesis and areas for future research.

# 2. Urban policy: a socio-historical account

In this chapter I want to outline and document the implementation and subsequent changes to urban policy since the Second World War. The chapter will set out the main policies created at a national level and consider its impacts at a local level. Urban spaces have changed dramatically over the last few decades. This change has meant that our understandings of and relation to cities, especially in the Global North, are fundamentally different to what they once were. Cities have long been the drivers of a nation's wealth and capital accumulation. But they have become particularly significant in a globalised world economy. The changes in urban environments over the last 3-4 decades have seen incredible differences develop between cities at a global scale and also within cities at a local scale. This is due to the changing expectations of the roles cities should play in an increasingly global political economy (MacLeod et al. 2003). The redesigning of space is not a new phenomenon. Urban space is characterized by a long standing history of development and redevelopment, but as Smith states,

> "What is new today is the degree to which this restructuring of space is an immediate and systematic component of a larger economic and social restructuring of advanced capitalist economies" (Smith 1986, p21).

The changes that have taken place comprise the 'new urban politics' of competitive urbanisation in which the aim is competition and social cohesion, but the reality is increased polarization of wealth and power. This chapter will trace the history of UK urban policy after the Second World War up until present day. It will aim to identify how the economic imperative to revalue cities and tackle issues of deprivation has resulted in the increased privatisation of public assets through the utilizing of private finance and the redirecting of state power. The converse of this process has been the marginalisation, increased management and increasing control of the populations who have long inhabited these city spaces. Moving beyond simply deregulation and the withdrawal of welfare, there has begun the construction of new forms of governance which work to actively support the creation and extension of new markets and

increasingly punitive forms of governance to manage this process and the people who challenge its success (Peck 2003). What this chapter will show to be emerging through urban policy is a fundamental shift away from spatially targeted attempts at redistribution and a commitment from Keynesianism towards a growth agenda.

## 2.1 Post-war policy

Following the Second World War, the Labour Government under Clement Attlee took great efforts to ensure they were the driving force behind urban development (Hill 2000). Following on from several years of poor quality private house-building and Local Government decision making, the government centralised urban planning power and housing development. The intention was that house building after 1945 was to be dominated by Council owned properties. It was envisioned that these homes would provide a better quality of accommodation than previous privately built houses and that the majority of people would rent from the local state, rather than own their own homes (Lund 2006). What followed was the largest concentrated building of Council homes in British history. However, the production of private build houses in suburban landscapes was challenging the government's dreams of a Council renting citizenry.

The movement of people to the suburbs, the failing ability of Councils to meet housing need and the onset of deindustrialisation with its associtaed job losses soon drew attention to the increasing problems the British inner cities were facing (Schoon, 2001). In 1968, the government initiated attempts to tackle the growing deprivation of the inner cities through the Urban Aid Program offering funding to Councils to tackle issues of decline. The Community Development Project of the following year was intended to discover the reasons for area specific deprivation and tailor solutions based on these discoveries. However, both these programs were rooted in an assumption that poverty in deprived areas was the result of social pathology; that individual people's failings were somehow self-inflicted, rather than structurally generated (Badcock 1984). Thus the assumption was that areas were deprived because particular types of people were clustering within these spaces and therefore solutions where targeted at an individual level. We will see this assumption maintained and developed through the chapter.

Recognition of the effects that changes had had on the declining cities was solidified in the 1977 White Paper *Policy for the Inner Cities.* The paper showed unemployment as a cause of: economic decline which it argued stemmed from the loss of the mass employment industries which were subsequently replaced by a much smaller in employment terms service sector; and a lack of jobs to match the existing skills of people and a lack of skills to match the emerging jobs (Burton & Boddy 1995). Reinvigorating the city's economy, coupled with a strong welfare base was identified as the key to reversing the inner city problem, led primarily by the Councils (Watson & Niner 2010). Specific areas were identified for the targeting of directed funding (Badcock 1984). What began here was a process of specifically spatially targeted initiatives which continued to be the focus of urban policy over the successive decades.

## 2.2 Thatcher era

During the 1970s Britain faced the 'winter of discontent', an economic recession stemming from the oil crisis, the weakening of the sterling in 1976 and increasing inflation (Malpass & Rowlands 2010). In 1979 the Conservative Government led by Margaret Thatcher won the general election and began tackling these inherited economic problems with neoliberal reforms of free market competition, privitisation and welfare cutbacks. The problem of the declining inner cities was expressed by the government as being a cause of the existing government controls on planning and development. These controls were articulated as prohibiting private enterprise and investment which were described as the solution to reinvigorating these inner city areas (Badcock 1984). A lack of faith from the centre in Local Governments ability to improve urban areas led to dramatic changes in local democratic power. Ultimately, the changes enacted in urban policy were intended to consolidate a broader ideological change in the relationship between central and local government (Oatley 1998).

These changes were not specific to urban policy, but applied to all Conservative Government changes being undertaken and embodied the main conservative neoliberal ideology emerging at that time. Defining neoliberalism has been a challenging task for scholars due to its complexity but also its uneven variations as it is applied throughout

different arenas. For Dikeç (2006) then, defining neoliberalism is "neither an easy task nor a particularly desirable endeavour" (p61). For Peck & Tickell (1994), neoliberalism is a political project which rejects social welfare provision in favour of market regulation and competition generated by supply-side rather than demand-side measures. For these authors, neoliberalism did not occur as a solution to the decline of Fordist-Keynesianism, but emerged at this time of crisis as its symptom. It is thus a 'jungle law' that has broken out in which the competition for scare investment and resources generates a 'begger-thy-neighbour' strategy (319).

It is under cover of this neoliberal doctrine that Brenner & Theodore (2002) argue the state was able to deregulate control over major industry, reduce the power of organised labour, scale back and privatise public services, encourage capital mobility at an international level, reduce corporate tax whilst simultaneously gradually withdrawing welfare services, increase competition between places, and increase the punitive treatment of the urban poor (p350). Again, these authors highlight the inconsistent application of the neoliberal project, which challenges its utopic ideology of free market rule; as in reality neoliberalism has served to generate market failures, social polarisation and an uneven spatiality. Thus neoliberalism could be thought of as an ongoing process of 'neoliberalization' rather than as an end-product (Brenner & Theodore 2002, p353). What also needs to be considered when discussing neoliberalism is how it moves beyond a purely policy framework towards the way that it also serves to shape and govern individuals. Larner (2000) highlights how neoliberalism is both a 'political discourse' which dictates the rule of governance and also a 'set of practices' which enacts governance at a distance (p6). Dikeç (2006) takes in to account all these elements and defines neoliberalism as "a political rationality", and defines neoliberalization as "a particular form of restructuring guided by this political rationality premised on the extension of market relations that privilege competition, efficiency, and economic success" (p62). It is this definition that shall be utilised throughout this thesis.

The Thatcher led Conservative government, along with the Reagan Government in the US, restructured urban policy within this political neoliberal rationality. The first main urban policy was the 1980 Local Government, Planning and land Act which set out the

provision of Enterprise Zones (EZ) and Urban Development Corporations (UDC) (Badcock 1984). UDCs were given the power to acquire land and control over planning applications, including those it submitted itself. The UDCs were only accountable to central government, sidelining local government control. The corporations themselves were comprised of business professionals and planning experts, ushering in their involvement in social projects (Cullingworth & Nadin 2006). EZs acted in a similar manner to UDCs. These were designated areas of land, usually derelict spaces in deprived inner cities with deregulated planning controls. The rationale underlining EZs was economic growth (Hall 1991). The selling point for Enterprise Zones was that businesses which moved in to the designated areas would be exempt from certain taxes. The success of these two policy initiatives is uncertain. Evaluation has shown it to be unclear whether the new businesses established in the EZs created new jobs or just caused the relocating of existing businesses to more affordable areas. More critically, EZs and UDCs stood accused of having primarily economic rather than social objectives as its end point (Hill 2000).

## 2.3 Housing and the Right to Buy

The Conservative's neoliberal reforms were also transforming the housing market with the same political rationale, through a chain of policy reforms which would serve to fundamentally change the face of Council housing forever (Hodkinson et al. 2013: 4).

This Conservative Government came to power with 4 main housing objectives: prioritise owner occupancy as the main tenancy of choice; reduce the position of local Councils as the main housing providers; diversify tenure options by assisting the private rented sector in improving its stock base; and restrict government resources to areas with the most chronic housing needs (Atkinson & Durden 1994). It has also been argued that this policy goal of reducing the number of Council housing and its tenants was a political tactic to weaken the Labour Party's electoral base of Council tenants (Hodkinson et al. 2013), the assumption being that by dismantling the social provisions that Labour had created, there would be less people dependent on it and thus less people inclined to put Labour in power (Kemp 1990). Privatisation of Council housing was already under way

when Thatcher came to power, but it was solidified by one of the most significant privatisation programs in social housing; the Right to Buy (Watson & Niner 2010). The Right to Buy was encouraged by increasing the rent paid by Council housing tenants, offering large subsidies for tenants to purchase their Council home (up to 50% discount), and an increasing stigmatisation of people in Council housing (Jones 2010).

In the years following the Right to Buy the take up of tenants exercising their rights saw home ownership increase by 40% between 1981 – 2001 (Bramley et al. 2004). Correspondingly, Councils were only allowed to keep 25% of the revenue generated by the sale of Council houses. This was for repair and maintenance purposes. Any additional money was to be used to pay off debts. This financial restriction prevented the Councils from being able to build any new Council homes to replace those lost (Durden 2001). Financially, this constrained local Councils' ability to continue as sole providers of housing. The social and economic consequence of the Right to Buy was that the larger houses of better quality were bought up by those middle and upper lower class workers who had the required income to gain a mortgage. The result of this was that the lower quality houses in the least desirable areas were the ones left for those who could not afford to buy but still required a Council property (Jones 2010). This served to residualise low quality housing for people who were in specific need of assistance within what became monolithic Council estates, further adding stigma to Council house occupiers.

The government's next move in diversifying tenure was to increase housing management and provision through the private renting sector (Lund 2006). The Housing Act 1988 and the Local Government Act 1989 were the government's final attempts to halt local Council involvement in housing (Durden 2001). The move was to see Councils primarily in an 'enabling role' rather than as providers of housing (Lambert & Malpass 1998: 98). This is congruent of the political rationality of neoliberalisation; placing public authorities as enabler rather than provider, a job which then moves to the private sector (Peck & Tickell 2002). It also ushered in an ideological transformation with the dominant narrative being that state interference encouraged dependency rather than individual choice and responsibility; a discourse that we will see become much more entrenched under neoliberalism (Jacobs & Manzi 1996).

## 2.4 Introducing Competition

Under John Major's new leadership for the conservative government, Michael Heseltine, the then Secretary of State for the Environment, set out to redesign urban policy to tackle issues of urban decline. After visiting problem areas his determining was that a 'dependency culture' had occurred within local government on central government funding. This dependency culture, it was argued, prevented local Councils from developing more innovative ways of working. Heseltine's suggestion was to introduce competition between Councils for government funding. This, it was stated, would unleash creativity and drive in urban regeneration (Oatley 1998). These ideas came together under the 1991 City Challenge. This model was to experiment with the ideas of competitive bidding between Councils and the emergence of partnerships between Councils and other agencies. The significance of this encouragement of inter area competition was that it began to shift the focus of funding under previous policies away from areas displaying the most need, to areas that could demonstrate the most effective use of resources. This represented a serious departure in urban policy from a more welfare based criteria.

The City Challenge experiment solidified the move to competition dependent funding when it was integrated in to the 1994 Single Regeneration Budget (SRB). The SRB introduced a corporate and entrepreneurial way for Councils to work. The focus within bids was to be more business-like, prioritising an area's economic potential and subordinating their social needs. The effect of this was that successful bids were quite often in the more affluent areas that could demonstrate private investment potential. The most deprived areas on the other hand were not often as successful. Thus competition based on these criteria began to widen rather than ameliorate the economic and social unevenness of different geographical areas (Oatley 1998).

The features of the Conservative government under John Major are characteristic of the ideological transformation in the urban governance of late capitalist countries that David Harvey (1989) called a shift from Managerial to Entrepreneurial governance. This has taken place, Harvey argues, as a consequence of the declining economies within the

inner city and the requirement of local governments to be instrumental in reversing this decline through innovative and entrepreneurial methods. What was interesting during this shift, Harvey notes, was the consensus over the need for this change, with disagreements emerging only over *how* it should be done.

There are 3 main features that Harvey has identified that are indicators of this shift. Firstly, local government 'public-private partnerships' have been created in an attempt to unlock private funding and investment to instigate development and generate employment opportunities. These partnerships, like the Urban Development Corporation described earlier, involve the public sector as a facilitator of private capitalist development. Secondly, these partnerships are inherently entrepreneurial because they act speculatively in its design and implementation. As the public sector is facilitating this speculation then it is the public sector that will most often (but not always) be assuming the risks associated with speculative investment whilst the private sector takes the financial benefits. Thirdly, there is a greater focus on the political economy of place over territory. Here territory refers to specifically designated areas of jurisdiction. When a development project has a territorial focus, for example education or housing, the people within that territory will be intended to benefit. However, focusing on place instead means that benefits can be felt at different levels. They are not constrained to the level of territory. For example creating new cultural centres or industrial parks may positively illuminate an entire region. However, focusing on promoting and enhancing place over territory may divert attention away the particular social problems an area faces in the quest for economic and urban development (Harvey 1989). When David Harvey proffered this analysis of urban governance in 1989 he argued that this transition was in no way complete. But as we will go on to see throughout this thesis, this entrepreunerial, neoliberal (although Harvey never used the term) logic has become structurally entrenched in to our everyday practices. Thus Harvey's article can be considered as a 'conjunctural moment' and a 'historical tipping point' of what was to come (Peck 2014: 396).

## 2.5 New Labour and the Third-Way

When New Labour was elected in to power in 1997 under the leadership of Tony Blair, poverty and inequality within cities was extremely high. The economic developments undertaken through previous urban policies had failed to trickle-down to the inhabitants of the inner city communities (Imrie & Raco 2003). The Labour government, rather than reverse the neoliberal reforms of the previous Conservative government, actually served to reinforce and continue many of the existing dominant urban policies. However, New Labour's approach to this was to promise a 'Third Way' of governing. This 'Third way' was to be a position occupied between capitalism and social democracy; a balancing act of responsibility divided between the state and the free-market. The key to achieving success under the third way was to enable people to depend on themselves, rather than on the state. This consolidated the move towards individualisation and responsibilisation which began under Thatcher's government. Rather than expecting the market to support neighbourhoods or expecting the state to support local economies, the government was to assist people in developing their own social capital; the skills and the opportunities necessary to assist themselves (Kearns 2003).

New Labour aimed to address regeneration through 2 primary initiatives. The first was to tackle neighbourhood deprivation, including exclusion, poverty, unemployment and housing through the newly created Social Exclusion Unit (SEU). The second was to tackle the wider issue of declining cities through the 'Urban Renaissance', aimed to improve the urban environment, increase community cohesion and promote social mixing (Punter 2011).

As Levitas (2004) argues, the term social exclusion had begun to be used critically throughout the 1980s and 1990s to denote the multidimensional effects of exclusion, poverty and deprivation within social inequality. Redistribution of resources was called for as the primary solution to inequality. However in the 1990s, two further social exclusion solution discourses took prominence. The first being social integration: that paid work would alleviate the problems of poverty and thus exclusion. It saw the labour market as the answer, ignoring wider issues of low paid and insecure forms of

employment and the devaluing of unpaid work. The second discourse promoted the idea of a moral underclass: a culture of welfare dependency and family breakdown leading to a lack of values and worklessness. It was these latter two types of social exclusion discourses, welfare dependency and the labour market which dominated New Labour policies (Levitas 2010).

The SEU set out its initial aims for neighbourhood renewal in 1998. Broadly speaking, its main aims were to improve the management of neighbourhoods and housing, to improve access to services in both the public and private sector, to increase employment opportunities by providing training and skills, and to improve the chances of young people (Kearns 2003). These discourses of social exclusion evoked the image of the included (politically, culturally, morally) and the excluded (those who reside in the spaces of worklessness and deprivation). This choice of language served to justify neighbourhood levels of policy intervention. The rhetoric here was that being disadvantaged was a result of individual failure. The government then facilitated individual improvements through assistance such as skills training or sanctions such as restriction of benefits and increased policing (Atkinson & Jacobs 2010). So whilst Local Government was being encouraged to not be reliant on central government for fear it inhibited its ability to self-manage, so too were individual citizens encouraged to be self-sufficient away from the dependency culture on welfare which was posited as encouraging, even causing, exclusion.

## 2.6 New deal for Communities

The first main SEU programme to tackle exclusion at the neighbourhood level was the New Deal for Communities (NDC). Like the SRB, the NDC neighbourhoods were chosen based on their ability to demonstrate to central government that they could develop partnership working and deliver specific outcomes. The NDC committed funding over a 2 year period to the 39 'Pathfinder' areas established (Lee 2010). Wallace (2007) argues that the NDC programme expected its success to come from three main factors: a strong community base and high levels of social capital; harnessing individual agency amongst community members and involving them in decision making and plan formation; and by

empowering citizens to actively improve their life chances and reducing the perceived 'area effects' of living in a deprived neighbourhood (Wallace 2007).

Assessment of NDC initiatives has shown mixed results. Lawless and Beatty (2012) found that the place-based objectives improved (crime, community and housing and the physical environment) whilst the objectives that aimed to tackle the people-based objectives (health, worklessness and education) did not. Thus it was the more physical rather than social/economic objectives that were achieved. It was also the NDC areas where the amount of social housing declined and the number of owner occupiers increased that showed any improvements. This, they argued, reflected the displacement of social housing tenants and communities. A review of official NDC evaluation documents also concluded that the evidence of success was weak, and where it was said to occur, it was difficult to identify why it occurred and who benefitted (Kintrea 2007).

On a more structural level, the idea of area effects i.e. 'where you live affects your life chances', Slater (2013) argues, should be inverted so as to proffer the more realistic suggestion that instead, 'your life chances effect where you live' (p369). In considering this we need to bring in to focus those urban policy changes that have been instigated at a national level that have created these areas and constrained peoples choices, for example the changes in the labour market and subsequent skills shortage and housing policies like the Right to Buy. To create solutions then at a neighbourhood level as a solution to the problem is a short-sighted and simplistic policy response to a much broader structural issue. Drawing on Marxist urban theory, Slater contends that life chances are related explicitly to a history of capital accumulation and class struggle shaped by the markets ability to determine land value and thus peoples access to it. For Slater then, the inherent problem for people in deprived areas has been created by the state facilitation of private market speculation that we have seen occurring through neoliberal rationalities.

## 2.7 Urban Renaissance

Whilst the most deprived neighbourhoods were being dealt with through New Labour's NSNR, the fates of the other cities were to be tackled by the Urban Task Force (UTF)

established in 1998, led by architect Richard Rodgers. The UTF comprised of public and private sector experts and local working groups. The task was to identify the causes of decline in the urban environment and deliver housing for over 3 million new households; 60% of which should be built on unused brownfield sites (Punter 2011). The UTF's first publication in 1999 *Towards an Urban Renaissance* set out the government's renaissance vision for towns and cities. Its mission statement was for the UTF to "… identify causes of urban decline in England and recommend practical solutions to bring people back into our cities, towns and urban neighbourhoods" (Department for the Environment Transport and the Regions 1999).

Following on from this the government published its urban White Paper *Our Towns and Cities – The future: Delivering an urban renaissance,* setting out the strategy for achieving the UTFs recommendations. Whilst social inclusion was to be tackled primarily by the SEU, the renaissance agenda had clear socially inclusive aims which again centralised the role citizens and communities were intended to play (Punter 2011). The underlying goal was to transform cities via expert design and management which would create spaces that would provide all the necessary resources for good quality urban living. The goal was to reverse the declining populations and increase people's desire to live in inner cities, offering "a high quality of life and opportunity for all, not just the few" (Cullingworth & Nadin 2006: 373).

For critics like Butler and Robson (2001) both the Urban Task Force and the Urban White Paper gave the appearance of a 'gentrifiers' charter' (in Lees 2003: 70). Both these publications provide a call to bring people (middle-classes) back to the inner cities in order to reverse decline and increase affluence via upgrading the physical environment that produces exclusionary enclaves that many people cannot engage in on account of their lack of disposable income or cultural capital (Lees 2003). The strategies established in the UTF and Urban White Paper are less about improving the conditions for those in most need but about creating attractive urban spaces for those financially able to use them. The underlying logic is that this method and the associated social mixing of economically able groups would result in a trickle-down of social and economic benefits.

Working alongside this was a commitment to culture as part of a regeneration strategy. Culture was identified as a place-making selling point which emphasized the idea of creativity and diversity within a city. Securing investment for large-scale cultural developments in post-industrial spaces, like the Tate Modern in London, have been held up as good examples of entrepreneurial forms of governance (Miles & Paddison 2005). Designated cultural-quarters and arts based centres have become common features of urban regeneration, leading Dungey to argue that no city's regeneration plan is complete without one (in McCarthy 2005: 299).

However, whilst the 'cultural turn' in urban regeneration has been adopted fairly wholesale across redeveloping cities as a standardized regeneration tool, the success of such initiatives has been challenged, not only because the adoption of this as a strategy reduces its uniqueness as a cities selling point (McCarthy 2005). It has also been criticised for causing displacement of local residents from certain regenerated spaces and gentrifying inner city neighbourhoods. There have also been criticisms levelled at the eradication of local history within what can at times be quite sanitized and managed spaces (Evans 2009). Peck (2005) also argues that these developments generally rely on the 'trickle-down' mentality which very rarely materialises. He also argues that creative cities generate a division of labour through which local residents, if they achieve employment within these areas, are most likely to be employed in the service industry, servicing the 'creatives' and skilled sector workers.

## 2.8 Increasing Privatisation

Housing continued to be a focal point for urban policy under New Labour which continued the reduction of Council housing by committing to transfer to housing associations 200,000 Council homes a year (Hodkinson et al. 2013). The Spending Review in 2000 set the Decent Homes standard; criteria for which all social housing had to meet by 2010. Local Councils were offered 4 options to help them achieve this target: existing Housing Revenue Account budget; stock transfer to registered social landlords/housing associations; the Private Finance Initiative, in which effectively a private company make all the improvements and manage the stock for which the

Council pays a monthly fee; or Arms-Length Management Organisations (ALMO), which means additional resources are given to the Councils by the government if their services receive a good rating and if the management of the houses is delivered not by the Council but by a non-profit organisation (Lund 2006). All options reduced the Council ability to continue the ownership and management of Council housing itself and demonstrate a continued commitment to the increased private sector involvement to deliver public services. This was done most significantly through the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). PFIs allow the Council to retain ownership of housing stock, but enter in to a contract of between 25-30 years with a private firm who is responsible for the building and maintenance cost of that stock. The private partner agency funds the initial costs and receive monthly payments from the Council for services provided (Hodkinson 2011).

Whilst PFI schemes were intended to balance private investment intentions with the needs of local tenants, what materialised was the privileging of private investor desires (Hodkinson 2011). It also puts a large amount of publicly owned assets in to private hands and offers them the benefit of generating large amounts of profit from that public sector. The use of PFI is not constrained to housing but has been used in all areas of public policy including health, schools, infrastructure, prisons and fire stations to name a few. The PFI is effectively a public-private partnership in which swathes of public assets are contracted to the private sector who then charges the public sector to manage them. It locks the public sector in to long-term binding contracts which is beneficial to the private investor. But it is also a more secure development for the investor as the public sector still bears the risks as what is being produced is a public service (Raco 2015b).

## 2.9 Creating a market for housing

Low demand housing was identified under New Labour as a key driver in the decline of certain northern neighbourhoods. It was determined that both local and regional factors had affected housing demand, and thus it needed to be through locally driven efforts, rather than nationally prescribed interventions that would increase demand (Lee 2010). Nine areas were designated as pathfinders and were chosen due to low housing

demand, decreasing house prices and high vacancy rates. They contained nearly half of the 1% most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in England (Leather & Nevin 2013). The idea was to link the pathfinder area to the local market and city to create a flow of capital between the two, regenerating the pathfinder area and creating a housing market.

Housing Market Renewal (HMR) was a massive programme of house building. By 2010, the HMR programme had refurbished 82,000 homes, built 12,000 new homes, with land ready for a further 28,000 new builds and demolished 23,000 (Macleod & Johnstone 2012). Assessment of the success of HMR has been mixed. Whilst there have been evidence of success in HMR terms, for example better quality of housing stock, increased house prices in designated areas, evidence of greater community involvement, greater social mixing in neighbourhoods, job creation and better transport links to the city centres (Turcu 2012; Leather & Nevin 2013), there has also been severe criticism leveled at HMR. The predominant criticism is that HMR rebuilds areas of low demand for new incoming groups of people who could improve the identity and economy of a failing area, at the expense of existing groups whose needs were arguably marginalised. Cameron (2006) in his study of HMR in the North East of England concluded that the intention, rhetoric and discourse of HMR had shifted the goal away from improving the deprivation of existing residents to replacing the existing communities with those on higher incomes. Mass demolitions, it was argued, displaced the long term existing communities in favour of bringing in new, more affluent citizens (Atkinson 2008). This process challenged the government's plans of creating sustainable communities.

HMR relied heavily on compulsory purchase orders and demolitions. This, according to Macleod and Johnstone (2012) was '…a mode of governmentally choreographed displacement and 'symbolic violence' designed to remake the landscape in accordance with a privitized middle-class habitus' (p11). In their view, this symbolic violence comes from the dismantling of working class communities and their informal networks of support in order to create an economic market for, potentially, other groups of people to benefit from. Allen (2008), in his study of HMR in Liverpool, reiterates this class distinction. He states that working class residents are more likely to relate to houses as places to live, a practical solution to a life necessity; whereas middle class people may

be more likely to view houses as wealth accumulators and as a demonstration of social position. Allen argued that HMR has in effect consisted of the mass demolition of working class housing that is then sold to private developers who build new housing suited to the middle class house buyers who desire to live in the city. Housing markets thus become a mechanism through which certain social groups can be dominated by others (*ibid*).

This is further supported again by Macleod and Johnstone (2012), who argue that HMR is 'accumulation by dispossession', taking the term from David Harvey, who argues that "'accumulation by dispossession' lies at the core of urbanization under capitalism" (Harvey 2009: 326). It is the concentrating of wealth and power for the upper sections of society away from the lower and middle sections. It is the privatising of public assets by the powerful, which utilise them, once bought at low values, to redevelop and then profit from. Privatisation and deregulation opened up new markets for capital accumulation through speculative private finance, whilst at the same time the state redistributed wealth to these sections through reducing welfare and citizen rights (Harvey 2007). Macleod and Johnstone (2012) argue that this process is exemplified via the HMR. Here low demand areas were created through the absence of investment and declining economies. They were thus left to be devalued and then compulsorily bought by private agencies at low cost who then rebuild, reshape and rebrand the area in the interests of attracting new residents whilst simultaneously displacing the old residents.

## 2.10 Gentrification?

What the above criticisms allude to is the process of gentrification. Lees (2003) argues that the terms used by New Labour like 'Urban Renaissance', and similarly terms like 'urban regeneration' and 'urban sustainability' are all just other names for gentrification.

The promotion of 'place' has become crucial in a global competitive economy, where cities are reconstructed to sell their economic and consumer functions to investors and potential residents (Macleod 2011). This can involve completely reinventing the identity of a particular city, specifically for those areas that are seen as notoriously bad areas which suffer from what Wacquant (2007) calls 'territorial stigma'. The spaces are

transformed in to 'centres of spectacle' as their histories are recreated as places of entertainment. The image being promoted does not always correlate with the lived experience of most residents; however, the reimaging is not intended for the local communities, but for the potential incoming groups (Griffiths 1998). As Smith (2002) argues,

> "…it is not "people" in general who are to be brought "back into our cities"; this appeal is not aimed at Welsh coal miners, Bavarian farm workers, or Breton fisher folk. Rather, this appeal to bring people back into the city is always a self-interested appeal that the white middle and upper-middle classes retake control of the political and cultural economies as well as the geography of the largest cities" (p445).

Whether or not gentrification is a negative process has been widely debated. When Ruth Glass first coined the term gentrification in the 1960s it was to refer to the small scale process of middle class people buying houses in traditionally deprived working class areas and turning them in to middle class neighbourhoods (Atkinson 2003b). After this, critical analysis of the process highlighted the negative class implications of displacement of working class communities (Slater 2006). More recently, gentrification processes have been adopted into normalized urban policy processes that promote this style of regeneration as a positive. Under what Lees (2008) calls the 'emancipatory city thesis', the positives of gentrification lie in the social mixing of people from different backgrounds in cities that are seen as diverse and tolerant and share different cultural practices. This image of gentrification and the language used to promote it through policy, however, ignores the negative effects this creates.

Slater (2006) has asked why there are so few recent critical perspectives on gentrification, and identifies three main reasons. Firstly he argues that commentators have spent too long arguing over the precise definitions of gentrification and how they originated (e.g. economic or cultural demands) rather than analysing their affects. Secondly, he says that the issue of displacement has been removed from recent literature due to its difficulty in measurement. Where people have attempted to quantify displacement and found none, the conclusion is that it does not exist. However,

this ignores the possibility that people are not leaving the area because there are few reasonable alternatives and that some people are 'exclusionarily displaced' in that they may not be able to move in to the area due to increased prices. Thirdly, Slater reiterates the issue of language and terminology. Gentrification is dressed up as 'social mix', which has far less negative connotations attached to it. For Slater (2014) then, gentrification is a feature of false-choice urbanism, whereby councils are forced to choose between investments (gentrification) or continuing levels of decline. However, for Slater, in seeing gentrification as the alternative to decline we ignore the structural neoliberal capitalist logic that creates such declining spaces in the first place.

As the New Labour gvernment came to the end of its term it had left a legacy of spatially targeted regeneration strategies that had increased unevenness and disparity in equality. It had maintained a commitment to the neoliberal rationality which had begun under Thatcher's Conservative government. Whilst the government developed an approach to social inclusion, this approach reinforced a view of individual pathology which increased responsibility and self-reliance and reduced the notion of 'rights' as contingent on certain conditions. The physical landscape also changed massively. The inner cities continued to be transformed into leisure spaces of consumption attractive to creative types and affluent workers. Increased privatisation also saw the wholesale involvement of private capital within public services, reducing the public sector's financial ability to deliver these services otherwise. This increased the reliance on private professionals and practitioners to deliver regeneration. Whilst there were many criticisms levelled against New Labour's approach to regeneration, given the economic crisis of 2007 and the subsequent election of a Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition government, we may actually, as Southern (2013) suggests "look back and lament the golden years of regeneration under New Labour" (p400).

## 2.12 ConDem Government and the end of regeneration?

In 2010, the Conservative party and the Liberal Democrat party formed a coalition government, with a Conservative party majority led by David Cameron. Entering government after the global economic crisis of 2007-2008 and continuing the

conservative neoliberal ideology of reducing big government, the coalition set out to tackle the national deficit and decentralise power away from local government. They dismantled many of the programmes running under New Labour's Urban Renaissance banner through huge cuts to the Communities and Local Government Department, including the abolition of the HMR and Regional Development Agencies (Punter 2011). Primarily, the two main aims under the coalition government were localism and economic growth. The Coalition fundamentally changed the landscape of urban regeneration as a spatially targeted set of urban policies. There has been no specific regeneration policies created.

Under the coalition, the focus was on attracting and encouraging what had seen to become, post-economic crash, nervous private investors. Regeneration funding was reduced by two-thirds and as Pugalis and McGuinness (2013) declare under the coalition, "'for the first time in over forty years there are no area based initiatives targeted at the most deprived parts of England'" (p341). Investment and government, both local and central, were to be directed at places of growth; areas that were not necessarily territorially bounded but could display coherent economic potential. Under this, new spaces could be created that do not map on to any specific democratic jurisdiction. There was a wholesale shift from sites of need to sites of growth potential. This refocusing of regeneration funding was coupled with intense welfare cutbacks to local councils and government departments. Thus what we have seen emerging is what Peck (2012) has termed 'austerity urbanism'; urban policy under the conditions of extreme cuts to public spending. Under austerity urbanism, regeneration as the amelioration of deprivation at local spatial scales arguably no longer occurs (Goodchild & Hammond 2013).

The Localism Act 2011 set the policy of the Big Society agenda, the planned policy of giving communities and residents more local powers to make necessary decisions (Cabinet Office 2010). Within the Localism Act, community groups, private companies, third sector voluntary and charity groups and employee cooperatives were able to bid to take over the provision of public services, with potential funding from new resources such as the Big Society Bank and create Neighbourhood Development Plans through

locally created Neighbourhood Forums. One of the outcomes of this was the ability of local groups to sideline the role of local government in the process (Buser 2013). It has been argued, however, that this turn to localism and locally directed plans will be more successful in those areas of high social capital and more vulnerable areas may suffer as a result. The consequence of this is likely to be uneven policies which create uneven spatialities (Pugalis & Townsend 2013).

With regards to growth, the main developments have been a removal of grants and central government funding towards financial incentives that encourage local councils to deliver growth (Bailey et al. 2015). The Regional Growth Fund, Tax Increment Financing and Earn back models like City Deals all work on the basis that a local council will receive funding proportionate to the amount of growth that has been proven to be delivered. This growth funding is also dependent on the amount of private investment a local council can obtain. Essentially then what has been created is a 'payment by results' system of funding which encourages local councils to go after developments that are likely to generate the biggest returns (Waite et al. 2013). The implication here then is that the areas that will be the subject of investment will be those already most likely to deliver, rather than those areas that are underdeveloped or declining (Pugalis & McGuinness 2013). It also subjects the councils to increased levels of risk by investing in projects that it is hoped will pay off in the future and be making funding contingent on increasing growth which, as Longlands (2013) has argued, is not guaranteed to materialise and diverts attention away from those immediate social problems.

Another significant development under the coalition has been the creation of the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP), which are private business led partnerships with Councils. Their remit was to set the economic strategy for an economic area of their designation. The Regional Growth Fund was developed to allow LEPs and other partnership projects to compete for resources. Like previous funding initiatives, the bids had to show how the projects would increase the economic potential of an area. It was particularly directed towards areas with an over reliance on public sector labour markets (Deas 2012). The Regional growth Fund has created a direct pool of resources provided by central government towards private enterprise, with the last two rounds of funding only

being open to private business to apply for. LEPs were created with the intention that private business could unlock investment and enterprise that Local Authority planners were seen to prevent (Pugalis & Townsend 2013). This increasing involvement of private sector agents with planning and regeneration responsibility challenges the role of democratically accountable agents. It reduces the extent to which these decisions are based in democratic politics rather than technocratic forms of expert management. As Raco (2015b) has argued, these transformations are output focused; concerned only with delivering in the most efficient manner. Experts outline suggestions from which the democratic-elect have to choose. Operating under this framework the logic is often "'we don't need political debating, we need action!'" (Davidson & Iveson 2014: 4). This is characteristic of an 'austerity urbanism' in which it is deemed as though there are 'no alternatives' to the neoliberal growth agenda set out (Pugalis & McGuinness 2013).

## 2.13 Post-political policy

This 'no alternative' mantra has been characterised in recent urban policy literature as a move towards a post-political consensus. This refers to a process of depoliticising and has been the focus of recent academic literature centred around work most notably by Jacques Ranciere, Chantal Mouffe and Slavoj Zizek (Wilson & Swyngedouw 2015). The concept of depoliticisation is argued to be a consequence of the dominating but internally weakening form of democratic political life. Ranciere (2004) identified that with the collapse of the Soviet system, in conjunction with economic globalisation and the increase of identity politics there were renewed calls for a 'return of politics'. However what emerged was a conflating of democracy with the liberal economy. The need to manage the consequences of the global economy united the politics of both the right and the left, seeking a consensus over the mitigation of problems that would affect all party members equally on all sides. This consensus for Ranciere became 'the supreme democratic value' (2004:4). Consensus was promoted as the solution to conflict that emerged over differing ideologies. Consensus was necessary for the common good.

Historical battles of ideology that had once taken place over what makes a 'good' society, Wilson and Swyngedouw (2015) argue, have come to an end through this

consensual depoliticising. Democracy as a political democratic order has won out over other forms of political life. Democracy, for these authors, refers to the space given to the debate and consideration of a plurality of issues spanning from lifestyle concerns, environmental issues, parliamentary behaviours, people's rights and so on. All issues of public concern are now open to politicisation and discussion, giving rise to the notion that democracy as the preferred form of political life has been fully established. But what occurs in this consensual democracy is an uncontested politics of efficient technocratic managerialism.

## 2.14 Problematising consensus

Why do these authors, amongst others, frame consensus as a challenge to politics proper, or a depoliticisation? Metzger et al (2015) identify the emergence of such scholarship, loosely termed post-foundationalist, as taking place during the 1990's in response to what was at the time a reoccurring theme of 'the end of history' as predicted by Francis Fukayama. 'The end of history' for Fukayama occurred with the fall of the Berlin wall, signalling an end to a long standing battle between differing ideologies (Wilson and Swyngedouw 2015). This end of history coincided with the emergence of a non-adversarial form of Third Way politics as previously mentioned under Blair, which raised new questions about what politics actually is (Metzger et al 2015). It was during this redefining of politics that notions of post-politics and post-democracy emerged, most notably from Mouffe and Ranciere respectively, but also Zizek. These theorists sought to centralise dissensus, disagreement and antagonism as a fundamental necessity for the exercise of politics proper.

For Mouffe (2005), antagonism is constitutive of politics, and to attempt to remove antagonism and the option of conflicting alternatives is to remove proper political questions. These questions relate to the political differences that divide groups and offer political alternatives. As Mouffe argues, in our consensual approach to democracy problems or threats that society faces, which the 'common good' must tackle together, are treated as technical rather than political issues. They are solved by experts and technocrats rather than politically debated by opposing collectives. This, Mouffe

identified, is the consequence of a liberalism that is primarily individualising. This individualism 'forecloses acknowledging the nature of collective identities' (2005:10) and fails to recognise that a pluralistic society will harbour conflicting needs and interests that can in no way be reconciled under a consensual ensemble. It is because of this limitation that liberalism seeks to refute this antagonistic dimension of politics, promoting the individual as the central point of engagement.

Mouffe, drawing on Carl Schmitt, defines what she determines to be the difference between politics and the political. Politics, Mouffe argues, is the administrative, managerial and organisational role of the state in which order is established in society. The political, however, is the 'dimension of antagonism … constitutive of human societies' (2005:9). The political is a site of disagreement between groups in which a 'friend/enemy' or an 'us/them' divide takes place between collective identities. For Schmitt, the solution to the antagonism between groups which can erupt in to violent oppression is to exclude the other by whatever means. True consensus can only be achieved through exclusion and thus can never be truly inclusive (Schmitt in Mouffe 2005). Mouffe departs from Schmitt here and suggests that the 'we/they' relation can exist without being antagonistic and threatening. In fact the 'we/they' relation can exist in an agonistic form, where enemies are replaced with adversaries who have legitimate space to offer alternative political positions. This would allow dissenting voices genuine space in which to be heard and respected, even if not always agreed upon. For Mouffe, this would prevent the repression of difference which when denied emerges via alternative means, namely political apathy or violent expression (for example right-wing populism). It would also avoid the techno-managerial form of politics which seeks to close down the scope for genuine disagreement over necessary and fundamental political questions regarding how society should be.

Ranciere (1998), like Mouffe, identifies there is a difference between politics and the political, but adds a third dimension to the structure; the police. For Ranciere the police are the institutions that order and govern the social world. Our general understanding of politics, that being the procedures that govern our roles and place in society, is not politics for Ranciere, but a 'police order' that defines our doing, saying and acting as

either legitimate or not. It defines who is heard and who is marginalised, who is visible and who is invisible. It defines the part we play within the overall whole. Genuine politics, for Ranciere, only really emerges once this police order is broken and defined roles are transgressed. It is the emergence of true equality that challenges the logic of the police order. Politics only emerges when the logic of the police is confronted with the logic of equality by those who have no defined part in the overall whole (Wilson and Swyngedouw 2015). Power and politics are not the same thing. Power may be exercised but it may not in any way challenge the police order and thus is not proper politics. Ranciere uses the term post-democracy rather than post-politics. This post-democracy operates through disavowal, rather than repression as Mouffe argued (Wilson and Swyngedouw 2015). This disavowal allows the police order to acknowledge those who have no part, but in a way that allows their political subjectivity to be neutralised, as Dikeç (2005) argues,

> "…identifying 'the excluded' as the excluded is already to include 'them' in the whole; nothing escapes the police, especially 'the excluded'. And, once the excluded are identified as such, the possibility of politics is cancelled out at the outset; there is room merely for modifications in the police order, motivated either by a moral effort to 'include the excluded', or by a concern with the security of 'the included' threatened by the outside" (2005:177).

This disavowal emerges under conditions of a 'consensus'. Like Mouffe, Ranciere acknowledges that this consensus results not in consensus, but in violent expressions and identity politics in the form of an inarticulate expression of rage, for example riots.

For Mouffe, the key to political expression is an agnostic democracy and for Ranciere it is the eruption of those with no part. However, Zizek, another prominent post-political writer, argues that depoliticisation occurs, not through repression or disavowal but through a form of post-political foreclosure, in which 'old ideological divisions' are left behind in favour of expert knowledge and technocrats (2000: 198). Zizek's argument is that this foreclosure prevents the emergence of political subjects via the accepting and legitimising of individual claims by the dominant order, but never actually allowing these

claims to become universal; meaning they are never allowed to represent something more than themselves. This individualising process legitimises claims and wrongs, giving the appearance of democracy, but in reality it prevents groups forming to mount a genuine challenge. As Gill et al (2012) argue, "It is precisely by tolerating and accommodating each technical and individual demand that a generalised sense of wrong is never developed" (2012:4). For Dean (2009) the notion of post-politics is 'childishly petulant' (2009:23). She argues that the failure of politics is more a reflection of the failure of the Left to engage in politics. Drawing on Zizek, Dean (2015) argues that depoliticisation emerges from the inability to take something individual and make it stand for something universal. This, however, is something only the Left fail to do. The Right on the other hand are adept at taking individual groups and making them stand in for larger societal problems. The Left are failing in politicising issues because, as Dean claims, they have conceded to the Right in accepting capitalism as *the* economic strategy.

## 2.15 Post-political urban planning

What we might consider then is whether urban planning and the changes in urban regeneration can be understood through this post-political framework. Metzger et al (2015) suggest that the planning system began to operate under a post-political consensus based system during the dominant 1990's Third Way movement. As has been seen it was during this period of time in which the planning system began to draw heavily on governance rather than government and partnership as a short hand for the state and the market. It also drew on notions of the 'public interest' to denote economic growth that was promoted to also deliver social and environmental benefits for all (Metzger et al 2015). Planning is an inherently political task in that it seeks to develop how a territory should exist and develop. However, as these authors argue, it is also a form of 'policing' in the Ranciere sense, as it is about locking down and designating the usability of a space for the interests of a 'we'. The plans involved in planning restrict alternative optional uses of those very spaces and inevitably involve the exclusion of some other groups. And it is via these exclusions that we may see the emergence of a political subject who rises to challenge this dominate order. For Allmendinger and

Haughton (2012), discussions about the direction in which planning should be developed and how land should be used represent political spaces for contestations over what should be done and how. It is at these points that political democratic decision making can be practiced. However, under current commitments to neoliberal growth, dissensus and discussion is foreclosed and in its place is a consensus-based politics in which all sides of the political spectrum agree on the way forward, as though it is a fait accompli; a foreclosed progression. We can see how this has been gradually emerging over the course of this chapter. As alternative lines of opportunity and funding have been curtailed and local powers have been restricted, there are very few genuinely viable alternatives to handing over control to private interests in return for contingent central government loans.

Davidson and Iveson (2014) explain that the normalisation over time of the need for cities to be competitive, secure, global and creative result in the deferring to expert practitioners in order to attain these goals. There is little room or time to contest these internalised assumptions. Promoting consensus over dissensus is the linchpin of the post-political city. Being post-political then is about defining the problem and the solution. It is about creating replica sanitised and securitised spaces through which only certain voices or identities are expressed whilst others are removed. Reconfiguring the urban environment through the well-established and well duplicated regeneration tactics, Swyngedouw (2010) argues, is not a response to the inevitable neo-liberal economic order, but rather a conscious production of it, by creating the very existence of those neoliberal urban conditions. Post-political planning, Raco (2015a) argues, is about having efficient and 'output-centred' policies. The individualising process of capitalism and the modernising project of politics has promoted a 'Good Governance' agenda which operates under a consensus based logic of 'what matters is what works'. For Raco, "Delivery has replaced democracy as the core principle of Good Governance" (2015: 156). What this suggests is a form of democracy that assumes outcomes are more important to citizens than how decisions about those outcomes are reached.

Raco (2015) identifies four examples of strategic rationalities that indicate post-political governance. Firstly he argues, the decision making structures have become so imbued

with a multiplicity of actors and partnerships that it is difficult to ascribe accountability to any one body of actors. The structures and decision-making channels are far too complex for members of the public or other social groups to understand or challenge. Responsibilities are also spread between diverse groups of public and private actors and agencies, diffusing overall accountability, which is a deliberate strategy, Raco argues, rather than an unfortunate outcome of the process. Secondly, the discursive mobilisation of 'communities' as co-producers of policy, as seen with the New Deal for Communities, are actually structured in ways that limited community engagement in any meaningful manner. These communities are allowed to engage if they can do so in a professional and business-like way, which supports the strategies of the policy process. This can serve to limit any competing views or challenges to established ways of doing things. Thirdly, experts are promoted as the ultimate decision makers, highlighting their objective non-political nature as a preference to political debate. Fourthly, the political dimensions of temporality in relation to decision-making can be utilised to reduce dissent and narrow the scope for democratic engagement. Public consultation periods can be relatively short, minimising the scope for conflict. On the other hand, long term contracts with private organisations to deliver public services can limit the ability of the public to make changes to those services. These long-term contracts may solidify what Raco has termed a 'post-political rigidity' (2015b: 35). Raco uses this term to describe the increasing prominence of contractual governance, in which government departments and local authorities enter into long term contracts with private sector partners to deliver services. The nature of these contracts results in the public sector being unable to change policies or divert from the course of action already set. It is a process which serves to 'lock out' politics for the duration of its lifecycle (ibid: 35).

These rationalities speak to what Swyngedouw refers to as a 'depoliticised urban populism' (2010: 9). Under this condition which is argued to be a symptom of a post-political consensus, all citizens are expressed as potentially under threat from urban problems, for example non-competitiveness or globalisation. It is this populism that speaks across ideological differences, promoting a commonality and restricting parochial interests. For example, low demand low value housing effects all within that geographically located market. This populism ushers in urgency for immediate action to

resolve these commonly shared problems. However, as Davidson and Iveson argued, democratic decision making is being reduced to the 'constant invocation of necessity' (2014: 1). The necessity to act quickly and with urgency to withstand external threats, such as the loss of mobile capital, restricts the ability to exercise considered democratic decision making. Urgent action always takes precedence. The need to be a competitive city in order to attract investment is the paradigmatic case of a 'post-political' urban governance according to Davidson and Iveson (2014). These ideas are taken as fact and reproduced through the cities that accept them. The result is a situation in which agreement over these necessities forecloses dissensus or democratic challenges to their legitimacy, as Davidson and Iveson argue,

> "To attract developers, land-use controls must be relaxed. To attract employers, labour markets must be more flexible. To attract investors, infrastructure must be privatized. To attract skilled workers, certain facilities must be provided. The corollary is that anyone who complains about such measures is putting their own parochial interests ahead of the city's interests" (2014: 3)

The extent to which most cities in the UK have bought into this neoliberal logic about the development of the urban reinforces Margaret Thatcher's 'there is no alternative' mantra (Deas 2013). Political debate about how the future should look is being replaced by technocratic decision-making around how it will look. Representative democratic actors are said to have been replaced by non-representative practitioners and consultants who can navigate the best course of action utilising market-led solutions. A neoliberal capitalist economic future is thus expressed as an inevitability (Swyngedouw 2010). Drawing on Rancière, Davidson and Iveson (2014) argue that in the context of necessity the power of a democratic institution to govern becomes justified through the articulation of its own impotence, in other words, its actions are necessitated by its inability to act otherwise,

> "At the end of the day, proof of the right of the state power is identical to the evidence that it only ever does the only thing possible, only ever what is required by strict necessity in the context of the growing

intricacy of economies within the global market. The legitimacy of state power is thereby reinforced by the very affirmation of its impotence, of its lack of choice faced with the world-wide necessity it is dominated by" (Rancière cited in Davidson and Iveson 2014: 2).

Within urban policy, the contemporary objective is securing economic growth and the necessity and commitment to this objective is the most prominent form of post-political consensus. This has been made increasingly central to urban development through both the Coalition and the subsequent Conservative government policies (Deas, 2012). Under urban regeneration, politics proper can only appear when a subject emerges to challenge and undermine the singular vision that has been established in planning frameworks which determines how regeneration will take place and in whose interest. Regeneration is post-political when these challenges are reduced to noise or explained away as resistant to change, provincial, and misunderstanding (Baeten 2009). As Deas (2012) has argued, policies like the Localism Act introduces the possibility of involvement from a range of local actors and third sector groups in the decision making process and a devolution of power to the local area. This could give rise to legitimate forms of conflict in which different views have space to be heard. However, as he also argues, the reduction of available funding for local groups, the entrenched commitment to economic growth, and the simultaneous establishment of Local Enterprise Partnerships and the governments Growth funds may actually serve to foreclose any meaningful form of local intervention (Deas 2012). For Allmendinger and Haughton (2015), this localism and Big Society form of urban planning is a 'divide and rule' tactic that is both simultaneously centralising and decentralising (2015: 34). An 'illusion' of local choice is maintained so long as those choices operate within a growth agenda, as the authors argue, "a neighbourhood can determine where development will go, not whether there should be development" (2015: 34).

However, some authors warn of the danger of utilising the notion of post-politics as a consistent and hegemonic form and disregarding its more nuanced appearances (Johnstone 2014). Writers such as Davidson and Iveson (2014) argue that we need to be aware that in identifying post-political conditions we are not simply reinforcing this

view, adding to the notion that there is no alternative. As Bylund (2012) argues, there is a potential irony emerging in which 'the genre of post-political diagnosis is itself at risk of attracting a post-political condition" (2012: 3). It may be that our use of the term 'post-political' serves to limit our potential critique of politics within planning. Following on from Allmendinger and Haughton (2015) the use of the term post-political within this thesis is not to usher in a post-political condition but to draw on its analytical potential in which to highlight and critique strategies that serve to challenge or displace the existence of politics within planning in Salford. It is to enable a discussion of the complexities of spatial planning and urban regeneration within this specific context. As Allmendinger and Haughton (2010) argue,

> "...the postpolitical condition and the practices of spatial planning are far from being a monolithic force: rather, the practices and discourses of spatial planning have evolved over time and taken on different complexions in different parts of the country, creating the context for diverse understandings and evolving practices" (2010: 804).

## 2.16 Conclusion

The urban changes over time documented in this chapter have led to the formation of a new urban policy, in which entrepreneurial forms of governance increasingly prioritise the economic goals of development over their social necessities. Public and private partnerships work together to target urban development on specific places; marketing their competitive potential to regional, international and even global audiences (Swyngedouw et al. 2002). Rather than a withdrawal of the state, as pure neoliberalism would suggest, the state has restructured itself to actively engage and drive the new urban policy. The UK government has implemented policies which force competition between cities, has provided incentives for private investment and businesses through economic policies and has opened up new markets for capital accumulation. Simultaneously the state has been instrumental in defining the 'problem' of the city as one of dependency and a lack of personal responsibility, which a free market economy

would solve. This has allowed for the neglect of the structural causes of the declining city and the rolling back of welfare (MacLeod et al. 2003).

The desire to move people back to the city and the prioritising of economic needs over social needs has resulted in issues of gentrification and displacement. Gentrification, whilst never explicitly called such within policies, can now be seen as an urban strategy undertaken by most, if not all, city leaders (Smith 2002). This neoliberal blueprint of regeneration can be seen occurring in replica fashion in most postindustrial cities; ubiquitous and similar despite their respective differences. Waterfront developments, cultural quarters and large scale shopping centres are characteristic of these changes and, as Swyngedouw (2010) remarks, each reader will be able to generate a list of their own favourites. This regeneration strategy has correlated simultaneously with increasing forms of policing and control designed to sanitise these environments for their new users, focusing on anti-social behaviours and quality of life issues, and expressing signs of a revanchist and aggressive mentality (Smith 1996).

Whilst there are documentations of resistance at both a local and national level to these changes, they do bear the hallmarks of what can be defined as a post-political consensus. Each urban area is forced to compete for reduced levels of government grants and mobile capital that generates this neoliberal order by making one city the winner and another the loser within this 'jungle law' (Peck & Tickell 1994). Thus it is a capitalist policy response to the problems caused by capital in the first instance, and thus is stuck within this capitalist logic (Pugalis & McGuinness 2013). The intensification of a growth agenda in an era of 'austerity urbanism' looks likely to increase uneven spatial development as areas struggling for, or left partially developed by, previous rounds of capital will be overlooked in favour of areas with growth potential that can generate even more scarce sources of funding.

The next chapter will explore these how these changes in UK urban policy have materialised in a specific British city. Salford is a city in the North West of England. It is adjacent to Manchester, which has become one of the most important cities to the English economy, and has seen the largest growth outside London in the last ten years. Salford is roughly half the size of Manchester and has much less economic might.

According to its own documentation it is a city 'punching above its weight' (Salford City Council 2013d). However, recent urban developments have seen Salford acquire a much stronger position, both economically and politically. The outcome of this is that Salford Council now has to balance the needs of increased competition with entrenched levels of deprivation.

# 3. An urban history of Salford

What was described in the previous chapter took a national overarching picture of urban policy. What I want to consider in this chapter is the local variations that these national policy and programmes have taken. As MacLeod et al (2003) argue, urban politics do not diffuse 'blanket-like' across all terrain, but emerges in accordance with the locally specific economic, political and physical context in which they are articulated (p1658). For this thesis I am interested in looking at the local context of Salford, or more specifically, Central Salford. Salford is located in the North West of England, within Greater Manchester which comprises of 10 Local Authority areas. It is situated next to Manchester City Centre to the West, just over the river Irwell which runs between the two cities. Salford is only half the size of neighbouring Manchester with less economic success and high levels of deprivation and unemployment. However it has recently found itself in a strategically strong position in which parts of the City have become central to the development of not only the City Region, but the wider North West generally, and moving towards gaining international recognition. The development of MediaCity UK in Salford Quays (SQ) and the relocation of parts of the BBC there in 2011 is promoted as Salford's flagship development.

Salford has historically taken second place to neighbouring Manchester, with long standing conflict between the respective councils in competition for funding (Carley et al. 2000). However, more recently Salford Council has embraced entrepreneurial forms of governance, including  partnership working with Manchester City Council, other public agencies and private investors to ensure the securing of significant regeneration funding streams; and by taking the lead in major regeneration programmes (Robson 2002). The success of this has put Salford on the investment map, even out-bidding Manchester for the BBC relocation. However, industrial decline over recent years has resulted in high levels of deprivation across the city, having a negative effect on the life chances of many Salford residents. The large amount of regeneration in Salford, particularly Central Salford, is intended to benefit all residents, through job creation and trickle-down economics. However, there are emerging signs of gentrification practices, community disaffection and conflict over space (Jeffery & Jackson 2012). What this

chapter intends to do is present a case study of the City of Salford and the urban regeneration that has taken place up to this point. I will explore how the national urban reform programmes discussed in the previous chapter have taken form in this city, how it has impacted the decision making of the local government and the effects this may have on the lived experiences of the residents. This chapter is based on desk research and is a survey of the relevant documentation and publications that relate to my field of analysis. It can be considered as a 'first chronology' or 'first reading of events' (Hajer 2006: 73) before I move on to the empirical data that I collected as part of this research.

## 3.1 Industrial beginnings

Salford City has had a history of rapid industrialisation coupled with radical labour movements. Industrialisation in the 19$^{th}$ century saw Salford grow from being a small town of farmers and textile producers, to one of the greatest cotton towns in England. The advancements in steam power and machinery drew people in to work in the newly built factories. Vast numbers of terraced housing were erected nearby the factories to accommodate the expanding labour population flocking to the area for employment. The move to steam power increased the pace of industrial growth and in 1816 there were a reported 86 steam powered factories across Salford and Manchester (Clarke & Cochrane 2013). The construction of the Liverpool to Manchester railway in 1830 and the increasingly sophisticated canal networks increased Salford's industrial capacity and also increased its necessary workforce (Nevell 2008). Industrialisation and the increased population created poor living conditions for many of Salford's residents. This was vividly highlighted in Engels' book, The Conditions of the working Class in England;

> "The traveller crossing this viaduct can still look down on plenty of dirt
> and poverty. If he takes the trouble to go through these alleyways and
> peer through the open doors and windows into the houses and cellars
> he can satisfy himself time and time again that the Salford workers of
> Salford inhabit dwellings in which it is impossible to live in either
> cleanliness or comfort" (1971: 74).

Engels' work in the Conditions of the Working Class was to present a Marxist critique of industrial capitalism. He was keen to emphasise the conditions that this order created and the increasingly uneven spatialisation between the working classes and the bourgeoisie. But what he also served to do in this account was create an image of Salford and its levels of deprivation that is still drawn on and resonates to this day. This is an image that, as we shall see, has stayed with Salford challenging its efforts at renewal.

The economic depression in the latter half of the nineteenth century and the increasing costs of importing goods to transfer by rail had negative impacts on the local workforce. The solution was to petition parliament for the creation of a ship canal directly in to Manchester and Salford (Williams et al. 2010). The ship canal was opened in 1894 by Queen Victoria and it brought much needed employment to the Salford area. After 7 years of building, many men got full time stable jobs working on the Salford docks, which became the 3rd busiest port in England (Struthers 2003). However, after the First World War and the subsequent Wall Street Crash in October 1929, unemployment soon rocketed to unprecedented levels. In this crisis, not unlike the one just experienced in 2008, the deficit was such that the government, in arguably protecting the interests of capital, slashed wages for the public sector workers and cut unemployment benefit, along with many other welfare programmes (Castles 2010).

As advancements in technology and changes in trade occurred, deindustrialisation took hold and the Salford docks became less beneficial to the economy. The knock on effect from this was that increasing numbers of local manufacturing businesses closed, raising levels of unemployment even further (Bullock 1998). The housing erected so quickly and cheaply during the industrial boom soon began to decline. People once again were living in poor conditions of damp and cold. Slum clearance programmes were undertaken in the area during the late 1960s replacing terrace housing with high-rise flats and maisonettes. One of the most famous writings about Salford during this period is in the work of Robert Roberts (1973) in *The Classic Slum*. In this text, Roberts promotes the notion of working class solidarity and community spirit argued to exist strongly in these working class neighbourhoods but challenged by the slum clearance programmes.

When the docks finally closed in 1982, unemployment in Ordsall, where the docks are located, increased to 32%. This was followed by an increasing crime rate and the 1991 Salford riots (Henderson et al. 2007). Following deindustrialisation were the neoliberal reforms highlighted in the previous chapter. These reforms encouraged a free market economy, which was to be directed by consumer preferences, making them more efficient and diversifying the range of consumption products. These changes are particularly important for a city like Salford, given its once strong industrial community base, and there is evidence of this insecurity amongst residents. The labour market in the area has changed drastically over the preceding decade. Manufacturing and elementary employees now make up the bulk of the unemployed in Salford and the emerging jobs in the area are in the knowledge based industry. This has created a significant skills gap in the area, characterised by above average levels of unemployment (Manchester Independent Economic Review 2009). The Local Authority solution to this has centred on training programmes and aspiration building, echoing the neoliberal responsibilisation approach (Raco 2009). The changing economy in Salford has brought new residents to regenerated and newly build areas, which has created antagonism amongst locals. Expressions of general dissatisfaction, feelings of loss, a lack of ontological security and a sense of powerlessness have been documented in previous academic research due to the area changes (See Walklate & Evans 1999). There is also evidence of struggles over space and belonging in the newly built leisure and consumption areas (Minton 2009). These themes will be explored in the remainder of the chapter.

## 3.2 Demographics of Salford[1]

According to the latest census data in 2011, Salford holds 233,933 residents, which is under half the number of residents in neighbouring Manchester (503,127). This is 8.7% of the wider Greater Manchester total population and is the 5th most populated of the

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[1] The data in this section relating to Salford as a percentage of Greater Manchester and the ethnic composition of Salford residents has been aggregated by the author from the ONS census data 2011

10 Local Authorities (Office for National Statistics 2011). There is a mix of housing tenure in Salford. Half of all residents are homeowners, which is lower than the North West (NW) average of 64.5% and the England average of 63.4%. There is also a much higher than average rate of social housing in Salford, with 17.8% renting from the Local Authority (compared to a NW average of 7.7% and an England average of 9.4%) and 11% in Housing Association or Registered Social Landlord housing (compared to a NW average of 10.6% and an England average of 8.3%). The unemployment rate for Salford residents is slightly higher again when compared to the NW and England, with 5.2% unemployed compared to 4.7% and 4.4% respectively, with unemployment rates being higher for male residents than female. The ethnic composition of Salford is majoritively White (90.1%), which is similar to the NW ethnic composition (90.2%), but higher than the England average (85.4%) (*ibid*).

Salford is ranked in the top twenty Local Authorities in England in 2010 which contains the highest proportion of most deprived areas (33%) (Department for Communities and Local Government 2011). Unsurprisingly, the health rate in Salford is poorer than UK average, with more people reporting bad or very bad health. Life expectancy for Salford residents at birth is lower than average. Between 2008-2010, the average life expectancy for males in Salford was 4 years below the England average and for females it was 3 years below (ONS, 2011b). 56.7% of people in Salford live below the England household income average (£36,009). The mode income in Salford is only £12,500 and 17.5% of people are claiming out of work benefit. This is much higher than the national average of 12.1% (Salford City Partnership 2012d).

## 3.3 Uneven Salford
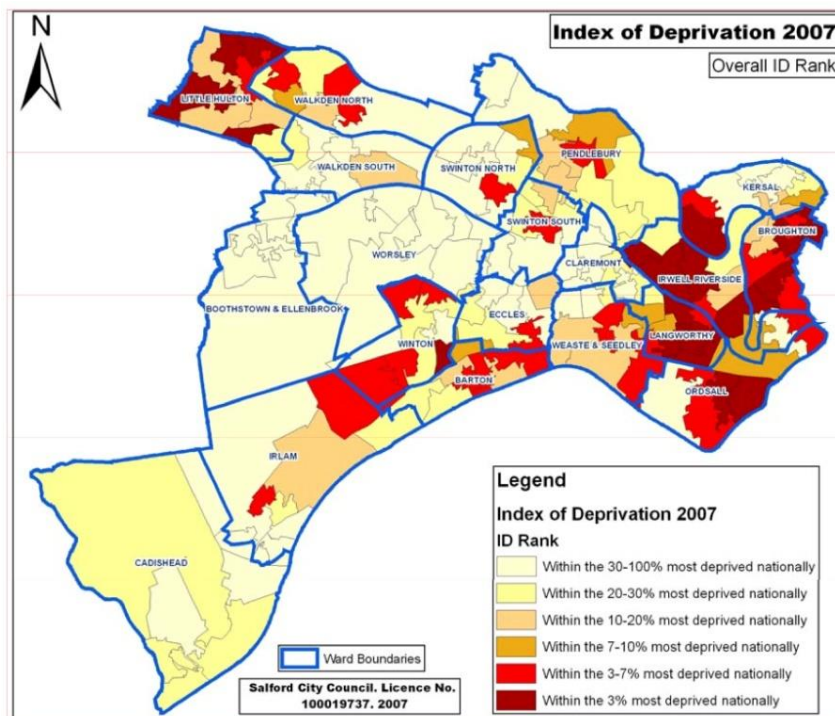


*Figure 8: Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007. Source - Salford City Council.*

Within Salford, the demographics vary considerably, from areas of significant poverty to areas of significant wealth (figure 8). Salford City is made up of 8 Neighbourhoods (figure 9) which cover 20 wards. To the west of Salford exist some affluent wards, with the more deprived being those closest to Manchester, in the Central Salford locality. Central Salford consists of the seven wards of Ordsall, Broughton, Kersal, Irwell Riverside, Langworthy, Claremont and Weaste and Seedley and is the area which has been designated as key to the revival of the wider Salford economy (Central Salford Urban Regeneration Company 2006: 8). Worsley and Boothstown are the most prosperous of the Salford neighbourhoods and the only neighbourhood with all Conservative elected Councillors. It is amongst the 70% least deprived areas in England. It borders the Bridgewater canal and has a large proportion of Green land. 97% of the area is private homeownership, and the houses in this area are the highest price in Salford, with an average house price of £239,051 (Salford City Partnership 2012c). The median household income for Worsley and Boothstown in 2012 was £43,562 (the mean household income being £50,608) (Salford City Partnership 2012f).
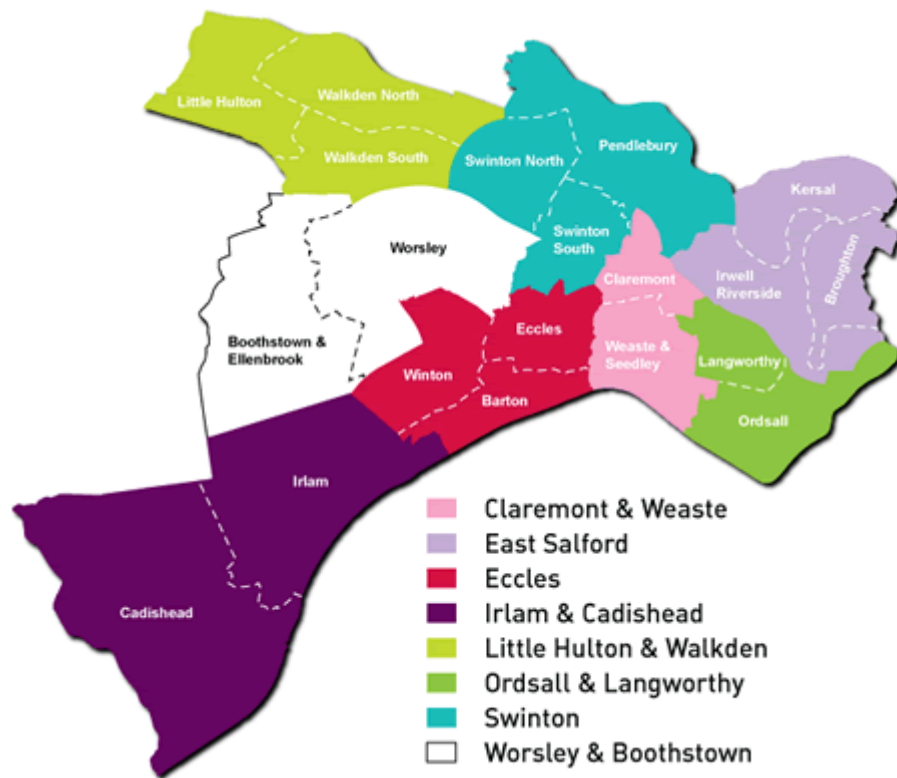
*Figure 9: Map showing Salford neighbourhoods. Source - Salford City Partnership, 2010*

Worsley and Boothstown compare drastically to the more deprived neighbourhoods in Salford, particularly East Salford and Ordsall and Langworthy. Both neighbourhoods border Manchester City Centre and are within Central Salford. Central Salford is locally referred to as 'Old Salford', distinguishing it from the more westerly wards which became part of the City area at a later date (Walklate & Evans 1999). The East Salford neighbourhood comprises of Broughton, Irwell Riverside and Kersal. It has seen a considerable population increase over the last 10 years, and comprises a larger than Salford average of people aged 20-29, a group which has increased 36% in the last 10 years. It is predicted that the population will increase a further 25% over the next 20 years (Salford City Partnership 2012g). However, income levels are low. The median household income in 2012 was £21,146 with the most occurring household income being £12,500, demonstrating the disparity within this space. Health is below both national and Salford average for people in the East Salford neighbourhood, and whilst there are variations within the neighbourhood, there are areas where the life expectancy of residents is 10.3 years lower than the national average (Salford City Partnership 2012a). This is a considerable difference in health, especially when

compared to the Worsley and Boothstown area within the same city which has an average life expectancy of 2 years above the national average, representing a 12 year difference in life expectancy within the same city, a distance of less than 10 miles.

The Ordsall and Langworthy neighbourhood are particularly interesting neighbourhoods in Salford. There are considerable regeneration efforts on going in this area and have been on-going for several years. Ordsall is home to SQ a residential, tourist, leisure and consumption space, which also now includes MediaCityUK, a dedicated creative and media business and residential space. SQ has been Salford's main regeneration project and its biggest economic driver. However, Ordsall and Langworthy remain significantly deprived, with Langworthy being the site of the recent 2011 UK riots (Jeffery and Jackson 2012). In terms of income the figures are starkly different for the 2 wards, with Langworthy having a median household income of £19,435 and Ordsall having a median household income of £30,479. This figure for Ordsall is undoubtedly increased by those residents living in the more affluent SQ area, as the mode income for Ordsall in general is actually only £17,500 (Salford City Partnership 2012e). This shows the differing economic prospects of the new SQ residents compared to the rest of Ordsall. 39% of housing in this neighbourhood is social housing and the area has long waiting lists for vacancies. Conversely, the area has the highest rental market in Salford at the second highest rent levels. The majority of these are again the new developments in the SQ area (Salford City Partnership 2012b).

As the below figure shows, there are levels of extreme deprivation in Ordsall, situated immediately adjacent to areas of considerable affluence (figure 10). The area of least deprivation in Ordsall is the SQ development. The other more deprived areas that neighbour it are the local residential spaces. Figure 10 also shows deprivation in Langworthy. Again, the least deprived area here is the Chapel Street area which houses the University of Salford but has also been subject to concentrated regeneration efforts.
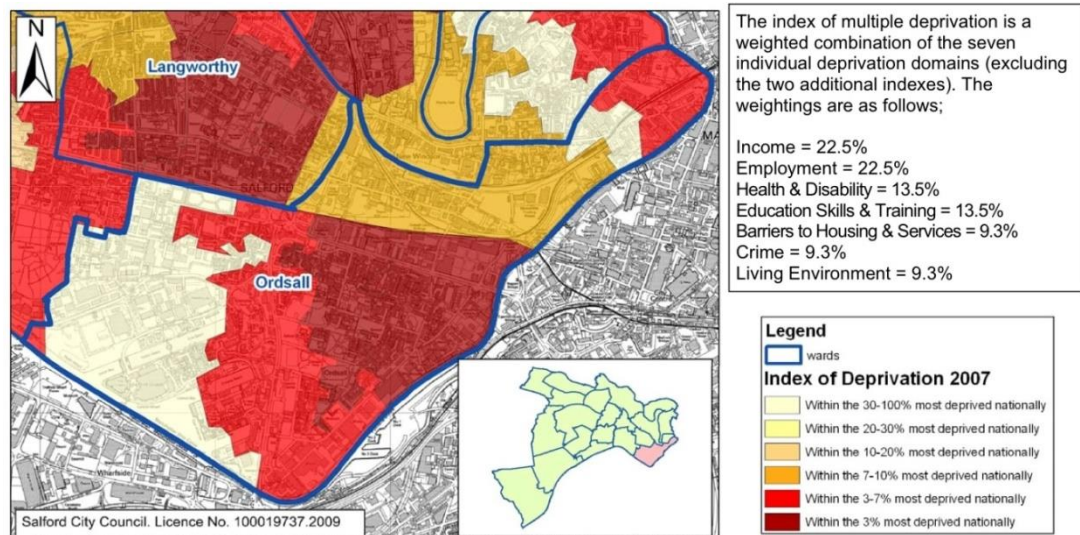
*Figure 10: Index of Multiple Deprivation for Ordsall 2007. Source - Salford City Council*

Between 2001-2010, Ordsall has seen an incredible population increase of 72.6%, which is an increase of 4,892 people in to the area. Over 60% of this increase (3,307 people) was between 2007-2010 alone (Salford City Council 2012g). The nearest to this of any other of the wards in Salford is the Irwell Riverside with an increase of 13.13%, demonstrating the disproportionate level of in migration to the area. Interestingly, Langworthy saw the biggest population decrease (6.7%) of all Salford wards during the same time period, caused by mass demolitions as part of the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder project in that area (1912 demolitions) (*ibid*). These regeneration projects will have changed the face of the local landscape for existing residents considerably.

What can be seen then in these demographics are uneven levels of affluence and deprivation both across the conurbation but also within local wards. Some of the changes in population as a result of the regeneration initiatives that have taken place have increased these disparities and resulted in a much more proximal unevenness, with sites of relative affluence next door to sites of deprivation, especially in Ordsall and Langworthy.

## 3.4 The move to entrepreneurialism

Despite the continuing high levels of deprivation in these areas, Salford has seen significant amounts of regeneration over the past three decades and has been successful

in receiving many of the regeneration funding streams mentioned in the previous chapter, including the Single Regeneration Budget from rounds 1,2,3 and 5, New Deal for Communities funding and the Housing Market Renewal pathfinders programme (Central Salford Urban Regeneration Company 2006). Salford Council has arguably embraced the task of securing funding to regenerate the area. It has been reported that many Labour controlled councils initially rejected entrepreneurial forms of governance and the involvement of private interest groups, with Manchester City Council being one of them (Quilley 1999).

However, Salford, also a Labour constituency, welcomed private sector involvement, so long as the Council was not subject to an Urban Development Corporation described in the previous chapter (Barlow 1995). The differing responses of Salford and Manchester reportedly worked in Salford's favour when bidding for funding (Henderson et al. 2007). Salford established its own regeneration partnership in 1994 called the Salford Partnership. Bringing together public and private interests, the Partnership was to consolidate and organise regeneration efforts, but with Council leadership. It was through the Partnership that bids were created and presented. Over time the partnership became more business-like, with contracts being developed, although not legally binding, through which all partners agree and commit to set aims (Carley et al. 2000). This demonstrates how Salford Council began to engage with the entrepreneurial style of governance mentioned in the previous chapter, where partnership working and private investment work together in an attempt to upgrade the city.

## 3.5 Housing Renewal and New Deals

Central Salford has been the focus of most of Salford Council's regeneration efforts. Its flagship developments sit on the SQ site in Ordsall. Improving the housing in the surrounding areas has thus been key for Salford Council. The New Deal for Communities (NDC) funding was secured to address neighbourhood decline in several Central Salford wards. £59 million was secured in 2001 to regenerate a significantly deprived area spanning the boundary between the Irwell Riverside and Kersal wards. At the time the NDC was established, the area comprised of over 50% social rented housing. As

mentioned in the previous chapter, the aim of the NDC was to draw on assumed strong community ties, social capital and individual responsibility to achieve the success of the project (Wallace 2007). The idea was that the active community would rehabilitate the disengaged or anti-social members in to the normative community way of living. Official Evaluation reports of Salford's NDC programme demonstrated improvements in quality of life areas, for example satisfaction with the area, increased feelings of safety and lower perceptions of crime and dereliction, but not of economic or market based outcomes such as jobs or education (Batty et al. 2010).

Wallace (2007) conducted a study of the Salford NDC and challenged the very concept of strong and active communities. He identified varying levels of conflict within the communities themselves. Young people felt over policed in the area, especially due to the increased policing initiative as part of the NDC, whereas older people felt under policed. Contentions over space occurred, with verbal support for certain initiatives, such as youth centres, but refusal from residents to have them within close proximity to their homes. Thus, Wallace argues, a singular community voice was not identified. There was also conflict between groups of residents seen as incomers and those seen as existing residents, for example, tension arose between the resident social housing tenants and the incoming home owners. The enforcement of social mixing that the NDC encouraged actually served to increase self-segregation; demonstrating that the existence of a community has to involve more than simple proximity.

Salford was one of 9 areas to also receive the Housing Market Renewal (HMR) programme funding initiated under the New Labour government, to bring a housing market back in to low demand areas in the North of England under its Sustainable Communities programme (Leather & Nevin 2013). Working in conjunction with Manchester, the Salford HMR programme covered Broughton, Ordsall, Langworthy, Irwell riverside and the inner most parts of Kersal, Claremomt and Seedly. The areas selected all surround Manchester city centre, presumably to support the increasing growth which this area has seen (figure 11) (Audit Comission 2010). Under HMR, Broughton (split in to Lower and Higher Broughton) was classified as a major intervention area, in which a larger proportion of funds were directed.
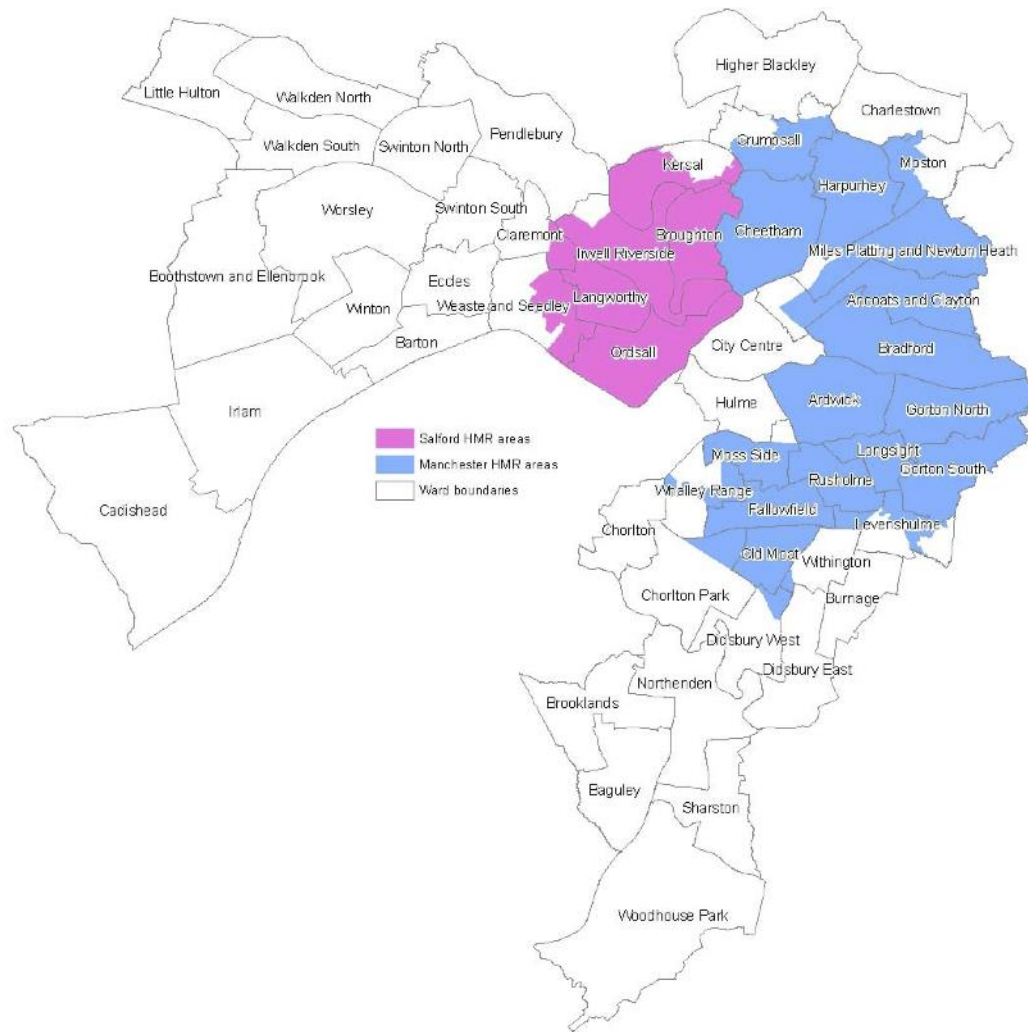
*Figure 11: HMR pathfinder in Salford and Manchester. Source - Audit Commission, 2010*

In Broughton, 1250 homes were demolished under the HMR process and 933 were built. In addition to this was the improvement works on 592 properties (Audit Comission 2010). In Lower Broughton, only a third of the new build properties were purchased by existing residents, the rest being from external areas. Undoubtedly this regeneration work has contributed to the population increase in the area over the last 10 years. Broughton has also seen the highest house price increase of all the Salford wards over the last ten years. For houses this increase was over 100% and for apartments it was over 500%. In 2010 in had the highest house price to income ratio (7.3) against a Salford average of 4.4 (Salford City Council 2012g). These statistics indicate the scale of change occurring in this area, and the affordability issues for local residents that this has created.

The impact of HMR on local communities has been significant. Large scale demolition has displaced and disrupted many community networks, leaving people in empty and derelict areas or displaced to elsewhere (Power & Houghton 2007). Increased house prices have meant many evicted residents are unable to return to their streets having been priced out. There have also been considerable local media reports of local people being forcibly evicted, periods of stress and the loss of community (The Salford Star 2010b). According to the Audit Commissions strategic review of the project in Salford, unemployment has actually increased and house prices have remained low (Audit Comission 2010: 9)

## 3.6 Development of Salford Quays

The SQ development has been the most significant of all the Salford developments. Salford Council purchased the majority of Salford docks in 1983, with the other part going to private business (Walklate & Evans 1999). This satisfied the government of the time's desire to use Brownfield sites as areas for priority regeneration. From the Council's own admission, there was uncertainty as to what could be done with the dock area, so architects who had previously worked on transforming the London Docks were commissioned to generate a plan for the area. The main aim of the plan was to transform the area so as to "...attract investment and activity of a different kind" (Salford City Council 1990: 8). The environment was to be improved, particularly the water ways which had suffered when the docks were still in use. The water feature of the area was central to the vision of the now named SQ (SQ) development. Housing was also another key initiative, particularly private build dwellings for home ownership. The SQ development was intended to change the class structure of Salford. The Council wanted a new identity for the city, a move away from the manufacturing industry of the old docklands (Henderson et al. 2007). New jobs were a necessity for the area due to mass unemployment but there was also recognition of needing to attract people with a different skills base to the traditional manufacturing industry of the area (Salford City Council 1990).

The docks area was to be transformed into an area where people could not only live but also work, socialise, spend leisure time and consume, recreating the ideal of inner city living. The allocation of an Enterprise Zone to cover a large proportion of the docks area encouraged businesses to relocate to the area. The economic downturn during the early 1990s saw interest and development in the area slow. The Council then decided to forge ahead with an earlier idea of creating a Centre for Performing Arts, which was granted funding from the Lottery Millennium Funding (Henderson et al. 2007). The vision was transformed into the Lowry Centre which was opened in 2000. Its opening production was the Paris Opera Ballet, symbolically signifying the intended cultural capital of the project (Struthers 2003). What can be seen here is the adoption of the creative turn in urban regeneration, delivering a flagship cultural product.

The Lowry project was important to the development of Salford, particularly promoting SQ as a new centre for investment. The centre consisted of The Lowry building, the Lowry Outlet Mall, the plaza, a Digital World Centre (state of the art facilities for business and enterprise) and the Lowry footbridge (linking to neighbouring Trafford and the Imperial War Museum (Salford City Council 2008a). The area was transformed, consisting of office spaces, new housing/apartments and new leisure facilities, featuring 2 theatres, an art gallery, cafes, bars, restaurants and an indoor shopping centre (which in itself hosts a swimming pool, private gymnasium and a multiplex cinema). The regeneration of SQ has put Salford on the map with regards to economic development and appears to be Salford Council's proudest achievement; as Assistant Mayor Derek Antrobus stated "It is no exaggeration to say that what has been achieved at SQ represents one of the most extraordinary examples of regeneration that the UK has ever witnessed" (*ibid*).

The SQ development, led by Salford Council has exemplified the shift from Managerial to Entrepreneurial governance identified by Harvey (1989). The Council has embraced partnership working with private investors to deliver the changes at SQ. The Council created an Urban Regeneration Company in 2005, led by private business professionals, to take on the delivery of the project and lead on the negotiations with other private developers. The development can be seen as speculative in that its success was

unknown at the time. Most significantly and in relation to Harvey's thesis, the SQ development was placed based rather than territorially focused. Its intended benefits were to move beyond just Salford. The site now is seen to give Salford the competitive edge over other cities in England. However, research has suggested that these changes, whilst successful with regards to economic development, have had a detrimental impact upon the local communities (Raco & Henderson 2006).

Sentiments of gentrification were raised by the Ordsall community. As the in migration of new residents to the area began to increase, so did house prices in the wider Ordsall area, leading to fear of displacement (Henderson et al. 2007: 4). Raco and Henderson's (2006) study of the regeneration project in Salford concluded that neither the new SQ residents, nor the Ordsall residents felt included in the development process, meaning that neither groups have developed a 'sense of place' in or about SQ, with a significant loss of heritage for those local residents (2006). The visible spectacle of SQ was intended to give people a demonstrable aspirational drive, it was intended to be viewed with a sense of pride. However, the proximity of these 'islands of gentrified affluence' to areas of extreme deprivation can actually serve to increase tensions and hostility between groups, rather than inspire aspirational thoughts (Jeffery & Jackson 2012).

## 3.7 MediaCityUK

MediaCityUK UK is the latest main development on the SQ site. Whilst the land that MediaCityUK was built on is owned by Peel Holdings, a private developer company, Salford Council has had significant involvement in the development process, seeing it as "…a catalyst to raise the profile of Salford, to raise aspirations and to create job opportunities for local residents" (Salford City Council 2014c). It is to serve the needs of the creative and digital industries, and comprises of studios, office space, apartments, retail and leisure spaces, a private members bar and hotels. The vision for MediaCityUK is "To become a leading international hub for the creative and digital sectors, and a vibrant destination to work, live and play" (MediaCityUK Manchester 2013). MediaCityUK gained most attention when parts of the BBC moved there in 2011. There is a whole range of other media and creative businesses there, including a new

development by Salford University and ITV have begun their move over to the area. Significant continuing development is planned to take place in MediaCityUK over the next 20 years, with additional office, residential, retail and leisure functions, and also the building of an SQ town centre (The Peel Group 2012b).

The MediaCityUK development, Christophers (2008) argues is characteristic of a move towards attracting the Creative Classes, in which successful urban redesign is not just about providing business incentives and infrastructure, but about actively attracting and retaining those people who work in the creative industries and providing them with the urban lifestyles which they require. Attracting the creative classes, according to Florida (2003), is key to becoming a successful competitive city. The creative classes want to live in cities which allow them to be creative, to be adventurous and exciting, sites of diversity and culture with open leisure spaces, converted mills, coffee shops and walkways. Cities need to exhibit 'the 3 T's' of Technology, Talent and Tolerance in order to secure the attraction of the creative classes. Creativity is seen as being a specific human trait to be developed, which over time can enhance the creativeness of others around them. Florida's thesis has achieved considerable attention and following in urban policy and planning across the globe. It has also been subject to much criticism, most notably by Peck (2005) who argues that there is a failure by Florida to demonstrate how creativity can actually transform into economic growth. More importantly, Peck turns his criticism to social inequalities, identifying that existing creative cities are more often the most unequal. He argues that the labour divisions in creative cities may be necessary to their very existence, "A swelling contingent economy of underlaborers may, in fact, be a necessary side-effect of the creatives' lust for self-validation, 24/7 engagement, and designer coffee" (p756).

Christophers (2008) claims that MediaCityUK, and most importantly the BBC move, signifies a competitive commitment to establishing the creative class in Salford, but not all of Salford, predominantly SQ. Christophers questions who the development is intended to benefit, alluding to the fact that most of Salford residents, if they do benefit via employment opportunities, will be in the lower paid service sector, echoing Peck's assessment of labour divisions and continuing inequality. Evidence for this can be seen

by Salford Councils Business Team, who are responsible for encouraging new businesses to move to the area and actually promote the lower than average weekly wages of a typical Salford resident as a selling point, "In comparison to other cities, Salford's workforce is competitively priced, with the gross weekly earnings at £461.70, lower than many other large cities including Liverpool (£485.10) and Manchester (£514.30)" (Salford City Council n.d.). This speaks to what MacLeod et al (2003) referred to as the promotion of '*segmented labour markets*' (italics in original) wherein agents attempting to sell their cities to potential investors will offer a low-cost and disciplined labour force alongside a pool of highly skilled and educated specialists. The authors argue that this segmentation, far from being a point of concern, is actually a well celebrated selling point. It has been reported that of the 3,172 Salfordian job applicants, only 24 have been employed in MediaCityUK (Carter 2012).

The regeneration that had occurred was intended to improve the reputation and perception of Salford that has endured since Engels wrote about it in 1843. The cultural construction of Salford has often portrayed it as a rundown slum like area of traditional working class heritage, as described in the first chapter. In Ewan MacColl's song 'Dirty old town' Salford is depicted as poor and dirty from its smoky industrial base in need of knocking down. The song concludes with the lyrics "I'm going to take a good sharp axe, Shining steel tempered in the fire, We'll chop you down like an old dead tree, Dirty old town, dirty old town". The goal of the regeneration in SQ has attempted to move away from some of these cultural representations of Salford, aiming to promote a more modern, safe and affluent lifestyle attractive to incoming middle class groups. Interestingly, in a Guardian tribute article to Ewan MacColl the author comments, "today one suspects MacColl, far from wanting to "cut down" the place, would be fighting for the preservation of its industrial heritage against austerity-era cuts" (Spencer 2015).

## 3.8 Budget Priorities

The austerity measures in place after the 2008 economic recession has forced Local Authorities to implement large financial cuts. Local government have seen one of the most significant levels of budget reduction of all the public services (Lowndes &

Pratchett 2012), meaning that not only do they have to cut back services, but that they are more dependent on generating their own revenue streams. Due to this, Salford Council has had to impose £40m of savings in 2011/12, £24m in both 2012/13 and 2013/14, with a potential £40m to be saved over following two years (Salford City Council 2013a). Cuts of this magnitude will undoubtedly have a negative effect on an area like Salford, which has a low Council Tax income and high levels of deprivation. Salford City's Mayor acknowledged this negative effect, stating; "We've had the near impossible task of trying to come up with a scheme that will minimise the impact of the cuts on Salford residents and their families. But make no mistake, no matter what happens this could make life very difficult for a lot of our residents" (Salford City Council 2012a).

The cuts so far have seen 1,200 council job losses, large cuts to children and adult services, reduction in street maintenance and refuse services and axing of the area based grants, which were a government provision to make up the short fall from lower than average Council Tax income (Salford City Council 2011c). The Council has been vocally resistant to these cuts which are blamed on the Coalition government and has attempted to mitigate the effects by freezing Council tax and introducing the living wage for all Council employees. However, whilst these cuts are being felt, the Council is still providing significant amounts of money to developments in and around the SQ area including, in conjunction with the North West Development Agency, £61 million pounds of public funding to Peel Holdings for the development of MediaCityUK (Salford City Council 2011a), £20 million pounds over 8 years to the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra (Salford City Council 2008c) and £1.23 million on water taxis or 'Waxi' to transport people from SQ to Manchester City Centre (Brooks-Pollock 2013b). The funding of developments like Media City at a time of cuts to public services may cause further resentment and disaffection amongst community members who, as has been demonstrated by the lack of jobs secured in the SQ area, have not been receiving the benefits of these economic investments.

## 3.9 Regional success

Despite the tensions occurring from the regeneration efforts at the local level, the changes in Salford have raised its profile as a growing economic sector. It has witnessed 12% economic growth since 2004 (Salford City Council n.d.) and it is also of increasing importance to the rest of the region. Salford and Manchester have had a long recognised rivalry between the cities, with Manchester long being seen as the core city in the region. Manchester has seen considerable economic growth post industrialisation, and is regarded as 1 of 8 core cities currently driving the English economy (Core Cities 2010). In 1972, the entirety of Greater Manchester (10 Local Authorities) was placed under the governance of an elected County Council, coordinating the strategic progress of the conurbation. This challenged Manchester's privileged position as regional leader, as decisions were made which benefitted Greater Manchester in general (Hebbert & Deas 2000). However, the differing needs of each council resulted in conflict and proved difficult to manage. In 1985, the Thatcher government, skeptical of big government organisations disbanded the County Councils, leaving the 10 Local Councils under their own governance, but with a coordinating committee which today remains as the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) (Deas & Ward 2002).

After the dissolving of the Greater Manchester County Council, and with the increasing emphasis from the central government for partnership working, particularly to secure funding for urban development, Salford Council engaged in partnership working with several of the other Greater Manchester Authorities, particularly Manchester. Firstly was the creation of City Pride in 1994, a strategy between Manchester, Salford and Trafford Councils to coordinate regeneration efforts and increase the competitiveness of the centre of Greater Manchester. However, with Manchester as the central driver of City Pride, there were suggestions that it was not allocating resources fairly between the 3 areas (Deas & Ward 2002). Salford and Manchester partnered again during the second round of bidding for the Single Regeneration Budget. They were the first cross council partnership to receive funding, but again, reports of distrust between councils and a lack of individual transparency caused problems (Carley et al. 2000).

Most crucially to the continued partnership working between Manchester and Salford has been the creation of a Regional Centre. This is a designated area comprising parts of central Salford, with adjacent areas in Manchester and Trafford. The areas of Salford included in the Regional Centre are SQ and Salford University and parts of the waterfront development. The more deprived areas in Ordsall are not included (figure 12).



*Figure 12: Regional Centre of Salford and Manchester. Source - Manchester City Council.*

The Regional Centre has been designated as the key economic driver of the City Region and the wider North West region. It is the priority focus of regeneration initiatives, alongside the 'inner areas' which surround the Regional Centre, for Salford this being Central Salford (Government Office for the North West 2008: 128).

Salford City is part of the wider North West (NW) Region. The NW region covers the geographical areas of Lancashire, Merseyside, Cheshire and Greater Manchester. Under New Labour, regions became of significant importance. New Labour decentralised power to regions with which they were to decide how national polices are implemented and how the region should be taken forward (Pearce & Ayres 2009). This marked a shift away from a previous focus on specific cities and their neighbourhoods to a more holistic

approach of whole regional development. The purpose of regional focus was to enable strong networks of businesses, entrepreneurial initiatives and a skills base which would work together towards a common target to enhance the economic prosperity of the region. It was to give a greater strategic focus to the work that individual cities within a region were already undertaking and to reduce overlapping organisations that were already operating to the same objectives. The overall aim was to ensure a region would be able to compete globally with other regions (Jones & MacLeod 2002). European countries were already operating within this fashion and the UK regions were in competition against them for European funding streams (Webb & Collis 2000).

The developments in Salford are being promoted as key to the overall North West strategy, specifically MediaCityUK. In the *Future North West: Our Shared Priorities* document produced by the North West Regional Development Agency in 2010, MediaCityUK is one of the key priorities for diversifying the economic base of the region and is also the site of developing an internationally recognised digital and creative industry (Northwest Regional Development Agency 2010). Interesting is that whilst MediaCityUK holds a prominent position with regards to future economic success, this particular document makes no reference to Salford, compared to 67 references to Manchester. The term 'Manchester' in most regional documents is used to refer to Salford as will be seen below, and this has received negative responses from local media, who skeptically view the advancing SQ and University as becoming parts of Manchester rather than Salford (The Salford Star 2011). Reasons for this include SQ being renamed 'The Quays', dropping Salford altogether and Salford University recently rebranding to become 'The University of Salford Manchester'. Most recently the governments latest proposals to reduce its number of parliamentary constituencies by redrawing boundaries have redrawn the Manchester city centre constituency to take over parts of Central Salford, specifically SQ and the University (BBC News 2011a). Whilst the perceived loss of identity for Salford residents is a source of contention, Salford Council planning professionals do not appear to share the same concerns, "we have become more relaxed about parts of Salford being described as "Manchester" in some quarters – I think this is a sign of confidence" (Findley 2009).

## 3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a case study assessment of Salford and the changes in urbanisation that have taken place over several decades. It has provided an outline of the main regeneration projects that have occurred and their intended and actual outcomes. What the above has shown is that SQ has grown in profile and significance for a much wider area than its own juridical boundaries. Salford Council is now in the position of having to deliver regeneration benefit to not only its residents but also to a regional and potentially European economy. However, the success of these developments rests on attracting investment and increasing the wealth of the residential base. This may be hindered by the high levels of deprivation which continues to surround SQ.

The skills gap between many Salford residents and the emerging economy of media and financial services is seen as a barrier to attracting investment (New Economy 2010). It is thus crucial to Salford Council that neighbourhood regeneration efforts, including education and training, are successful. However, as it has been seen, initiatives like the NDC and HMR have not provided the intended benefits of reducing deprivation. Nor have the SQ developments served to reduce worklessness. The conflicting demands of both the local (in terms of social need) and the regional (in terms of economic need) may cause the resident communities to be seen as an obstacle to be overcome if the SQ benefits are to be delivered.

Whilst Salford Council is being subjected to intense levels of austerity, forcing it to slash public services, it is continuing a regeneration programme that requires drawing in significant private investment. The Council has demonstrated entrepreneurialism in working with the private sector to drive regeneration. The creation of the Central Salford Urban Regeneration Company to lead on the Lowry development is indicative of this, as is the Council's continual working relationship and financial investment to Peel Holdings for the MediaCityUK development. However, Salford still suffers from high levels of deprivation and significant unevenness across the city, even within close proximity. It is likely that the recent policy changes which promote a growth agenda will exacerbate

this unevenness by channeling investment in to areas like SQ over some of the proximal areas of decline.

The remainder of this thesis will present a more thorough examination of the regeneration of Central Salford through qualitative interviews with policy developers behind the regeneration projects that have been identified within this chapter. These interviews will seek to understand from these participants' perspectives how these changes have taken place and their intention. It will also bring these perspectives in to dialogue with some of Salford's local residents and community representatives to offer a multiplicity of perspectives. In the chapter that follows I will outline the main research questions and the methodology that was used to collect the data to answer these questions. It will specify who was interviewed and the data that was gathered, before I move on to an exploration of the themes that emerged throughout the data in the empirical chapters.

# 4. Research Methodology

The following chapter will outline the methodology employed for the delivery of this thesis. Ultimately it will attempt to document how I translated my research problem into an empirical fieldwork strategy. I will begin by outlining the research aim and the key research questions that underpin this as informed by my initial literature review. I will then go on to provide an audit of the data gathering and analysis process with some reflections on why this process was undertaken and the advantages and potential disadvantages of this process. By the end of the chapter the aim is that the reader will have a clear understanding of the empirical research process that was undertaken.

## 4.1 Research focus

After having conducted some preliminary literature research and having spent time in Salford observing some of the changes that had occurred I was primarily interested in understanding the uneven spatial disparity that had emerged. I was interested in trying to understand the decision making process that lay behind the physical and economic outcome of the regeneration process up to this point in time across Central Salford. My interest lay predominately with the decision makers as opposed to the impact on residents per se. There were two reasons for this. Firstly, I kept coming back to a central question of inquiry which was 'how has this transition occurred'? I felt that this question could only be answered by those people involved in the decision making process. Secondly, I was guided by previous research in urban policy which had highlighted the role of the central state and the local state in regeneration practices and called for a closer understanding of how practices were embedded differently in different places and at different times. As Fuller (2012) argues we need to pay much more attention to how spaces are governed and how they are shaped in different ways through the negotiation of crucial mediators. By focusing on this decision making at a local state level we can understand better how Salford has had the specific outcomes that it has.

The overall aims of the research project were to;

- Understand, from the experiences of those involved in making the decisions, how the regeneration in Salford had come to be materially manifest in the ways that it had, and to explore the ways in which the regeneration outcomes were designed, implemented, negotiated and legitimised by those same people.
- To draw on this case study to develop an understanding of the wider changes taking place within the politics of urban economic development

The specific research questions that underpinned these aims are as follows:

- What is the purpose of regeneration in Salford according to those responsible for making the decisions?
- What role does the local government play in urban regeneration and what does it tell us about its priorities?
- How do state and non-state actors engage to deliver regeneration at a local level and what is the impact of this for democratic accountability?
- In what ways can we see regeneration moving away from a process based on spatially targeted need towards the delivery of economic growth?
- Does a growth consensus within the urban political landscape foreclose alternative options for development?
- How can we conceptualise the politics that take place behind urban economic development?

The following is an account and justification for how I went about answering the specified research questions as detailed in the introduction.

## 4.2 Selecting the study area
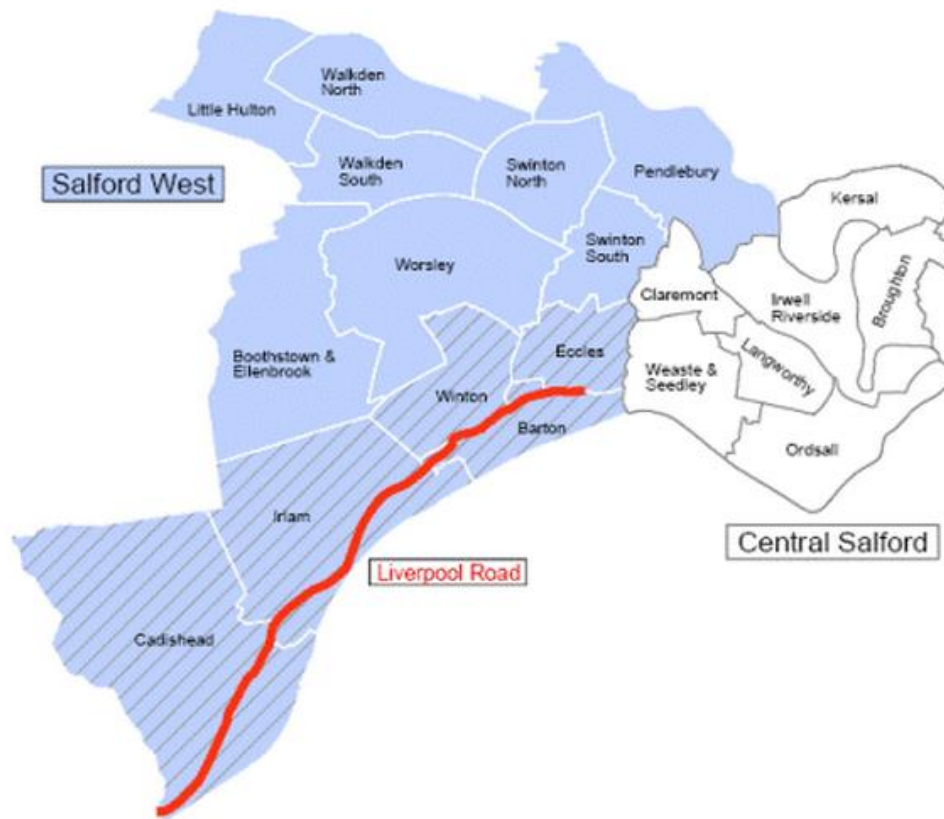


*Figure 13: Case study area – Central Salford. Source - Salford City Council*

The primary focus of this thesis is Central Salford. The reason I have chosen to focus most heavily on Central Salford is that it has been the site in Salford where most of the regeneration programmes have taken place. It is described as different from the westerly parts of Salford due to the western wards being included later within Salford city boundaries and is often referred to by local residents as 'old Salford', signifying its more traditional or original status (Walklate & Evans 1999). Central Salford has significantly higher levels of deprivation than West Salford, which is considerably affluent in parts, and had been seen to be more in need of regeneration projects (Salford City Partnership 2012d). Its geographical location is beneficial from a place-making point of view as it borders Manchester City Centre and parts of Central Salford make up the 'Regional Centre' with inner city Manchester. It incorporates both the river Irwell and SQ, both key features of flagship regeneration projects. An Urban Regeneration Company was created in 2006 to deal specifically with the Central Salford area and the

whole of Central Salford was targeted for regeneration within the Central Salford Vision and Regeneration Framework 2005. Whilst West Salford became the subject of a regeneration framework in 2008, it does not have the same history of regeneration programmes as does Central Salford, nor does it have the same high profile areas or suffer from the same levels of deprivation. Thus Central Salford was chosen as the area to focus on for this research and the data that were gathered was in relation to the development programmes occurring in this specific locale. This research then is a case study of Central Salford. It can be defined as a case study in that Central Salford is the specific unit of analysis and all data gathered will be in relation to this unit for the purposes of a close examination of this area (Bryman 2012).

The limitations most often levelled at case study research are that they are practical and context dependent and thus not as valuable as theoretical and context independent knowledge; not generalizable to other cases; only useful for initial stage hypothesis generating rather than theory building; open to verification bias; and difficult to summarise as they are so specific (Flyvbjerg 2006). However, Flyvberg (2006) goes on to argue that case studies can to an extent be useful for generalising as they enable a closer understanding of commonly held beliefs and views and challenge what we take as universal. This also helps with issues of verification bias. The case study, Flyvberg argues, is no more subject to verification bias than any other methodology, but in fact with the case study the researcher is more able to challenge commonly held beliefs that verify them. With regards the difficulties of summarising what can be difficult and complex case studies, Flyvberg advises instead of a summary, "*Good studies should be read as narratives in their entirety*" (italics in original, p241). This is certainly an approach that I intend to take during my thesis. I would like to present a full narrative highlighting the socio-historical changes that regeneration has taken over time.

One element of the case study that I have found to be a challenge was in regards to naming the specific location of my case study area. Walford (2005) has argued that it is generally accepted as standard ethical practice that anonymity should be provided for participants and research sites. However, he also argues that this is not always necessary and that actually anonymity may encourage researchers to be more generalizable and

vague about context specific facts and details. I have not anonymised my research site because I feel that the context specific elements of it are key to the analysis. However, this raised certain ethical dilemmas. I selected and accessed my participants through the publicly available documentation and the availability of individuals' names and job titles online. I was keen to offer confidentiality and anonymity to my participants. But I was also aware that if I identified Salford by name then others who followed the same research route as myself may be able to not directly identify but narrow down to a group of possible individuals who my research participants may be. This meant that it would have been ethically problematic to offer full anonymity to my research participants (Walford 2005). Instead I informed the participants in the information sheet and consent form that I would be naming the area but that their names would still be anonymised.

Of course, there are those who are critical of the notion of 'default anonymity' for research participants (Kelly 2009). There is an assumption in ethical guidance from institutions such as the British Sociological Association and the Economic and Social Research Council that anonymity will be offered, but with little rationale as for *why* this may be the case (Moore 2012). It has been argued that anonymity is difficult to guarantee in practice given the interactive nature of the research process (Walford, 2005). It has also been argued that it only acts as a form of protection from harm when the participants do not object to what is being written or if what is being written about is too trivial to arouse a response (Nespor 2000). Critics have instead suggested a negotiated or situated process of offering anonymity, rather than a blanket approach, where by those participants who do not want anonymity do not have it imposed upon them (Moore 2012).

On a few occasions during my research several participants suggested that I could publish their names in full without anonymising them. I believe this was because some of my participants are used to being in the public eye and providing interviews and comments on public matters and are themselves publicly accountable. This has not been done however, and all participants have been anonymised. The reason for this choice was that by identifying or 'naming' some participants it could narrow down even further to those participants who did seem more favourable towards anonymity. As Moore

(2012) argues, offering some of the participants anonymity "… is a zero-sum situation—what one side gets by way of accommodation, the other must lose—because *part*-anonymity cannot guarantee *any* anonymity for those who need it" (emphasis in original: 440).

## 4.3 Identifying 'key players'

| Interview matrix | Mode of interview | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type of participant | Face to Face | Telephone | Email | Total |
| Elected Official | 4 | | 1 | 5 |
| Council Employee | 9 | | 1 | 10 |
| Private Property Developer | 2 | 1 | | 3 |
| Third Sector Officer | 2 | | 1 | 3 |
| Planning Professional | 1 | | | 1 |
| Community representative | 5 | | | 5 |
| Police Officer | 2 | | 1 | 3 |
| | | | | 30 |

Table 1: Interview matrix identifying participants interviewed and method of interview

My interviews were conducted with people I identified as being 'key players' (Hajer 2006) in the field of regeneration in Salford i.e. people who were in positions of power or able to influence decision making that shaped the form of regeneration in Salford. This included people involved in property development at key regeneration sites. But more so I was interested in the role of the Local Authority and how policy was enacted by it. Blanco et al. (2014) have argued that a limitation amongst accounts of

neoliberalism and its effects on urbanisation is that it often neglects the role of the local state in implementing 'neoliberal meta-narratives'. This implementation of the macro to the micro engenders spatial variations in urbanisation and results in a ''messiness' of local urban politics and practice' (p3131). It is this 'messiness' that I am interested in, or more specifically how regeneration as a national policy has taken the specific form that it has at this local level. In Massey's (1994) terms, it is about generating an understanding of how the 'specificity and uniqueness' of a place has been created or 'articulated' through the interactions of networks of particular people (p117).

In research terms these 'key players' are often referred to as local 'elites'. The term elite is difficult to define and will inevitably mean different things to different people dependent on the subject matter in question. An elite in one situation may not be considered as such, or may not consider themselves as such in another. Woods (1998) argues the term 'elite' is often "employed largely as a short-hand term for those actors who are in some way perceived to be more powerful or more privileged than some undefined other group" (p2101). For Woods, then, the concept is often problematic and ill-defined but generally it is relational in that it refers to a person in a position of power as measured against someone else e.g. someone is a member of an elite only in comparison to someone who is not. Inevitably then that same logic also applies within groups of people who are considered to be 'elite', in that there will also be power differentials amongst themselves.

Cochrane (1998) argues that the definition of local elites in research is often taken at face value i.e. taken to be someone in a position of seniority within an organisation, but that this assumption lacks sophistication. He argues that being in a position of standing in ceremonial terms within an organisation does not automatically mean you are in a position of influence. Nor does it include all those who are in a position of influence because, as Cochrane states, "Not only is there an absence of businesspeople, but the use of such starting points also frequently fails to reflect the full extent of power relations within the local welfare-state regimes (including, for example, the range of health-related agencies and major voluntary or not-for-profit agencies, such as housing associations)" (p2127). Elites exist then not as a designated group but as network

members and are relational and dynamic. They change over time and some may be considered an 'elite' by definition of position but may not occupy the same key relations or networks that give them the power (Woods 1998).

However, I was also interested in people who occupied positions that enabled them to be engaged or a party to the decision making processes but also with links to the residents and able to see how these decisions take shape *on the ground*. This included for example Neighbourhood Managers of specific regeneration areas and local third sector officers responsible for making employment links between local residents and the emerging businesses. This also included local policing teams with knowledge of the changing neighbourhood environments. I also was also interested in local residents who had involvement with regeneration decision making from regeneration boards and committees and residents involved in affected Social Housing Trusts.

The sampling framework used to identify my participants was to systematically target each organisational area that I was interested in, specifically;

- private developers operating within the regeneration areas in Salford;
- the regeneration teams working for Salford Council responsible for the different projects;
- locally elected councilors responsible for the regenerated areas;
- professionals responsible for planning within Salford;
- the Urban Regeneration Corporation;
- local third sector trusts responsible for skills and work;
- council business team responsible for securing investment; and
- Local policing teams.

These participants were identified through careful assessment of the council website and organisational charts, Council documents, key Council policy texts, local regeneration frameworks and media sources. The purpose of identifying people through this method was to try and determine the networks of regeneration practitioners. Seeing the same names or organisations appear across the documentation gives a good indication of relevant 'key players' by identifying those who are routinely exercising their power (Woods 1998). From these searches several names became apparent as either taking the lead or playing a role in certain urban developments. There was also an

element of 'snowball sampling' to the identification of my 'key players' (Bryman 2012). Through this sampling method I was able to identify other relevant participants as mentioned to me by other research participants.

## 4.4 Making contact and gaining access

For those participants operating in the public sector as officers or elected officials contact was made in the first instance through email. Due to the nature of their professional positions the participants had an online presence with contact details available and so I was able to make contact directly. From the research that I had done prior I had got a sense that many of the people I approached already had some familiarity with giving press interviews and some academic interviews, particularly with regards SQ and the BBC. I felt that this timing (the second half of 2013) benefitted me in gaining access considerably as MediaCityUK was such a dominating presence within Salford at that time. It actually felt on occasion during my interviews that the opportunity was being taken to demonstrate an individual's involvement in this regeneration 'success'. In fact, as one of my participants expressed,

> *"They say you can judge the success of a project by the number of people*
> *who claim credit for it. I think every [practitioner] has put on their CV that*
> *they were responsible for the development of Salford Quays, and I'm sure*
> *that's a good sign" (1 – Elected official)*

Ward & Jones (1999) argue that access to a political institution will not just be open or closed dependent on the organisation or the individual but will also need to take account of the 'temporal variations in the *mode of entry*' (p306, italics in original). Whilst for some researchers this temporality of political sensitivity may hinder access (see Desmond 2004), my experience suggested it may have emboldened it in that people were keen to discuss the significance of what was currently taking place. Interestingly however, in September 2014, Salford Council ratified an 'Employee code of conduct' in which it was stated to employees that "You must not make any statements to the media, or any other public statement which concerns the business of the Council, unless you have been authorised to do so" (Salford City Council 2014a) (p7). This code of conduct

suggests a closing of the research field. Whilst it is impossible to know for certain, there is a possibility that were I to conduct my research again, gaining access to these participants may be significantly more difficult. Where I failed to gain access to these participants it was often those interview requests where I had to go through a gate keeper (for example a Personal Assistant or Public Relations team). If all my interviews had to be secured through a gate keeper such as a service head my experience may have been very different. The above quote and its implications for the foreclosure of available information highlight this temporal nature of access.

I secured fifteen interviews with public sector officers and elects (see matrix above - table 1). There was one participant that I was particularly focused on that did not respond to my requests but due to their high profile nature within the regeneration field they had conducted several publicly accessible interviews and written several articles on their involvement in regeneration which I have drawn on to supplement this gap. This person will be fully referenced when used and not anonymised like the interview data gathered by the researcher. Whilst not ideal, it does still allow for an insight that I would not have otherwise had.

Where access did become more of an issue was with private developers. Three interviews were conducted with private sector participants and whilst one in particular was particularly important in relation to the high profile nature of the organisation they worked for, it would have been preferable to access more. One of the problems was an inability to obtain an individual person's contact information. More often than not I would be directed through a website with an automated online query form in which to input my request for an interview. This made it difficult to specifically target an individual or to direct my inquiry to a particular team. There were occasions where no response was given or I received a policy statement that the organisation did not participate in academic research. On one occasion I entered into an email conversation with a developer who provided me with interesting information, but would not commit to an interview or sign a consent form.

Whilst I felt that I had made contact with the 'key players', there is a very real possibility that I had missed some people from the pool of potential participants. If we take Woods

(1998) assertion that elites exist within and because of the networks that they are a part of, then it is important to consider the possibility that there will be other people in those networks that exert influence over the decision making in Salford that are not identifiable from the conversations I had or the literature and documentation that I have access to. Parry (1998) argues that elite networks may include invisible and informal members who are disparate and unable to be identified. It is likely that this is the case in Salford. With that limitation in mind I tried to follow up on all the names of individuals that were mentioned during the interviews I conducted. Thus this thesis is not claiming that it is fully representative of all 'key players' involved in Salford's regeneration. However, it does account for the views of those most significant within the locality at a developer and Local Authority level.

In addition to the participants identified above I also interviewed three professionals who occupied key positions in local third sector organisations. These people had a remit of lowering local deprivation and assisting with local employment and skills. Their names were mentioned through conversations with key players as being engaged with the regeneration process at a local level in trying to improve the chances of local residents in benefitting from the jobs created through regeneration. I also interviewed five participants who were actual residents who were either actively engaged with a regeneration scheme or were members of a tenant organisation in the regeneration areas. I also interviewed three local police officers in one of the more unevenly developed areas of Central Salford as I was interested in the requirement of regeneration programmes in lowering the crime rate in particular high crime areas (included in the matrix as 'Public Sector Officers'). I was also interested in the dynamics between the incoming residents and the indigenous residents. These participants were all accessed through direct email as their details were publicly accessible due to their involvement with local regeneration schemes, except for two who I was put in contact with through a public sector policy officer using a snowball sampling method (Bryman 2012).

Whilst these eleven particular participants were loosely associated with the networks of elites described above, they were not within the network. Nor did they have access to

the same level of resources through which to exert power or influence. They arguably did not meet the same sample requirements as those participants mentioned above. However, it seemed important to speak with these people as it felt necessary to hear from people who were experiencing the outcome of some of these urban policy decisions. Hearing from people who resided in these areas or who were engaged with the regeneration process as a resident allowed me to bring their views and experiences in to dialogue with the claims and statements made by some of the 'key players' mentioned above. This was particularly important where the issue of jobs was concerned as some of these third sector institutions were used to bridge the gap between emerging jobs and unemployed residents and it was important to gain alternative perspectives on that. These participants allowed for a multiplicity of voices to be heard rather than to rely on a homogenous narrative. This idea is informed by Massey (2005) who understands space to be the 'sphere in which distinct trajectories coexist' (p9). For Massey space is constitutive of the existence of multiplicity and it is through the interrelation of this plurality that any space is constructed as it is at that point in time. Thus for this research it felt important to expose some of this multiplicity and speak with people who are experiencing regeneration through multiple ways. It is not to claim that these participants represent the views of all third sector organisations or all local residents, but that in speaking to these people it can offer another layer of understanding to the complexity of regeneration in central Salford at a local level.

In addition, and before I interviewed anyone, I conducted four 'Helicopter interviews' (not included in the matrix). These are, according to Hajer (2006) interviews with particular people who have a broad overview of the research field. In this instance these participants were a local journalist, two academics with good knowledge of the research area and a local government policy maker. These interviews were for general guidance and information only. The interviews were not recorded and the data was not incorporated in my data analysis in any substantive manner. The purpose was to gain some insight and clarify some of the points and themes. These interviews helped structure the focus of my subsequent formal interviews and were very helpful.

## 4.5 Semi-Structured interviews

All face-to-face interviews were audio-recorded except for one where notes were made instead. The interviews were semi-structured and aided by a list of topics, rather than specific questions to be asked so as to allow for emerging issues during the course of the interview (see appendix B) (Bryman 2012). Whilst the topics were consistent across interviews, the specific focus would vary depending on the specificity of the particular interviewee. For example a private developer would be asked about their specific development project, but the overarching themes would be consistent in asking about their links to regeneration, partnership working, social impact and local contributions. The interviews were flexible and allowed room for manoeuvre but were focused on deciphering how the participant framed and defined the issues raised and the intended solutions that regeneration delivered.

When conducting qualitative interviews it is important to consider the researcher-researched relationship and its dynamics. This is particularly important when interviewing elites as there tends to be a power asymmetry in which the 'researcher is dependent on the cooperation of a relatively small number of people with specialized knowledge' (Desmond 2004, p265). Schoenberger (1991) argues that when conducting interviews with elites the usual dynamic of the researcher leading and being in control of the interview agenda is reversed. In this situation it is the respondent who is accustomed to having the control and authority over an interview situation. The potential problem therein is that the interviewee shapes or directs the questions towards their own agenda and away from the particulars as set out by the researcher. Thus is it important for the researcher to consider their own approach to the interview and the interviewee in question. The researcher needs to make sure they do not become too deferential depending on the status of the interviewee (Richards 1996). It also needs to be acknowledged that the interviewee may be more or less willing to give information away to a researcher depending on who that researcher is. As Sabot (1999) discovered, one elite interviewee could have a 'Dr Jekyl and Mr H(i)de' persona depending on whether or not they trust or support the individual researcher.

My own research approach was fairly consistent. I was conscious not to be controlling with the topic guide as I was interested in allowing the interviewee to guide the narrative, choose their own discourse and define their own terms. This was equally so for the interviews with the 'key players' as it was for the interviews with the community facing participants. Of course, there were times when I had to steer the conversation back on to the topic at hand, but again this issue was not exclusive to the 'key players'. McDowell (1998) raises the question as to whether we as researchers should present ourselves as 'experts or ignoramuses'. What she means is how much should we indicate that we already know about the research subject and how much should we present our own beliefs about the situation. For my own persona I was somewhat in-between expert and ignoramus. This position was not a deliberate cultivation of a research persona but a genuine position in which I had knowledge of a range of regeneration policy and practice in Salford but I was not aware of all of the detail or the perspective of those involved. I acknowledged where I knew what was being discussed and asked when I did not.

With regards to presenting my own beliefs about the situation, this was more difficult. Whilst my primary goal of the interview was to identify the key players involvement in regeneration in Salford and their perspectives of it, I also needed to ask questions about some of the more negative elements of regeneration, for example the reports over the lack of jobs for local residents, issues of displacement, housing demolition and undeveloped clearance sites. These questions were harder to ask and at times met with some hostility. But as Harvey (2011) acknowledges, asking difficult questions is a challenge for all interviews, not just with elites. However, elites may have more experience of answering these questions or finding ways to avoid them. For my own interviews I felt that on occasion I was getting a well-practiced response to a sometimes pre-empted question. On other occasions the responses were much vaguer. On reflection, I think I could have been more upfront about the need, as part of the interview, to tackle some of the more difficult and uncomfortable issues. Ostrander (1993) suggests that researchers should take this more direct approach and expose the awkwardness around it,

*"It is helpful to acknowledge that their discomfort is not inappropriate, that I am in fact asking questions that might not be considered "polite"."* (p24).

## 4.6 Secondary documents

In conjunction with the interviews conducted, a systematic analysis of planning and regeneration documentation was undertaken. The majority of this data was gathered through the Salford City Council website. The first stage was a comprehensive search of the Councils Housing, Planning and Regeneration pages. Within these pages are a host of informative documents that establish the Councils Local Development Framework for planning and development. The cities Local Development Framework is comprised of Development Plan Documents (Statutory documents) and Supplementary Planning Documents (non-statutory documents). These documents, where relevant to the study, formed the initial body of secondary data for analysis and can be seen in the table below (see figure 14). In addition to these were the Central Salford Regeneration Framework developed by the Salford Urban Regeneration Company and Salford Councils most recent strategic vision 'Salford 2025: A Modern Global City'.

In addition to these documents information was also gathered from Salford Council's Core Strategy, which is a repository of over 500 documents which make up the strategy and the supporting evidence. Importantly this repository includes consultation documents on development that detail the feedback comments from private developers and local stakeholders and responses to those comments from the Council. It also includes notes taken from core strategy hearing sessions that minuted the discussions that took place over Salford's strategy and the main agents within these discussions. This is especially important for analysing decision making and questions of depoliticisation, as demonstrated in the introductory chapter. Similarly, I undertook analysis and constant monitoring of certain relevant council meetings and committees, including the 'Regeneration Briefing' and 'Regeneration Scrutiny Committee'. Both meetings took place would include reports submitted to the committee on timely regeneration issues. The Regeneration Scrutiny Committee would also include minutes

from each previous meeting detailing discussions that had taken place in relation to that meeting's agenda.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│      Local Development Framework     │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
              /              \
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| Development Plan Documents | Supplementary-planning documents (SPD) |
|---|---|
| • City of Salford Unitary Development Plan<br>• Lower Broughton Design Code<br><br>• Design and Crime<br><br>• Planning Obligations | • Housing SPD<br>• The Exchange Greengate SPD<br>• MediaCity and Quays point SPD<br>• Salford Central SPD<br>• Irwell City Park SPD<br>• Ordsall Riverside SPD<br>• Pendleton SPD<br>• Shaping Salford, Design SPD<br>• Shaping Central Salford's Spaces and Places SPD<br>• The Crescent SPD |

Other notable documents:

- Central Salford Regeneration Framework
- Salford 2025: A Modern Global City
- Salford Core Strategy

Meetings of significant contribution to analysis:

- Regeneration Briefing
- Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
- Full Council Meeting

*Figure 14: Overview of main documents analysed*

Attention was also paid to the full monthly Council meeting which also provided meeting minutes, including a section on questions and comments by council members and questions from members of the public. This allowed for analysis of the decision making processes and the conflicting positions within the Council and in relation to wider political changes. For example, the minutes for the 18th September 2013 included a question raised by a Council member regarding decision to grant a planning application on greenbelt land. The response from the Assistant Mayor for Strategic Planning highlighted the National Planning Policy Framework as favouring private developers and 'outweighing' any Local Authority opposition (Salford City Council 2013b). Here we can see the appearance of a fatalistic 'no alternative' approach to planning. Again, these sources of information were valuable for creating a body of data that allowed for a post-political analysis, demonstrating the decision making processes that underpin the more formal planning documents also under analysis (the specifics of this analysis is detailed in the following section).

Documents are useful for analysis in that they can illuminate how a discourse is manufactured and how it may serve a function (Prior 2003). Atkinson & Coffey (2005) argue that documents are not reflections of an objective reality but are an organisation's *constructed* reality. The authors state that documents are designed to represent an organisation or a subject matter in a particular way and in order to accomplish something. For this research then, I used the more formal planning documents to gauge the intended outputs and end points of the regeneration programmes. I also used documents to gain insight in to how Salford is being constructed through them in a productive and active sense. This is particularly relevant for this research when trying to ascertain how Salford is being changed and how this change is being enacted. The decision making process was analysed through the consultation documentation and the meeting minutes identified above. These helped to gauge how a consensual growth mentality was emerging over time. Of course, documents do not capture all of the decision making that takes place outside of these organised meetings and documented events. They can never capture fully the engagement that precedes before them. However, documents do serve to add to our understanding of a situation, they generate a narrative of events, they 'order the events and produce them anew' (Prior 2003: 93).

Whilst the Council site was a generally good resource, there were some reports and parts of meetings that were closed to the public. This was particularly the case with regeneration documents and data relating to partnerships. This 'closed to the public' happened occasionally within some meetings; however during the beginning of 2015 the Council put up a notification that it would apply closures more widely for certain meetings. The 'Regeneration Briefing' was one such meeting. Now every regeneration briefing meeting will include a section where the public and the press are excluded from taking part. This reinforces Ward & Jones (1999) in their discussion of the temporality of entry to research information. Since my research began, access to information from Salford Council appears to have become harder to obtain. There has been a foreclosure of accessible information. This has caused me to reflect on my own research as the product of data that I have been able to gain access to and the implication of further closing the research field (Bryman 2012).

## 4.7 Data analysis

My interviews were on average an hour long, with some being as short as 40 minutes and some being as long as two hours. I began transcribing my interviews using transcription software called 'Express Scribe'. I also utilised the services of a professional transcriber. My data was analysed using NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software package that allows users to, amongst other things, code data in to themes and categories (Bazeley & Jackson 2013). Of course the software itself is just a tool to organise the researcher's analysis. The construction and direction of the analysis comes from the researcher and will be informed by both the data but also the prior knowledge and theoretical understanding held by the researcher and shaped by the questions asked (Ryan & Bernard 2003). For my data analysis I took a reflexive approach in which I allowed themes to emerge from a close reading of the text. Themes in this context are categories that are identified by the researcher through their data which relate to the research focus/question and that builds on the codes identified through the analysis process which allows for a theoretical understanding of that data (Bryman 2012). Thematic analysis in my research was conducted by firstly reading through all the transcripts and field notes generated through the data collection stage. Once this had

been done and several common features began to emerge, I used NVivo to generate codes; which are the labels attached to text.

To begin with my codes were a mixture of descriptive (e.g. specific mention of *partnership*) and topical/thematic (e.g. discussion of working with the private sector). My initial coding approach took the form of a 'splitter' (lots of codes looking for fine grained themes) as opposed to a 'lumper' (fewer overarching themes) (Ryan & Bernard 2003, p95). The result of this was that many codes were created. Using NVivo then I was able to cluster together some of these codes in to hierarchical tree-structures. These hierarchies resulted from considering and developing an overarching analytical concept that the codes all identified with (Bazeley & Jackson 2013). Below (figure 15) is an example of where codes were created in the first instance and then recoded in to higher levels of themes. In the example below there was often reference to generating growth which I had coded initially as 'Growth creation'. This then was recoded within a theme that referred to the general notion of being driven by the market. I called this code 'Being market led – proactive' as there was also a theme of 'Being market led – resistant'. However, both of these, amongst others, were eventually recoded under an analytical theme of 'Normalising private growth' which referred to the normalisation of a growth agenda as a regeneration practice. I came to this overarching theme after the initial coding process in which I considered what it was that all these themes were speaking to and what was linking them together. A normalising process seemed to be at work amongst the discourses that I had gathered.



*Figure 15: Example of authors coding hierarchy*

As mentioned above, these themes were not objectively data driven but were shaped in part by the literature that I had already read up to this point. This then raises the question of validity. How can I know as a researcher that my themes are valid and not purely verification bias? As Ryan & Bernard (2003, p104) highlight there is no 'ultimate demonstration of validity' and different researchers will undoubtedly identify different themes to one another. There are two things that Ryan and Bernard identify can be done to make validity more likely. The first is to be clear about what judgements have been made about the data throughout the research. If it is made clear what is an inference rather than a fact then the reader is able to refute these claims if they so wish. The second is 'intercoder agreement'. This is where several researchers agree on a coding framework. As this was an individual project with only one researcher then this was not possible. However, discussions I had with my thesis advisors could be seen to be acting in this manner. Ultimately, I will rely on making my judgements clear and provide enough detail of quotes and context to allow the reader the scope to question these judgements as they see fit.

Discourse analysis also influenced my data analysis method for both the interview and the documents identified above. This was informed by prior research on urban policy that used discourse analysis as a methodology (see for example Jacobs 2006; Lees 2004; Atkinson 1999; Hastings 2000). In particular I was interested in using discourse analysis to identify 'how a narrative *constructs* a particular problem' (Hajer 2006, p66) and how solutions are also legitimised using this same construction. This enabled me to focus on answering my research questions, in particular:

- What is the purpose of regeneration in Salford according to those responsible for making the decisions?
- What are the perceived benefits of regeneration in Central Salford and who are the perceived beneficiaries?
- How is the outcome of regeneration legitimised by those responsible for its occurrence?

There has been what Lees (2004) calls a 'discursive turn' amongst urban researchers who have moved towards discourse analysis as a method of understanding language as producing particular courses of action. Jacobs (2006) offers two reasons for this discursive turn. Firstly, he argues that discourse analysis allows us to uncover the role

that power and ideology plays in decision making amongst key players and organisation structures. Secondly, focusing on language gives researchers a more thorough insight in to how particular policy objectives are perused by organisations in the comments and documentation they produce.

For post-structuralists, language is not simply a tool for communicating through which our understanding of an objective reality is shared, but rather language is the mechanism through which we create that reality (Hastings 2000, p131). In this context we can think of language as being active in its production of the social. It does not just reflect but actively creates the social context that we inhabit. In analysing discourse through this lens we can start to uncover how problems are defined and produced through the language we use to explain them and subsequently how solutions are then generated to solve these problems. Its value for this particular research then is in how policy makers describe and understand the urban problems in Salford and its subsequent necessity for regeneration. Importantly, discourse analysis will allow us to see how particular solutions and regeneration programmes are justified and legitimised in the first instance but also in relation to other possible options. The language used will allow us to consider how Salford is being re-imagined and promoted through the images and visions created which are then embedded within regeneration frameworks. The focus for analysis in this research is on what actions are being enacted through the choice of particular discourses and the outcome of specific uses of language.

For Hastings (2000) researchers using discourse analysis should be concerned with what is being accomplished through the use of particular discourses, instead of treating discourse purely as an honest reflection of participant's thoughts. In not considering what is being accomplished we miss the productivity of language. We also fall in to a trap whereby we treat discourse as a participant's honest reflection rather than approaching it as ideologically driven or perhaps given as socially desirable. This is particularly important to consider when researching elites or professionals who are representatives of a particular organisation. As researchers we must be mindful of the answers given and the potential that they are carefully considered responses to politically sensitive questions. For example, I conducted an informal non-recorded

interview with a key participant who informed me that were we to conduct the interview formally i.e. recorded and used for analysis purposes, then their responses to the same questions, even though anonymous, would be different; they would be professional rather than personal answers. This highlights that participant's responses may not always be an accurate reflection of their individual beliefs and that they should not always be taken at face value. Because of this issue, discourse analysis is a useful methodology. This participant demonstrated that the organisation they work for commits to a certain ideology that is performed through the discourses they promote. Being a part of that organisation requires a similar commitment from that individual within it. Thus what would have been spoken formally would be reproducing this ideology. By focusing on discourse analysis we can unpack some of these ideologies.

Hajer (2006) refers to this as a 'discourse – coalition' which is where a group of actors engaged in a particular form of associated practice, for example regeneration, utilise a shared set of discourse which reinforces this practice, '*Discourse* is then defined as an ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning is given to phenomena, and which is produced and reproduced through an identifiable set of practices' (p70). With regards to politics and power, Hajer argues, we can see particular discourse become influential when the discourse used to conceptualise a particular phenomenon becomes institutionalised as a form of practice. Of course there will always be numerous discourses that are included in political debates, but there will usually only be one that comes out as dominant. Through my data analysis I was exploring the way in which the practice of regeneration is embedded within the dominant stories amongst the relevant discourse coalitions in Salford. Through these discourses we can identify how a particular problem has come to be defined by those in a position of storytelling and how other stories then are foreclosed or other options are side-lined. In particular, I used this methodology to identify the nuances of this institutionalisation through the differing stories proffered and the power within the coalitions that result in the dominant practice.

To assist me in analysing the discursive practices mentioned above I drew on Fairclough's three-tier framework for analysis (in Lees 2004). This is textual analysis, in

which the researcher studies the grammar, vocabulary and the way the text is structured; discursive practice, which is about considering the context in which statements are made, its process of creation and how it is informed by others; and social practice, which is the ideological and structural conditions that the discourse is constructed within (Lees 2004, p104). Primarily I was interested in the discursive and social practices that create this discourse and the effects it has on the redesigning and shaping of Salford through the regeneration frameworks produced and the discursive strategies employed by the key players interviewed to explain and justify decisions. This allowed me to highlight the circumstances through which this discourse is produced and how it comes to take a dominant position amongst contesting voices. Specifically I was interested in exploring the discourse practices used to strategise regeneration within a potentially post-political frame. Therefore I was interested in:

- The narrative 'cues' (Hastings 2000) used to define the policy problem that regeneration was intended to ameliorate, drawing on temporal discourses of decline and progress,
- The discursive presentation of the *solution* to the identified problem, drawing on a growth orientated discourse and considerations of offered alternatives,
- The justifications for those solutions, drawing on the framing on inevitable change, necessity and presentation of a 'we' that may challenge individual subjectivities (Mouffe 2005).

These discourses were then analysed in relation to the wider social and structural contexts within which these discourses were generated. In particular:

- The changing forms of democratic accountability and emerging managerialism,
- The changing practices of economic development within the urban political environment
- The way that spaces are valued in the economic and political context

One criticism levelled at discourse analysis as applied to urban policy is that it is useful for identifying issues of social justice, but that it does not do enough to actively create social justice. For Lees (2004) then, 'we need to start with the discursive, but then we need to move away from it because talking about social justice is not enough – we need to create it!" (p105). For Lees then, discourse analysis is a starting platform from which to mobilise more urban activism. Jacobs (2006) refutes this criticism as a generalisation

and misunderstanding of the interpretative role that discourse analysis should play. For Jacobs, discourse analysis is primarily about highlighting the role that language plays in power dynamics and institutional inequalities. However, I agree with Lees in that as urban researchers we should be not only highlighting but challenging inequalities. Hopefully this analysis, in conjunction with the contested narratives and multiplicity of voices in this thesis can open up some ground for critical engagement with the regeneration processes as they are occurring in Central Salford.

## 4.8 Conclusion

Throughout this chapter I have outlined the research focus of this thesis and documented the data collection process, the form it took and the choices made to answer these questions. I have also offered some reflections on the limitations of this particular chosen methodology and how I have aimed to overcome them. I have raised the issue of using Central Salford as a case study approach and the problems this raises with regards to anonymity. I have discussed some of the challenges in relation to interviewing 'elites' and ascertaining data that can be validated. I have raised the issue I had over ensuring I had selected the relevant people for the interviews and the subsequent experience of access to these identified participants. I have also discussed the problem of available documentation to be analysed and that which is closed to the public. I have outlined the data analysis techniques that will be used and the potential challenges that these raise.

The following empirical chapters will start to explore the data collected and unpack some of the themes that have been identified throughout the analysis process. This next chapter in particular will focus on the outcome of the discourse analysis, looking in particular at how Central Salford has been perceived to benefit from regeneration and who the intended beneficiaries are. Each section in the chapter has been arranged around the common themes that emerged from the data using relevant examples to highlight and justify the arguments raised.

# 5. City on a journey: the 'right to dwell' in a changing Salford

## 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will be focusing on the three research questions identified in the methodology which are; what is the purpose of regeneration in Salford according to those responsible for making the decisions? What are the perceived benefits of regeneration in Central Salford and who are the perceived beneficiaries? How is the outcome of regeneration legitimised by those responsible for its occurrence? This chapter will begin with an exposition of the data gathered throughout this research from research participants to start to answer these questions. It includes data from the point of view of the policy makers, which include those from the public sector, the private sector and the third sector. It also includes data from interviews conducted with community members involved in relevant community housing associations. Each section has been arranged around the common themes emerging from the data.

The chapter outlines the journey that Salford is intended on taking, as determined by the policy makers. It outlines the transformations needed for Salford to achieve the changes necessary to make this journey. The chapter begins by exploring the narratives from participants that depict Salford after the loss of industry as a city in decline, a city that has regressed through a loss of population, employment and economic capital. In particular the city is described as having lost 'good people' and in its place has resulted in a residualised population of unemployment and poverty. This discursive frame is then used to justify market intervention that reimagines and restructures the area, something which is depicted as normal and necessary to reverse such decline and begin a journey towards modernization and progress. It will be argued that this begins a process of reducing the multiple uses of space into one that will signify this transformation. Drawing on Massey (2001), it will explore the concept of a trajectory which forces all on to a singular linear timeline, foreclosing alternative options for a different trajectory.

The chapter will explore how resistance to change from residents is deflected by policy makers as either a misunderstanding of the benefits to be realized or as an unwillingness

to progress. Through this discursive reframing of resistance it is argued that dissenting voices are quietened so as not to challenge the planned future for Salford. It will be discussed how local residents are seen as feeling 'out of place' in the newly regenerated spaces like SQ due to the class signifiers built in to this environment and the erosion of familiar cultural symbols. I will raise the theme of tolerance and discuss how local residents are not necessarily tolerated within these spaces as they are seen as not using this space in the 'right way', drawing on the notion of 'cultural capital'. This will raise the issue of exclusion and an 'us and them' divide.

The theme of aspiration will then be explored to discuss how SQ and other developments are to be utilised by local residents. It will be argued that discourses of aspiration building is used as a 'pacifying force' (Raco & Henderson 2009) to negate the lack of benefits generated for local residents from these developments. New developments are designed as something for local residents to aspire to rather than immediately benefit from. This pacifier places the onus on the residents to achieve success and to justify a possible lack of tangible benefits. This links to a discussion of a skills deficit. The notion of skills was raised as a problem for local residents. They are depicted as not having the skills required to take advantage of the new jobs created in the area. It will be argued again that this is a legitimising discourse which deflects blame away from the creation of a new economy which does not meet the needs of residents. It will raise the implication of what Raco et al (Raco et al. 2008) calls a 'politics of space-time' in which benefits for some are prioritized as occurring before others. For some, their perceived benefits are pushed to an undefined time period.

The chapter will discuss the changing residential population of the area and the priority to create mixed tenure neighbourhoods that reduce the size of monotenure estates whilst trying to ensure there is no displacement. Within this theme we can see that the policy makers are striving to bring economically active residents to the area. To do this the area is being redeveloped to meet their requirements. It will be argued that what is occurring here is the dilution of the concentrated problems in the area that regeneration is intended to solve. Increasing the economic base of the area and the number of employed who live there in a socially mixed way serves to improve the demographics of

the area without actually reducing the problems in holds. This will also explore the possibility of gentrification and the returning of the middle classes to a working class area through policies of social mixing.

From this theme I will explore how it relates to what Slater calls 'false choice urbanism' (2014). For Slater, regeneration or gentrification as he sees it is posited as an alternative choice to decline or deprivation. Gentrification and its potential negative social implications like displacement are still seen as preferable to a lack of investment or decline. Within this binary gentrification becomes the chosen outcome and focus is on reducing the negative implications of this. These negative implication then become a moral problem; how to avoid displacement, how to avoid exclusion. However, in focusing on the moral implications we neglect the broader question of how these inequalities emerged in the first instance. And this is the false choice for Slater, as both options (investment and disinvestment) are a result of circuits of capital accumulation that is both the problem of uneven development and the solution to it.

The chapter will then move on to consider how the journey Salford is taking is forcing those involved on to a singular trajectory which reduces the diversity of experience within a space and challenges what Davidson (2009) calls the 'right to dwell'. When we consider space in economic terms we overlook space as social and as a lived experience. Displacement can occur even if one remains geographically located. It occurs through the dislocation of someone and their relation to their changing environment. One can reside in a place but begin to feel 'out of place'. This chapter will explore how local residents are increasingly unable to 'dwell' in a manner that is not aligned to the journey that Salford is undertaking. There is a foreclosure over the multiplicity of identities and ways of living allowed within this space.

## 5.2 A Failing City

Interviews conducted with participants involved in the regeneration of Salford all began their narratives of change from a position of decline. The discursive frame used to describe Salford prior to the beginning of its regeneration was that of a failing city, a city in reverse or in backwards motion. The narrative was that after the collapse of industry

there was mass unemployment and those who could leave the area did so. Demand for housing reduced which generated a change in ownership and tenancy type. People with greatest need moved in to the area and the crime rate increased. Capital in terms of services and facilities left the area. They were, as one participant described it, 'sucked out'. The below exemplifies this sentiment. After deindustrialization and the beginnings of a population loss;

> "They then put in housing benefit type tenants who don't care about the property. Their rent is paid straight to the landlord so they're okay. They just sit there and there's no community cohesion. So the community that was very solid begins to break up. That then attracts more anti-social behaviour, more crime often around drug dealing, petty crime and criminals. That means that the remaining good people think 'I don't want to be here', so they sell. The only people then buying are at the wrong end of the market. So you get more properties owned by absentee landlords with the wrong type of tenant, increasing fractured community matters, more crime, more anti-social behaviour. It's a continuing spiral down" (3 - Planning Professional).

This socio-historical account of a 'spiral' of decline was offered readily when explaining the need for regeneration. The result was an area of residualised poverty that did not compete in the economic market for financial investment of any kind,

> "Interviewer: Why do you think that it was low demand housing?
>
> Participant 2: Well there was a sort of vicious circle. There was terraced property which people unfortunately some had been sold off to landlords, landlords had put in tenants that weren't particularly good tenants causing problems on the streets, people moved out of the area, the value of the propertied started to go down and there was a vicious spiral downwards" (2 – Elected Official)

In framing the problem in this manner it opens up a legitimising discourse in which it is reasonable for policy makers to want a return of those good people to the area. Not only would this improve the tenant base but it would also return capital to the area. The discursive construction of the problem Salford was facing as one of a declining social and economic base serves several purposes. For Mele (2000), the employment of these particular narratives serves to 'define urban restructuring as normal and beneficial' and by linking the physical with the social it legitimizes change and also silences dissenting voices from those considered responsible for the problems. Secondly these discourses legitimize the negative social implications, especially displacement of residents, as it seeks to 'better' the area through its restructuring and changing residential base. Displacement becomes a necessary but unfortunate feature of improvement. Mele also argues that these discourses facilitate the need for a new identity in order to accomplish the necessary change (p632).

What this discourse also does is construct Salford in temporal rather than spatial terms. The narrative of Salford is that it was in some ways regressing or going backwards as opposed to moving forwards, to progressing or developing. For Massey (2001), conflating space with time creates a trajectory of development that forces a place onto a singular linear timeline. Space should be understood as the site of difference all existing simultaneously. However, when a place is forced to be considered on a temporal axis it reduces this difference of a place or the multiplicity within this space so that all are pushed in the same direction and to the same end point. It closes down the possibility of difference or living in different ways and the chance to move along a different trajectory. Instead it points to an 'inevitable' future for all. Drawing on both Mele (2000) and Massey (2001) we can see Salford being conflated with the temporal. The differing experiences of people living within that space is described as regressing rather than progressing, foreclosing the option to remain in this way. It is important then to consider what trajectory Salford will be expected to take through its urban restructuring.

## 5.3 A time for change

### 5.3.1 Local stagnation

It is envisioned that Salford Central will undergo substantial change over the coming years. Central Salford's *Vision and Regeneration Framework* states that "Central Salford will be transformed" (Central Salford Urban Regeneration Company 2006: 7). According to the writers of this Framework the vision for Central Salford is "…deliberately ambitious. It envisages comprehensive transformation" (*ibid*, p8). This transformation is framed in the documentation as a 'journey', one through which Salford will be reborn as a competitive modern city. Frequently occurring discourse from the policy makers interviewed also framed regeneration in this temporal way as a journey or progression towards a particular way of life, particularly a more 'modern' way of life, one in which "Local communities must – and will – play their part in this journey" (Salford City Council 2013d: 4).

However, one of the frequently reoccurring themes emerging from interviews conducted with participants spoke of the immobility, or stagnation of the local community rather than them participating in a journey. As the below quote demonstrates,

> *"Yes its [regeneration] changing things and that's always a very difficult thing to do because people have got ideas as to where they, you know, as they'd like things to stay as they were" (2 - Elected Official).*

The perceived desire by local residents not to participate in this journey, not to change the materiality of their local space was viewed in the negative: as a lack of foresight or understanding about how the future for the area and consequently themselves *will* look.

> *"The younger element gets it [Salford Quays] because it's about modern living and how modern living is. You know, you've got to change." (4 - Elected Official.)*

The participant here was referring to the style of living created for people at SQ. SQ is described as being;

> "…a 24 hour metropolis of the highest international quality, offering an extraordinary environment in which to live, learn, visit, create, watch, or simply experience" (Salford City Council 2008b: 64).

For the local residents to express resistance towards this very distinctive and 'modern' style of development at SQ then demonstrates, in this participant's view, a lack of understanding about what the future will inevitably look like. This sentiment echoes Allen's (2008) research which demonstrated that resistance towards regeneration efforts by residents (HMR in his study) were perceived, accepted and reproduced by policy makers and developers as a fundamental lack of understanding on the resident's behalf. The dominant assumption was that the residents displayed resistance because they had not yet fully understood the purpose of the development or the 'benefits' they would obtain in the future from the developments. Resistance, therefore, is framed as a communication problem, one that can be solved by breaking down the problem to be explained in more detail, or by producing more examples to demonstrate the type of urban environment to be understood. Either solution however, serves to reduce any resistance to changes to communication problems, rather than to a developing conflict over the construction of this particular future (Allen 2008). We can see this occurring in Salford through the use of this language that posits resistance as a lack of understanding about what is to come. There is a restriction over the possibility of an alternative to this inevitable future for Salford.

In the following quote, SQ is understood to represents a microcosm of Salford's future.

> "I like to think (Salford Quays) reflects what Salford will become, yes. And that's why I keep saying to people that we are very proud of our past but we don't want to live in it. We actually want a future and (Salford Quays) represents our future and that represents how our world is going to develop" (2 - Elected Official)

The participants in this study often referred to a very particular conception of future. For these participants, the future is one in which Salford can engage and compete as a 'modern global city', where growth, investment and desirable urban living is prominent (Salford City Council 2013d). As Robinson (2002) argues, the concept of the Global city is a 'regulation fiction', one which designates this type of achievement as a developmental goal in itself, restricting other economic or cultural ways of living. Becoming a global city is an ends which justifies the means, and directs all policy processes towards achieving this goal. Allen (2008) argues that by representing a particular position as self-evident i.e. that there exists one particular, inevitable future, we can obscure the wider structural conditions in which this view was produced. Axiomatic assertions about a particular 'future' hide any self-interest or self-benefit that may sit behind this very particular and constructed view of what the future will look like. By representing it as inevitable the residents of Salford may be less inclined to question how becoming a Global City will benefit them.

Within the descriptive imagery of being stagnant, Salford communities were also very often described as being 'traditional'. What this meant was that they were seen to be 'close-knit', stable and unchanging communities, particularly within the mono-tenure housing estates. The view from some research participants was that, whilst these traditional types of communities could be seen as a positive, in an almost nostalgic way, it was also necessary to be open to change;

> "I still want to maintain [traditional neighbourhoods] don't get me wrong,
> but I want people to be moving in to those local neighbourhoods and
> becoming part of it, rather than just staying as it is". (2 - Elected Official).

The above quote demonstrates a paradox. Whilst the participant acknowledges the desire to 'maintain' these pre-existing communities, their preference is that they will also be able to incorporate incoming groups. For the same participant however, a traditional community was also expressed as a negative. There was a sense that a more transient and changing residential base was preferable because it was characteristic of a creative city, something which was held up amongst urban regeneration professionals in Salford as a utopian ideal,

*"Creative cities do tend to have a higher amount of immigration and people coming in to the area and a bit of a churned over population. So I think it's much better to have that than an entirely static population that's never moving or changing."* *(2 - Elected Official)*

However, the negative description of stagnant communities was at odds with some of the residents in these transition areas who expressed feelings of stability and good fortune to be living in such 'static' communities. As the below quotes demonstrate:

*"I've lived in this house since it was built. This is a council house, you know, on this estate. My house was built 16 October. Well, that was the date we moved in, 16 October 1978, so we're coming up to 35 years. Very lucky – I've got the original neighbours as well either side"* *(9 - community representative, emphasis added)*

*"A lot of them have lived there since they were built in 71 or 72. I'm one of the newcomers and I've been there 20 years!"* *(12 - community representative).*

The above quotes place residents who fall in to this category directly at odds with the desires and vision for Salford that the regeneration policy makers foresee. The above residents find a sense of comfort and happiness at the fact that they are long term residents with stable neighbours. This fact is a source of value for them. However, by positioning communities as unchanging and outdated they are inherently framed as standing in the way of progress. It places residents in a position of resistance or almost deliberate immobility. They are set apart from what Salford is going to become,

*"Salford is quite parochial and people want to stay near their parents, near their family, near their friends"* *(4 - Elected Official).*

These discourses of stagnation and parochial resistance de-legitimise the wants of residents to live in a manner that is inconsistent with the dominant views of what Salford is intended to become. It begins a process of what Atkinson (2015) calls 'un-homing', a process of changing people's attachments to their environment and challenging their

rights to experience it in a manner that has been no longer accepted as legitimate (p4). The local communities discussed above are less warranted within the new visions for Salford from the policy maker's point of view.

### 5.3.2 Exposure

Very often it was expressed that local residents did not see new developments like SQ as relevant to their lives, particularly some of the cultural developments like The Lowry;

> *"The Lowry, … I think it is kind of accepted that people who live nearby…, Ordsall and Langworthy wards, generally don't consume the cultural products if you like, It's one way of putting it, offered by the Lowry" (22 - Council Employee).*

This is reinforced through The New Economy (2013) report on The Lowry that stated the majority of visitors come from outside the Salford/Manchester area. In a bid to try to encourage local residents to attend they have established an 'Our Lowry' scheme. Through 'Our Lowry' membership local residents can receive discounted tickets and, whilst it is acknowledged that the majority of these discounts have been dominated by people from the more affluent areas of Salford the report states that "the scheme has managed to attract over 2,000 members from more deprived Salford neighbourhoods" (New Economy, 2013, p19). The report does not clarify the demographics of these particular residents. However, they are set apart as 'different' from the typical Lowry visitors,

> *"…these Our Lowry performances are noticeable by the different audience they bring to the venue and the extra energy and excitement this generates during the performance" (New Economy 2013, p19).*

Side stepping the hint of condescension in this statement, it highlights quite clearly that local Salford residents embody a difference which is amplified when in a space like The Lowry. Their presence is noticeable in this space because of their usual absence. The below quotes demonstrate the perception from the policy makers of this situation,

*"There is a sense that these opportunities (at Salford Quays) are… seen, 'it's not for us, it's for others and it never will be for us'"* (22 - Council Employee)

*"There was this sense that a lot of things 'weren't for the likes of us'"* (1 - Elected Official)

This theme was reinforced from the conversation had with local residents and third sector representatives. As the below resident states,

*"(Salford Quays) relationship with me though is nonexistent, and the relationship with the kids I work with is nonexistent"* (17 - Community resident/representative)

There is an expression here of being symbolically excluded from this space because of the symbolism it is imbued with. Davidson (2009) has argued that class distinction is built in to the physical architecture of a newly developed space. This is done in regenerated and gentrified spaces to reproduce class divisions. This reproduction is necessary to distinguish middle class practice from working class practice. Davidson argues that middle class identity *needs* a working class identity to distinguish itself from; there needs to be a baseline from which one can be elevated. Here Davidson is talking about 'new build' gentrification as opposed to classical gentrification. Classical gentrification refers to the process whereby middle class groups move in to working class neighbourhoods and change it though their cultural and economic consumption practices, reinforced by their economic capital (Davidson 2009). Their differences become apparent and restrict social mixing. However, new build gentrification is developer led. As Davidson states,

"Distinctions between `them' (incumbent working-class residents) and `us' (gentrifiers) are therefore presented, shaped, and mediated by the architecture, marketing, and built form of gentrifying developments created by real estate developers" (2009, p537).

The differences are purposely built in to the physical environment to attract a particular class group and enable those class distinctions to be maintained. This is necessary from a developer's perspective to position and market the development as a successful, competitive destination. In doing this it symbolically removes the space from its local area.

What emerged in the interviews is the experience of this exclusionary effect of distinction. However, this exclusion experienced by local residents was packaged by the policy makers interviewed as a 'disconnection' from SQ that comes from the residents themselves. The assumption was that they were wary or fearful of the unknown contained within SQ. The solution posited to this feeling of exclusion was that of exposure. Exposing local residents to the new types of culture or lifestyles on offer in this space would encourage them to use it and open them up to different opportunities,

> *"…university wasn't for them because that was for somebody else, the opera has nothing to do with us, you know, ballet, you know, exposure to it. It's not a question of forcing people to like particular things but actually making sure that they have the opportunity to grab hold of the things that they like" (1 - Elected Official).*

When this participant was asked to expand upon why local residents may feel that the types of developments in SQ were not for them, the answer was framed as one of class difference, as the below quote demonstrates,

> *"You could probably go to any inner city area in the country and find that this was the case and that it had something to do with social class, what sort of work the parents did, and all the things associated with that, which meant that there needed to be some intervention to expose… people to all the opportunities that life could offer" (1 - Elected Official)*

The response here suggests that the reproduction of people's social class, in this case working class, through the influence of parental generation's limits people's abilities to engage with these new opportunities. Opportunities here refer to the developments at

SQ like The Lowry, MediaCityUK and the University; spaces designed with a middle/upper class lifestyle in mind. The disconnection here is seen to lie with the individual. The responsibility of the Local Authority then is to change the individual through an 'intervention' in to their lives. However, it could be argued that this ignores the class demarcations that these cultural aesthetics create. This symbolic distinction contributes to local residents perceiving of the space as not for them. To assume that simple exposure to this space would result in consumption of the products on offer negates the class displacement that it inherently generates. It also ignores the embodied capital necessary to consume these products in the 'right' way (Bourdieu 1986).

Bridge (2001) argues that aesthetically redesigning a city is an act of class power, it is "to transform working-class housing into a display of bourgeois good taste" (p 93). Drawing on Bourdieu's theory of capital, Bridge states that certain displays and embodiments of culture are placed at higher value than others and that it is those with power who are able to determine and classify what is seen as being good taste. These distinctions in taste reinforce class boundaries. Gentrification is one way in which working class spaces are reclassified and bounded as middle class spaces. This is achieved through the inclusion of particular types of living, leisure and consumption practices which are more aligned to the tastes and value judgments of middle class residents. The exclusion of working class cultural expression demarcates the space as one that is not intended for working class residents (Bridge 2001).

Cultural capital, in Bourdieu's (1986) definition, has 3 forms: Embodied cultural capital are the skills, knowledge and tastes acquired over time, most notably 'inherited' through family socialization and is often "unrecognized as capital and recognized as legitimate competence" (p 86); the Objectified state of cultural capital is this capital in its material form e.g. Art, literature, instruments and the like, but these materials can only be consumed using the embodied capital of the individual; Institutional capital is the institutional recognition of the embodied cultural capital through for example educational attainment (1986). As Bridge (2006) argues, class power is exercised through all three forms of cultural capital as each form enables distinctions to be made which separate out tastes as legitimate or not.

Using the notion of cultural capital we can see how local residents may feel displaced from this space. In the recreation of SQ there has been a transition of cultural tastes or a creation of a new set of tastes which are being legitimized as the dominant form. Pure exposure to these leisure and consumption habits does not automatically result in assimilation with this space. In fact it may serve to reinforce that capital distinctions between groups as one set consume in the right way and the other do not.

It is difficult to ascertain exactly how often local residents actually do use SQ. However, what is evident amongst participants in this study was a tension over the loss of what would have been perceived as the more working class cultures and spaces of leisure in the area, predominantly the local shops and pubs. The below quote demonstrates the historical predominance of those spaces in the local area,

> *"For maybe 100 little corner shops they might only have like 5 shops left. For all the pubs that they had… there used to be a saying that you could never get from one end of Regent Road to the other and have a half a pint in every pub without being too drunk, run out of time or whatever. You'd never make it. Now there isn't one pub on that road"* (12 - Community representative).

> *"Just down the road here, if you go down Lower Broughton Road, down to the bottom of it, there were probably half a dozen pubs round there. Because people worked in heavy industry, heavy work, they'd come home and they'd go for a few pints or whatever. They're all gone bar about two I think now… nearly all of them have been demolished"* (19 - Elected official)

As the above two quotes demonstrate, there is a narrative of loss here, particularly regarding the pubs in Central Salford in recent years. Within this narrative of loss there lies a wider concern with what Cole (2013) calls a 'symbol of decline', whereby neighbourhood facilities, places of employment and shared social space disappear from a neighbourhood (p.74). The practical and symbolic function these places once performed are lost without *respective* replacement, signaling an erosion of legitimate

avenues for social engagement and interaction. The narratives of loss also signal a discomfort as local residents slowly become de-familiar with the area in which they reside. For Atkinson (2015) this ushers in a sense of "psychic distance" from the landscapes that emerge around people which represents a break from the past (p11). The old pubs that remain in the area but no longer as pubs do so in another guise, either as an abandoned relic of the past or as a frontage housing another purpose, for example a nursery.

The above residents spoke about these spaces with both a fondness and sadness. They shape memories of a shared past. They are, as Edensor (2008) calls, an 'absent-presence' that haunt the present day. They are reminders of histories past and they remain present in memory for the residents who used them previously. And whilst the eradication of the more obvious working class cultures is treated with sadness and nostalgia, the imposition of middle and upper class culture at SQ was treated as an aberrant indulgence, as the below quote demonstrates:

> "(Salford Council) gave a lot of money to the Philharmonic Orchestra I think. Well, what good is that to a pensioner trying to heat her home or trying to put food on the table?" (7 - Community representative).

This resident expressed a sentiment common amongst other people spoken to: that the cultural developments at SQ are so far removed from the realm of accustomed daily life that they become in direct opposition to it. For the above participant, publicly funding the Philharmonic Orchestra is taking funding directly away from local residents, particularly those on low incomes. So rather than exposure to the Quays resulting in usage, there is a possibility that it could lead to factionalism, as the below resident remarked on the same topic,

> "I don't go there [Salford Quays], I hate it. It's an absolute fucking disgrace" (17 - Community representative).

For this resident, SQ was a disgrace because it represents the prioritising of something for outside groups over local residents. It is seen as a visible display of the replacement

of local culture and heritage for the purpose of redesigning the space for the interest of someone else.

### 5.3.3 (Not) tolerating the locals

The previous section discussed exposing the local residents to the new developments in Salford, particularly at places like SQ. The assumptions raised above from the public sector policy makers was that the local residents needed to be exposed *to* these developments so as to encourage them to make use of and develop a taste for the products and services on offer. This next section will explore the inverse of that exposure; exposing the incoming groups *to* the local residents. One of the themes that emerged from the interviews conducted was that local residents were not always tolerated within the newly developed spaces or by the incoming residents. As the below participant described:

> *"Local people do use the Quays but it's not always appreciated. When the weather is hot kids go swimming in the Quays water and unfortunately what sometimes happens if it's a, you can almost write a formula around this, you need a number of days of consecutive warm weather and the numbers increase over that time people going over and then you get families going over, big groups of young men and if it's a weekend they will be drinking all day and guess what happened next, you know, ASB, some criminal damage, some mischief which goes beyond fun really, local residents get abused, it's not a happy scene really when it gets like that"*
> *(22 - Council Employee).*

The above quote is referring to what is and is not deemed as acceptable and legitimate forms of usage at SQ. Coleman (2003) argues, drawing on Sibley's notion of 'boundary erection', that urban spaces have been re-imagined in ways that promote disorder free spaces of 'quality of living' and consumption. As part of a broader neoliberal shift towards encouraging flows of economic capital back to the city through ordering, sanitizing and regulating urban centres, this re-imagining creates boundaries that are constructed through the intolerance of difference within those spaces. This is a

reinforcement of Davidson's (2009) argument in the previous section about maintaining distinctions between 'them' and 'us'. The designing of these spaces physically builds in a sense of legitimate order and thus illegitimate disorder. Dictating appropriate behaviour through moral separations reinforces these boundaries. They enable a symbolic or real denial of access based on what is predetermined as inappropriate behaviour or usage of those developments. This spatial ordering can be described as social ordering, in which certain types of people belong and others do not (Edensor 2005b).

This careful planning and ordering can be seen in SQ which has created a space in which its use is highly regulated, carefully designed and built with particular type of use in mind. The restaurants, piazzas and pop-up-bars determine what food and alcohol can be consumed and in which places; the designated seats and recreational commons dictate where to pause and relax; the walkways and bridges channel the movement of people down specific routes and the carefully manicured and maintained physical externality communicates to users how the area is to be treated. The looming access controlled buildings dictate who can come and go. The lack of affordable or social housing on the site specifies the income expectation of the residents who live there. The usual urban security presence, both public and private, reinforces appropriate behavior within this environment, particularly the private security at MediaCityUK who patrol the privately owned terrain on futuristic Segways. Swimming and other water sports in the Quays is allowed, but only through the designated purpose built Water Sports Centre which requires prior registration and payment, of which swimming is £5 per time.

This sense of appropriate use was summed up by one respondent, who stated simply that,

> "It's not just about bricks and mortar… it's about how people use it" (8 -
> Private developer).

As mentioned previously, there used to be a dispersal order at the Quays to allow police and security to dispel groups of people identified as acting anti socially or making people feel harassed or intimidated within the dispersal zone. This dispersal order was called

for in part by businesses, residents and workers at the Quays who identified particular behaviour they deemed anti-social, which included unregulated swimming in the water. However, in recent years this order has not been used in part due to the negative public reaction to this power (see The Salford Star 2010a) and in part because the same process can be done via different means, as the below quote demonstrates,

> *"It is a power that you could use, a legitimate power, um, but there are some Salford Councilors who don't like us doing a dispersal order. They think it gives a bad impression... Anyway we didn't have one last year and we don't have one this year so there's no dispersal power, and one of the reasons we've not done it this year is that police officers last year said actually, when the kids realised there wasn't a dispersal order they didn't run away from the police. So the police were able to talk to them and persuade them to leave" (22 - Council Employee).*

Thus, the dispersal of people within this space still occurs but through a method which reduces dissenting voices. Exclusion takes place through persuasion rather than force, reducing the bad impression it creates. This raises the issue of tolerance and (un)acceptable behaviours in this area. Linking back to Coleman's (2003) discussion, a key feature in the revalorizing of post-industrial urban spaces has been the necessity to build into the physical environment notions of safety, predictability and civility. Signs of crime and disorder or lower level Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and nuisance behaviours are at odds with the re-imagining of urban centres that are keen to promote safe and sanitized cultural and consumer spaces which promote a good quality of life. As Atkinson (2003a) has argued, people increasingly need to "conform or pay to use public space" (p.1832). What is seen to be occurring in redeveloped spaces like SQ is that they are being re-imagined for a middle class audience. This is symbolically excluding local residents by signifying its intended beneficiaries as being other incoming people. Those local residents who are using that space in a way that is designated as inappropriate or uncivilized are othered via exclusionary methods based on cultural or economic capital. Residents and consumers using SQ in the 'correct' way are seeing disorder in its

inappropriate usage. They are seen as not having a legitimate form of 'embodied capital' with which to display competence in their use of this space (Bridge 2001).

Conversations with policing representatives and public sector policy makers commented that the incoming groups are much less tolerant of certain types of behaviours, particularly around anti-social behavior. Behaviours that may have been previously tolerated by existing residents are no longer tolerated. As one police officer describes it, the incoming groups have a lower 'threshold' for disorder and ASB. They are more likely to report these issues to the police or the Council and they are described as being more 'resource intensive' as they expect a suitable police response to their reports. One of the tasks in redeveloping Salford is to change its reputation as a high crime area. Reducing crime and disorder is a key feature of the many regeneration schemes in Central Salford and planning guidance require developers to take safety and security in to consideration when designing the new developments in central Salford. As the below quote demonstrates,

> *"it's almost as if it's easier for them to go somewhere else because the community has changed and they're now prepared to grass-up their neighbour, which they wouldn't do before" (3 – Planning Professional).*

There are differing perceptions of incivility here. And whilst no doubt some of what the above quote is referring to is genuine criminality which will negatively affect residents, some of it is also described as behavior seen as *unproblematic* by the existing residents. This is compounded by the intolerance of particular types of usage that set groups apart based on issues of taste and moral sentiments of civility.

The intolerance, however, is not all one way. There is also a perceived element of resistance from the existing communities to the incoming groups. The close-knit element of some of the local communities that was seen previously as a barrier to modernization is also seen as a barrier to community mixing. As the below quote demonstrates,

*"It's like a little village. They are not very tolerant of new comers to the area and that's been a big challenge for us with new people moving on to the estate"* (22 - Council Employee).

Whilst it is assumed that there will be examples of harmonious interactions between incoming and existing residents in central Salford, what the participants interviewed here referenced were intimations and explicit examples of conflict. They represent what Jeffery and Jackson (2012) referred to as a proximate class disparity which is then a "cause of friction, antagonism and conflict" (p.19). Demarcating space for different social uses erects boundaries within the actual lived experience of place. These boundaries exist regardless of 'exposure' to these spaces. They also serve to reduce the multiplicity of existence within the space, challenging the rights of people to experience place in a manner suited to them or in a manner considered to be different.

### 5.3.4 Inspiring the locals to aspire?

Rhetorics of disconnection and exclusion mentioned above were very often explained as a problem of low aspirations, particularly in relation to employment. The discourse around a dependency culture and aspiration building is an embodiment of New Labour's 'social inclusion' policy strategy of the late 1990's, as described in chapter two. It was during New Labour's term in office that we saw a policy shift from notions of equality to notions of inclusion/exclusion. The solution for New Labour to this exclusion for both individuals and whole residential areas was to enable them to reconnect. For individuals this was done through increasing aspirations and social capital which will allow people to be in a position to take advantage of the opportunities on offer rather than offering direct provision (Kearns 2003). This fed in to the wider neoliberal shift to responsibilise individuals.

One of the key benefits of exposure to SQ, policy makers expressed, was that it would give local people something to aspire to in the future. This was particularly in relation to the prospect of jobs for the younger generations of local people. The current perception is that local people suffer high levels of unemployment because they have become disconnected from the work place due to a lack of aspiration or confidence. There was

an assumption from many of the policy makers interviewed that Salford suffered from a 'dependency culture'; that some local residents were content not to work, as the below quote demonstrates,

> "The communities here have spent so much of their life living on benefits and they operate on the grey economy. That's the way it works. They're not necessarily going to want to change that unless somebody tells them that their benefit is going to be stopped and they've got to change it." (14 - Council employee).

As Leitner et al (2007) argue, neoliberal cities rely on their citizens being responsibilised, hard-working and contributing. Under this guise, individuals become responsible in part, not only for their disconnection but for their reconnection also. SQ is seen as something which will encourage and inspire local people to make that choice,

> "I think Media City has got to be seen as something which local people aspire to" (15 - Council employee).

In promoting SQ as something to aspire to, there are less tangible guarantees around actual provision of employment for local people from this development. Aspiration here can be used to serve as a panacea of trickle-down. As Raco and Henderson (2009) note, regeneration discourses promoting inclusion and aspiration building over underlying structural issues like the loss of employment opportunities and housing availability can be used 'strategically as a pacifying force' (p302). It legitimizes an outcome in which benefits from regeneration efforts are not felt by local people. It acts as a preemptive justification for this potential disconnection. It also serves to deflect the blame away from the authorities for the lack of opportunities or successes of local residents.

## 5.4 Benefitting the locals

### 5.4.1 Local and low-skilled

So far I have discussed how policy makers intend the transformation of Salford to take place and the legitimation of the effects this has on the lived experience of Salford

residents and incoming groups. It is envisioned that Salford residents will modernize in line with the future vision for Salford as a 'modern global city'. In doing this they are expected to navigate an increasingly changing landscape. It is expected that exposure to these spaces will overcome feelings of being 'out of place'. It is also expected that it will inspire people to embrace the products on offer, including employment, leisure and housing. It can act as a visual representation to mobilize accomplishment.

Alongside some of the cultural barriers in place to achieving this aim as identified above, other issues relate to the skill base of Salford residents. So whilst aspiration is promoted as a necessity to modernise, it has to be translated into employable skills to become usable. The problem of skills shortage has become more apparent with the changing labour market in Salford. According to the New Economy's (2010) latest Economic Assessment of Salford the majority of the 2000's saw the highest number of private sector job growth of any of the other Greater Manchester conurbations in Salford and substantially above the national average (+11.5%, from 82,400 to 91,900 private sector employees). The main drivers of private sector growth in Salford, and neighbouring Manchester, have been in the financial and professional services. This sector has doubled in size over the past decade and now accounts for approximately one fifth of all employment in Salford (from 5.8% to 18.3% of all jobs in 2010). In particular Salford has a large number of banking and insurance companies, though much of the productivity in this sector in Salford are likely to be the back office functions, as indicated by the lower than average wages.  The development of Media City has also caused an expansion in the digital and creative media industries (New Economy 2010). Whilst the increase in private sector growth is heralded as a barometer of the good economic health of the city, the evidence states that the residents in Salford are not benefitting from this growth. Work place wages are lower in Salford than other comparable Greater Manchester Local Authorities indicating that many of the new business functions are lower value types or back office jobs. Additionally, Salford *residents'* wages are again lower than the average *work place* wages, indicating that actual Salford residents may not have the requisite skills to obtain these particular jobs (see table 2) (New Economy 2010).

| AREA | RESIDENT | | WORKPLACE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ANNUAL | WEEKLY | ANNUAL | WEEKLY |
| Bolton | £23,164 | £445 | £21,447 | £412 |
| Bury | £26,056 | £501 | £24,558 | £472 |
| Manchester | £23,054 | £443 | £26,674 | £513 |
| Oldham | £21,497 | £413 | £20,788 | £400 |
| Rochdale | £23,754 | £457 | £21,115 | £406 |
| Salford | £22,954 | £441 | £23,759 | £457 |
| Stockport | £25,973 | £499 | £26,368 | £507 |
| Tameside | £22,814 | £439 | £22,436 | £431 |
| Trafford | £27,745 | £534 | £27,080 | £521 |
| Wigan | £23,152 | £445 | £22,539 | £433 |
| **Greater Manchester** | **£24,016** | **£462** | **£23,676** | **£455** |
| **England** | **£26,148** | **£503** | **£26,138** | **£503** |
| **Great Britain** | **£25,931** | **£499** | **£25,909** | **£498** |

*Table 2: Local area earnings both resident and workplace (New Economy 2010).*

The view of the participants interviewed was that the Local Authority and the local developers are delivering *opportunities* for work and employment, but that local people have a skills deficit that precludes them from taking advantage of these opportunities now provided to them. As the below quote demonstrates,

> *"We're very good at, in terms of regeneration, delivering the physical bit. The more difficult bit is actually then linking local people to the jobs and often some of the criticism we get in some of the communities is, we talk about creating local jobs but do we really create local jobs and it's a challenge because sometimes those people within the local areas don't have the skills that the employers need" (11 – Council employee).*

By framing the problem in this way the Local Authority can feel vindicated because they have provided employment opportunities[2]. It is the people, however, that are the

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[2] A press release from the Salford City Council claimed the National Audit Office report on the amount of economic growth generated by the BBC's move to Salford was a 'vindication' of what the council had

problem. What occurs here is a pathologising discourse that situates the blame with the individual for structural inequalities that are being created through the regeneration efforts (Matthews 2010).

Unemployment then becomes a result of not having the skills to achieve the new types of jobs on offer, rather than a problem of the inaccessibility of the jobs created. For this participant, the skills shortage is the key to reducing poverty,

> *"I don't agree with the government that keeps saying you can measure poverty by other indicators; it's the absence of money to my mind and it's a fact that people have not got good qualifications or skills so they were unable to access higher paid jobs and were left with the lower paid jobs which are dropping out of the economy at the moment" (2 - Elected Official).*

The skills deficit was identified in Salford's most recent economic assessment (2010) that highlighted how local residents have not benefitted from the growth in Salford's knowledge economy (New Economy 2010). On average, Salford residents have a lower skills profile than the Greater Manchester or national average, with 23.4% of Salford's working age population holding an NVQ level 4 qualification or above (compared to GM average of 26.7% and national average of 29.8%). 10% of Salford's 16 to 19 year olds are not in education, employment or training, a higher than the GM average. As the economic review states, because of Salford's skills deficit,

> *"...the city has a disproportionately large proportion of working-age adults that remain economically inactive, with high levels of long-term unemployment and entrenched worklessness, particularly concentrated in its deprived neighbourhoods"* (New Economy 2010:18).

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done, even though the report acknowledged that only 39 local Salford residents had been employed (http://www.salford.gov.uk/pr-13-3523.htm).

However, the sectors that may now be beyond the skills level of some of Salford's residents have not simply 'emerged' as indicated in the previous quote by the elected official, but have been purposely encouraged and enabled by the Local Authority and the developers in Salford. The entrepreneurial role Salford Council has played in securing investment to the city has been key to creating this economic transition, with the knowledge-based sector identified as a priority. Since 2002 Salford has been a significant partner in delivering the *Manchester – Knowledge Capital*, which has been a key driver in Central Salford's regeneration initiatives (Salford City Council 2003). Salford Council, along with Peel Holdings, spent considerable time and money securing and building what was intended to be a world class Media City, hiring Michael Joroff to consult on the pitch to the BBC. Michael Joroff is a senior lecturer at MIT in Urban Planning. His main research interests include advising cities on how to generate a knowledge economy. Salford Council also draws on Richard Florida's Creative Classes thesis to inform its economic regeneration strategies (Salford City Council 2009a). The point to be made is that there is a specific and dedicated attempt to change the economic base to feature more businesses that require higher levels of skills and qualifications, a change which will inevitably leave local residents as under-skilled. The current provision of the type of economic opportunities available in Central Salford was not a curious occurrence, but part of a well-planned and considered growth agenda.

The using of a 'skills shortage' discourse to shape the problem enables the solution to be located within the unavailing individual. As the below quote demonstrates,

> *"I think from time to time you get the criticism is the only jobs you're creating,… the only jobs the Salford people will get will be the cleaning jobs. That's a school of thought. Well, why is that the case? Why can't they get the managerial jobs?" (3 – Planning Professional).*

Whilst the above quotes shape the issue as one of a skills barrier, one participant described the job opportunities as not yet 'open' to local people, as the below quote demonstrates,

*"… the real well paid good jobs that have been created, which are the*
*majority of jobs, are not necessarily open to local people at this stage" (22*
*- Council Employee).*

There is a suggestion of foreclosure here. The assumption being that in the future the local residents may have the necessary skills to secure these jobs, but as it currently stands, the jobs are closed to them.

The documentation published by the Council and the conversations had with interview participants consequently posit themselves as having a problem. They have a declining sector that requires low skilled workers, they have 'successfully' created new job opportunities in a more specialist skilled sector, but the local residents are unable to take advantage of these opportunities because they now suffer from a lack of relevant skills. This discourse allows the policy makers to distance themselves from the gap that has been created between the local skill base and the skills required by the new economic employment sectors. The below quote from a local policy maker sums up this apparent paradox,

*"The problem we've got at the moment is a lot of the established*
*manufacturing sectors have all declined, …and therefore it's, what do*
*young people do who for whatever reason are not going to aspire to the*
*higher value jobs that come out of the BBC and other businesses in the*
*Quays?" (11 - Council employee).*

Unemployment is viewed in a very different way when it is presented like this. When there was a lack of jobs in the area - it was a problem with the economy. Now the jobs have been created - it is a problem with the people.

### 5.4.2 Nobody said it was going to happen overnight

As demonstrated above, the interview participants and the Local Authority through accessible documentation do acknowledge that there has been dearth of local residents acquiring employment in the newly developed employment sectors in Salford. However, what emerged from the data collected was that the policy makers involved in its

development were fully aware that this would be the outcome in the first instance, as the below quote demonstrates,

> *"So we hear figures about very low numbers of people that are employed there despite a lot of Council investment, and all that's true, but nobody said it was going to happen overnight" (22 - Council Employee)*

The quote here parallels other interview participants' response to this issue, namely that local residents were never going to get the newly created jobs immediately. This was particularly the case when defending the creation of Media City and the move of the BBC. In the early stages of development, it was stated that MediaCityUK would create 'employment opportunities for 15,500 people' (Salford City Council 2013d). Since that time there have been numerous reports of a lack of jobs being created for local residents in Media City. This tension has been compounded by the other forms of exclusion felt by local residents mentioned earlier in the chapter. But again, the concession offered was that this was always going to be the case. In fact, it is presented as almost obvious,

> *"If you think about it, most of the jobs here were filled by existing people. They either moved from Oxford Road or they were moved from London. That was always the deal. So in terms of Salford residents getting work it was never going to be an instant thing. What this has done is create a massive opportunity for people who are long term Salford residents" (16 - Private developer).*

In articulating the problem as obvious it is possible to reduce any disquiet, as Mele (2000) argues, "Constructing the status quo as intolerable and restructuring as logical (and even natural) often neutralizes residents' protest of the social costs of changes to their community" (p632). The lack of available opportunities for local residents is restructured here as 'logical'. To present it in this way reduces the politics of dissent to one of presumption. One participant interviewed became visibly annoyed by these critiques voiced on this topic and responded to them as such,

*"The BBC relocated staff from London to Manchester and lo and behold, of the jobs that were available in Manchester most of them went to the staff who were relocating so it was headlines, 'local people don't get these jobs'. Well, they weren't anyway and I think you've got to look at it in the longer term that there are kids at school now who when the vacancies come up at the BBC 5, 6, 7 years' time they will have actually gone through the sort of education and the sort of experiences that will give them a head start in any applications to the BBC. No firm is ever going to say 'we will employ you because you live at this address'. You've got to have, there's got to be the right vacancies and you've got to have the right skills" (1 - Elected Official).*

This point is referring specifically to the new *Oasis Academy MediaCityUK* school situated, as of 2012, on SQ. The Academy promotes itself as a *Media Centre* offering the usual school curriculum alongside TV studios and other production facilities (Oasisi Academy MediaCityUK 2015). The expectation that benefits will be realized in the future most often is directed at the younger generations who are expected to take advantage of learning so close to MediaCityUK. However, the older generation of Salford residents are often removed from this temporal vision of future benefit,

*"This is a sore point for most people in Salford due to the fact that when the BBC moved, jobs were promised to local people but it didn't really happen. Some work is being done now to help local businesses recruit from Salford. More opportunities are arising for young people but there are very few opportunities for older people who lack work experience" (24 - Third sector officer).*

So whilst younger generation may benefit in the future by shaping their education and experiences to meet the needs of the new business sectors, the older generations who are either currently completing education or beyond education will find obtaining work here much harder,

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*"Not everybody is going to work in media are they? Again, you're raising people's expectations to something that actually you're not going to get. Just because we've got Media City doesn't mean that everybody is going to work in the media. We've always had Coronation Street and ITV, well you don't see everybody from Salford going into ITV or being in Coronation Street do you?" (14 - Council employee).*

Occurring here is what Raco et al (2008) refer to as the 'politics of space-time'. For these authors, regeneration literature has focused too heavily on the spatial transformations of an area and how these have occurred. Less has been said about the time element of regeneration, particularly *when* changes should or do take place. They highlight the issue of time, particularly; they discuss the contestation over which benefits will be delivered first and why and who gets priority over others. Regeneration developments incorporate a multiplicity of timeframes relevant to the different needs of interested parties which include the Local Authority, private developers, private financiers and local residents. Delivering commercial interests, profit and short-term goals usually take precedence over longer term social objectives, like reducing deprivation and unemployment. The politics of prioritizing one set of needs over another represents power inequalities between interested parties in these regeneration developments. Those with less power are less able to contest the decisions made and the timeframes agreed.

Sustainable regeneration projects are supposed to deliver more than quick-wins. They should deliver benefits to local communities. However, what transpires is that these benefits are often the last to be delivered, if ever they are (Raco et al 2008). However, for the local residents discussed above, their deliverable benefits are also now contingent on them being able to acquire the skills necessary to take advantage of these benefits. This discourse not only legitimizes the lack of immediate jobs for local people, but also makes local residents responsible for their success or failure. Whilst some people have benefitted and are still benefitting immediately from the regeneration of SQ, the local residents have to understand that they will not be benefitting until some point in the future when *they* are able to. It can be inferred from this that the Local

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Authority appears to have privileged the future possibilities of Salford and what it is envisioned to become, over its current needs (Mele 2000). What this serves to do it sacrifice a generation of people who require immediate improvements. If they are unable to mobilize themselves to traverse the divide that has been created between themselves and the new requirements for employment in the area then they are unlikely to feel any resulting benefits.

Of course, the BBC is not the only economic development at Salford Quays and whilst there have so far been reports of low numbers of Salford residents employed here (Salford City Council 2012f) there is scope for Salford residents to gain employment within some of the other emerging sectors. Specific data on how many local Salford residents have been employed on Salford Quays is generated locally through Business Surveys conducted by the Council making the data only a sample of the entire area (Salford City Council 2013e). However, the latest available data from 2012 shows that there are now 25,782 employees working at Salford Quays, this is nearly one quarter of the total employment within Salford and a huge increase from when the Quays was a working dockyard, demonstrating significant jobs growth (Salford City Council 2012f). The below table demonstrates the economic industries at Salford Quays as at 2012:

| Employment Sector/No.Employed | No. | % |
|---|---|---|
| Manufacturing | 983 | 3.77 |
| Construction | 1828 | 7 |
| Motor trades | 156 | 0.6 |
| Wholesale | 1115 | 4.27 |
| Retail | 756 | 2.9 |
| Transport & storage (inc postal) | 607 | 2.33 |
| Accommodation & food services | 748 | 2.87 |
| Information & communication | 3508 | 13.44 |
| Finance & insurance | 3785 | 14.5 |
| Property | 523 | 2 |
| Professional, scientific & technical | 2424 | 9.29 |
| Business administration & support services | 6731 | 25.79 |
| Public administration & defence | 1071 | 4.1 |
| Education | 486 | 1.86 |
| Health | 661 | 2.53 |
| Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services | 669 | 2.56 |
| Total | **26051** | **99.82** |

*Table 3: Employment sector at Salford quays 2012, source Salford City Council 2013e*

As the above table shows, the biggest employment sectors on the Quays are Information and Communication (13%),  Finance and Insurance (14%), Professional, Scientific and technical (9%) and the largest sector is the Business administration and support services (25%). This sector in particular has seen a substantial decrease in full time jobs and

subsequent increase of part time jobs (Salford City Council 2013e). A sample of these businesses show approximately 10% of employees to be Salford residents. It is not known from this breakdown what types of jobs these are. However, an assessment of employment at MediaCityUK specifically states that the jobs Salford residents are employed in are more likely to be facilities management, hospitality and retail (Salford City Council 2013e).  For example, 72% of the 80 staff employed at the Holiday Inn hotel live in Salford; 34% of the 94 staff employed at Booths supermarket reside in Salford; 15 out of the 70 G4S security staff live in Salford (Salford City Council 2012f).

### 5.4.3 Divisions of labour

The emerging situation then is that local residents are competing for the lower skilled, low paid positions that are appearing alongside the higher paid roles. These are often in the service sector which is also a growth area in Central Salford. One participant involved in assisting people in to work commented that current vacancies were most often in the retail, hospitality and customer service roles. These were most likely to become available and were the types of roles the job seekers were most likely to apply for. Their skills set was most suited to these roles. However, this is not necessarily seen in a positive way by local residents. And the demand for these jobs has also reportedly been high, with Salford being reported consistently as the hardest city to get a job in the UK from 2013 to 2015 (Adzuna 2013). So what is actually transpiring is that some local people are benefitting from the jobs growth, but in the lower skilled service sectors,

> *"It would be the jobs around (MediaCity) that would actually be the crucial ones. For example, supermarkets, hotels, and those sorts of developments it's generated. We expect to pick up a goodly proportion of those jobs and that's in fact what's actually happened. So it's not the BBC necessarily directly to start with, it's the industries and companies around it" (2 - Elected Official).*

One of the acknowledged problems of the emerging Professional and Financial or the creative sectors is that it does not absorb the surplus labour created following from the decline of manufacturing. The skills required in the new economy are not transferable

from the old. This raises issues for moving people out of unemployment into work (Pratt & Hutton 2013). Peck's (2005) critique of cities that have adopted an urban strategy aimed at attracting the creative classes argues that these creative economies necessarily function with lower paid service workers. These workers are crucial pillars in the service economies in creative quarters where consumption and leisure preferences need to be met and lifestyle choices need to be maintained, as Peck ponders "…who will launder the shirts in this creative paradise.." (p.757). Media City is shaped around the ideas of this creative lifestyle. Creative professionals will work in these spaces but will also require the lifestyles that accompany them. This includes leisure and consumption spaces that will allow for this creativity to flourish. This forms part of the vision for MediaCityUK and the Quays as a whole,

> *"Their next goal is to build the night time economy at Media city. They recognise that the creatives don't work 9-5. They have drinks and coffee and network at a variety of times. They need an environment which will support this lifestyle." (29 - Council employee).*

> *"The idea is that these people will want places to eat and relax and talk about things" (2 - Elected Official).*

The data generated from the interviews conducted suggests that the low skilled local workforce in Salford will be suitably placed to occupy these service roles.

> *"If you live in Ordsall or if you live in Langworthy the chances are you haven't got a media degree or you're not a television producer. But you might be a security man or you might be a cleaner. I know it might sound a bit, you know, but that's the facts of it." (16 - Private developer)*

Discussions with local residents gave the impression that local people employed mostly as security guards on SQ has become somewhat of a trope; a recognized caricature at their expense. This was, however, legitimately posited by policy makers as a good thing, a good achievement for local people,

*"There are other businesses down there (Salford Quays) where people might be less skilled. So there are restaurants, hotels, big supermarkets down there which do provide good opportunities and good career paths as well. Some of the restaurants are really good and stuff." (6 - Council employee).*

The sentiment emerging from the interviews was that any job is better than no job, even the lower paid jobs. So long as local people were being employed *in some form*, this was heralded as a success from the perspective of local policy makers,

*"Its not just the issue of the BBC, and people will no doubt say that so far the BBC hasn't employed all that many from Salford - we never expected them to initially. What it did was that all the industries around it and all the creativity opportunities around it employ significant numbers of people in Salford - to the hundreds basically" (2 - Elected Official).*

These figures are very difficult to scrutinize as there are neither publishable figures to attest nor are there recent local data collection, so I was informed. Notwithstanding the numbers given, the *type* of jobs is still purported to be the same. Again, this is expressed as a positive. However, the opposition to this dialogue comes from local residents, who do not necessarily share the same positive disposition,

*"Not everybody is going to stand in front of the camera and most people here don't have those skills to do that job. But there will be jobs working in the canteen, sweeping the floors, doing the reception and the admin. And those are the jobs that people tended to have got. But that doesn't necessarily mean that the people of Salford see that as a celebration" (14 - Council employee).*

What appears to be developing then is an acknowledged division of labour in which the new higher skilled jobs are being occupied by people from outside of Central Salford, whilst the lower skilled service jobs are more likely to be occupied by local Salford residents; something which is seen to be a bone of contention. However, this is not only

acknowledged but justified by pointing to a temporal dimension in which Salford residents will benefit in the future. By accepting this as legitimate allows the policy makers involved not only to vindicate the decisions made up to this point but to reduce any criticism to this as illogical. From a top down level, the success of SQ can be measured in terms of overall job creation and business growth. The number of jobs located in Salford has increased since the redevelopment of SQ. From a policy perspective, this is a good thing. It is seen as less important who specifically is employed here and where they are from. As the below quotes demonstrate,

> *"We knew the docks weren't going to come back again, we knew the heavy industry wasn't going to come back again, so we had to look at something different. And now actually on the overall dockland side, if you include the BBC and Media City, there are more people working there than there were when it was a dock. So in that sense it's worked" (19 - Elected official).*

> *"If a company relocates here they will bring their own people with them so it's wrong to say to local residents that we are creating 3000 jobs there cos were not. They are moving 3000 jobs there but there will be jobs already occupied so they are not new jobs being created from nowhere. So we have to make sure that we tell the truth about that, but none the less its 3000 people employed in this area on the Ordsall estate" (22 - Council Employee).*

Success here is measured by growth and Salford is demonstrating achievement on this scale. This speaks to a much wider shift in urban policy in which growth leads decision making. This will be explored more in Chapter 7. By repositioning the benefits of these developments as one of overall growth the consequences for local residents are able to be less of a concern. This is an issue for individuals with regards skills acquisition. The above participants have argued that any job is a good job and that even the lower skilled jobs are better than nothing. For some residents of course this may be true. And as indicated previously approximately 10% of all Salford Quays employees are Salford residents (Salford City Council 2013e). The Council is also working to increase the skills

base of the local residents and to source employment through for example the Bridges to MediaCityUK Partnership. This is a partnership initiative which has been in operation since 2010. Its focus is on maximising the potential for employment and training at MediaCityUK for local people (Salford City Council 2012f). The Council also have an 'Inspire to Aspire' programme which targets young people not in education, employment or training to develop relevant skills. The Council 'Transformation' programme is run to assist unemployed residents generate skills necessary for potential employment in the creative sector.

However, the above discourse emerging from the quotes overlooks the unequal structure developing within the new economic sectors in Salford whereby one group of people services the needs of others within the same locality. The transformation relies on having a lower paid service sector to perform these functions. They are a necessary component of delivering the professional and creative services and leisure spaces.

## 5.5 The 'good and bad' of regeneration

### 5.5.1 Gentrification as a nexus of critique

What has been presented so far in the chapter alludes to potential issues of gentrification. The movement of capital back to the city speaks to Hackworth and Smith's (2001) third wave gentrification. Large sums of capital have moved into spaces of decline, areas presenting a rent-gap, and in doing so are fueling the return of more capital through other business investment and the economic potential of people. This is turn may be having negative effects on local residents in which they begin to feel 'out of place'. But as the notion of gentrification becomes more common parlance amongst urban planners and citizens alike, there was a considerable awareness during the interviews of the need to manage and reduce not only the implication of gentrification but the consequent occurrence of displacement.

The participants interviewed who were involved in the decision making and regeneration implementation demonstrated a hyper awareness of this existing critical gentrification debate. Through the interview process many participants displayed that

they existed in a space where, because of their position within the urban regeneration field, it was necessary to be cognisant of the negative appraisal of regeneration programmes. By operating within this nexus of critique they were keen to assert that the more recent and ongoing programmes of development did not involve displacement or gentrification. The participants interviewed displayed an informed knowledge of the potentially loaded nature of these terms, an awareness of gentrification as a 'dirty word' (Slater 2006). Several participants demonstrated a pre-emptive consciousness of the debate surrounding regeneration within the interviews by stressing, unprompted and in anticipation of the potential critique, that this was not the case. For example one private developer mentioned, when discussing the development of a recent housing estate that,

> *"I should say that in that process we didn't knock down any homes with people living in them. No one was displaced. That's not what we're about."*
> *(23 - Private developer).*

For one public sector participant, not only were they well versed in the critiques of regeneration and its links to gentrification but they were demonstrably fatigued by the notion,

> *"There are those with certain political axe to grind who use terms like gentrification and the clearing out of the so called 'traditional Ordsall Salford community', which hasn't happened by the way" (22 - Council Employee).*

For the below participant, there is an acknowledgement that local groups may see the development as intended for incoming groups, i.e. a perception of gentrification, but this is dismissed as fanciful, as though the suggestion is unfounded,

> *"Um, I think its change you know, you get that in any community where you start to see change so any development that goes ahead in any part of the city, oh you know 'we oppose this we want to keep things the way they are' and if you're building something new it must be for the 'mythical outsiders'" (1 - Elected Official).*

One of the ways in which the regeneration of Central Salford has tried to avoided accusations of gentrification and displacement is by focusing instead on the notion of social mixing. As Lees (2008) has argued, social mixing has formed a major part of the urban regeneration policy initiatives since New Labour's Urban Renaissance agenda, particularly as part of their social inclusion strategy. For Lees however, social mixing is a rhetoric used in place of terms like gentrification, specifically because of its negative connotations. Promoting social mix necessarily removes any acknowledgement of class conflict. Instead it is promoted as a positive policy solution to spatial concentrations of poverty, bringing much needed financial benefits to the area, a solution that in theory, is difficult to take issue with, unlike gentrification which implies negative connotations (Lees 2008). This social mixing initiative is promoted in the below quote,

> *"There have been no house clearance and there's been no reduction in the quantity of social housing in the area, we've stayed committed to that. But building private houses alongside those was the idea of this notion that mixed tenure is generally a good thing for an area. And I don't think anyone can really argue with that" (22 - Council Employee).*

Identifiable estates of mono tenure social housing in particular were to be avoided in the new mixed areas,

> *"The aim from the beginning was not to have a complete mono tenure of Council social housing but to go for a mixed tenure with owner occupation, affordable rent, which is the new term for social housing, offered by housing associations and also some market rented property as well" (3 - Planning Professional).*

From the above quote it can be seen that the mixing of tenures was primarily to break up the concentration of social housing, not of owner occupied housing. One of the ways the Council is aiming to achieve this social mixing of tenures is through a 'tenure blind' building process. Any new house building in Salford that has a mixture of affordable housing and private housing will be built in a tenure blind manner. What this means is

that all the houses will be built with the same aesthetic. There will be no obvious difference between the tenures from an external view.

> *"Our ideal solution is something that's called tenure blind where by you can go in to an estate and not know which ones have been sold which ones are owned by people which ones are rented". (2 - Elected Official).*

The point of having a tenure blind approach is to prevent people from being able to determine the tenure of the property so that to the external gaze it is impossible to see the difference. It serves to manage the materiality of the housing and what those houses symbolically represent, as the below quote demonstrates,

> *"Well, it doesn't look like a mishmash. It doesn't make people feel they're looked down on" (18 - Community representative).*

Implicit here is the proposition that the social mixing approach to regeneration may actually contain a source of conflict from the incoming groups towards the original residents. The benefit of a tenure blind approach was only explicitly phrased as being beneficial for the residents in the lower value tenures,

> *"We wanted it mixed. And by mixed were not talking about, there's one estate and its at that end - the poor people; its literally you've got a terrace and a terrace and you've got maybe 3 houses in that terraced and 2 houses in that [owner occupied]… they're mixed in like that" (5 - Council employee).*

Again, this discourse focuses on the removing of signs of poverty or low income residents. Through a tenure blind approach these visible representations of lower income housing and households can be removed from view. The residents themselves can remain in the area just behind a different façade, one which quells the concerns of incoming groups and makes the area more attractive to new residents. The purpose of social mixing here then is to break up, or mask, the concentration of poverty in a particular space. It also, as Lees (2008) argues, constructs a particular way of living as the 'right' way, specifically a middle class way of living. This serves to 'other' the working

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class residents who are removed from the spaces they reside in as it is seen as poor or disorderly.

Whilst displacement was rejected as something the Council strived not to do, it was also seen as at times unavoidable in the current climate, particularly around 'affordable rent'. Affordable rent is part of the Coalition governments affordable housing programme initiative, in which any new social housing built after 2011 will be charged to tenants at up to 80% of market rates, which is actually more than current social housing rental levels, and will give shorter term flexible tenancy contracts (Hodkinson & Robbins 2012). Thus any resident moving from demolished social housing in to a new affordable house will likely see their rent increase. Simultaneously, the regeneration developments in Central Salford have seen the housing market increase in price. In 2014, Salford saw the greatest increase in house prices of any UK city triggered by the development of MediaCityUK and the relocation of the BBC (Osborne 2014). The effects of this serve to further increase the market value and the chargeable rent levels of the surrounding housing. Consequently, those residents who were promised housing within their neighbourhoods may still be offered them, but at a much higher price; one which is potentially unaffordable,

> *"When we've been talking to the community in the past we've been saying we'll do everything we can to ensure that you move with us then all of a sudden some policy change happens in between time and you've got to go back to those people and say we'll still give you the same choice, we'll still work with you, however circumstances have changed where it now costs this amount of money to move into that new shiny home over there" (20 - Council employee).*

This means that there is much higher chance that local residents will be spatially displaced. However, according to this public sector participant when asked specifically about this potential problem it was constructed as an unfortunate but necessary concern to continue greater levels of growth,

*So it's a bit of a tricky one at this moment in time. But it's one that I'd rather have than not have, if that makes sense" (20 - Council employee).*

This response is indicative of what Slater (2014) calls 'false choice urbanism'. Slater argues that the false choice in urbanisation is thinking that we are choosing between gentrification/reinvestment as an alternative to decline/disinvestment. Financial investment (read gentrification in Slater's terms) for cities is seen as a solution to neighbourhood decline. Even with potential negative consequences like displacement, Slater argues, gentrification is still, on balance, determined as a better option than the alternative. Approaching it in this way, this problem is then reduced to a moral issue of how to mitigate the negative side effects for those people affected by the incoming investment, i.e. those financially or spatially displaced. However, in focusing on the moral we serve to neglect the political issue of capital flows as fundamentally linked to uneven development in which some financially benefit whilst other lose out (p.519). Drawing on Neil Smith's 'rent gap' thesis Slater highlights how investment and disinvestment; renewal and decay, are not alternative choices or options but are fundamental and inevitable antagonisms that occur within the overall process of financial capital moving in and out of spaces seeking to accumulate. To see investment as an alternative to decline ignores how decline occurred in the first instance. It ignores the gradual withdrawal of capital from places like Central Salford over the past 40 years. It ignores the creation of rent gaps from the movement of capital out of Salford that can now be capitalised on again. The participants interviewed displayed this rhetoric of investment as a necessary alternative to decline, even with the inclusion of displacement, neglecting the critical consideration of circuits of capital that had come before. As the below quote exemplifies,

*"Ensuring that Salford has the right quality and quantity of housing to support its growth in economic strength is vital. This in turn will help to attract and retain a diverse range of citizens that will continue to make the city prosperous. **The city's remarkable success, however, comes at a cost.** Salford is faced with a shortage of good quality affordable homes. Homelessness and overcrowding remain ongoing challenges and rising*

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*housing costs are also hitting working households on low and middle incomes.* **The economic case for continued investment therefore is compelling**" *(Salford City Council 2014c Emphasis added).*

The above quote, taken from Salford's latest housing strategy, demonstrates how capital is entangled within the moral question of this 'false choice urbanism'. Success results from investment which increases inequalities that can be solved through more investment. The irony, Edensor (2005a) argues is that in replacing that which is now determined as unproductive in order to inspire production and progress we are removing those signs which remind us that progress is not continual or linear; we remove the symbols of previous rounds of destructive capitalism. As Edensor states, "modern capitalism proceeds by forgetting the scale of devastation wreaked upon the physical and social world, for obliterating traces of this carnage fosters the myth of endless and seamless progress" (2005a: 101).

## 5.5.2 The economic value of people

Read in the above way, the quest for social mixing appears somewhat disingenuous. Individual economic capital will determine who can reside in these redeveloped spaces. This individual capital is also seen as crucial to continue to secure the wider investment necessary to further the overall transformation agenda. One goal of redeveloping Central Salford was the need to bring economically active people to live within the area. One of the reasons for this is the recognition that as the area continues to improve, developers are less able to take advantage of cheaper land prices compared to surrounding areas like Manchester. There is recognition that the rent-gap is closing in some of the higher demand areas. Salford now needs to 'derive competitive advantage from non-price differentiation' by having skilled residents to draw in business and support the local economy (Salford City Council 2009a). As the below quote demonstrates,

> *"The object was to bring in Economically Active people to reinvigorate the existing community, to make a bigger community where there is more*

*economic activity there by supporting businesses… without economically*

*active  people that wouldn't work" (8 - Private developer).*

Bringing those with economic capital to the areas is then necessary to maintain upward growth and foster more business investment. An example that can demonstrate this recirculation of capital back to Central Salford is the Salford Shopping Precinct within Pendleton, home to planned PFI which is a £650 million pound programme looking to redevelop 1,253 existing properties and build 1,600 new homes alongside them (Salford City Council 2014f). Pendleton is situated in a location that is seen as a key corridor connecting Central Salford with SQ, Manchester City Centre and the regeneration occurring in Chapel Street. The aim is to develop the area in a way that will expand the local housing stock offer to incoming groups and improve the housing for existing groups. The Shopping Precinct within Pendleton is designated for substantial redevelopment. The precinct itself services the needs of many Central Salford residents as the main shopping centre in the area. It is an indoor shopping centre that houses several national brands but also contains many discount stores (99p store, Poundland, Pound store and Super Pound Store), cash generators (Cash Convertor, Cash Generator, CEX, Grainger Games, H&T Pawnbrokers, Mays Pawnbrokers and Jewellers), gambling outlets (Arcade, Betfred, Ladbrokes, William Hill) and money lenders (Money Line, The Money Shop, Speedy Cash) (see figure 16 below).

*Figure 16: Salford Shopping Precinct – Authors own photo*

The consistent story around the Precinct is that when the population began to decline post-dock closure, many of the big stores left the area, including Marks and Spencer and WH Smith. When the precinct was first built during the late 1960's it had required large scale demolition of houses and shops to make space for its manifestation. At the time the precinct was designed to be 'the finest in Europe' (The Salford Star 2010c). Whilst it never quite obtained this status, it did require substantial Council investment to build. Since the 1990's it has had several cash injections to improve its fascia, including £4 million pounds from the Council. In 2000 it was sold to a private investor and ten years later in 2010 it was sold again to Salford Estates (*ibid*). Salford Estates is owned by Praxis Holdings, which regards itself as one of the UKs most 'active, reliable and discrete investors' (Parxis Holdings 2013). They sell themselves as 'well-resourced and highly acquisitive' and specialise in purchasing 'under-performing or non-performing' assets speculatively that can reap benefits in the short and medium term. Salford Estates have

planned to transform the Shopping Precinct into a newly marketed 'Pendleton Way', a main shopping provider of the 'New Salford'. The precinct is to be modernised, providing higher a quality physical realm and a greater choice of shops, housed within modern, double height units (see figure 17 below).



*Figure 17: Salford Shopping Centre Design. Source - Pendletonway Developments*

However, whilst some of the planned developments have materialised - the building of an Aldi which has already been sold off to another developer – the development of the Shopping centre has yet to begin. The plans have been widely publicised not only through the Pendleton Way website which has been visible since 2011 but also local news media sources and Council statements. There however appears to have been little by way of updates since 2011. From the author's personal correspondence the suggestion is that the development is contingent on securing nationally recognised tenants to commit to leasing the space. These commitments, however, appear to also be contingent on improving the demographics of the catchment area and their spending power, a fact that has not gone unnoticed by the local residents, as the below quote demonstrates,

> *"Companies won't commit to go there [shopping centre] until the demographics go up the scale a bit. As long as we're all peasants on our social assistance, or whatever it is, they're not interested" (18 - Community representative).*

The implication is that investment will begin to return to the area as people with economic capital return. Until they do, these plans are left to languish and the date for redevelopment keeps getting pushed further in to the future. What becomes explicit here is who these particular developments are intended for. Drawing in economically active people to the area becomes more and more crucial to maintaining Salford as an investment destination, reversing the capital withdrawal that occurred previously. As Fuller (2012) argues, the differences between affluent incoming groups and the less affluent local residents are framed as a difference in their market value and that "…those that have economic capital are more hegemonic as they have the ability to regenerate…" (Fuller 2012: 920). What can be seen in the interviews conducted is that economically active people are sought after because not only will they be less demanding of services from the Local Authority but they will be crucial in driving forward growth. The inverse of this assumption then is that non-economically active people who currently reside in Salford are not only less crucial to the regeneration of Central Salford but increasingly less able to deliver its success, particularly when success is most frequently measured in investment and growth terms. To achieve regeneration success in these terms then it appears, through the interviews conducted, that the existing residents do not necessarily need to feature prominently.

### 5.5.3 Delivering 'success'?

'Salford 2025: A Modern Global City' is the latest available prospectus detailing the strategic vision and aims for Salford's future transformation. This document subsumes the earlier regeneration frameworks into a much more ambitious strategic vision in which Salford readies itself to compete in a global economic market,

> *"Salford 2025 A modern global city sets out that ambitious vision – founded on a commitment to complete the work already started on Salford's transformational agenda, creating decent jobs, outstanding environments where our communities can grow, and sustained economic growth. Critical will be the ability to inspire, upskill and connect Salford's growing (and increasingly diverse) population to the new opportunities created"* (Salford City Council 2013d: 3).

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The prospectus highlights the successes so far achieved during Salford's transformation agenda beginning with the adjudication that Salford has been changed 'dramatically and positively' (*ibid* p5). The inventory of accolades identifies 'tangible benefits' that have been so far delivered for Salford and the rest of the region. A major success which is featured as most significant has been the securing of substantial private sector investment - £1.3 billion pounds from the private sector over 5 years. This investment achievement is attributed to the successful partnership working at a regional and national level. This investment is deemed a success in that it delivers the regeneration, but also demonstrates to an outside audience the entrepreneurial ability of the Local Authority to work with partners to secure investment and deliver growth (a topic I will discuss in chapter six). The delivery of these projects in and of themselves then serve as a measure of the Local Authorities 'unique ability to deliver jobs, growth and success' (*ibid* p5). The measure of success then can be seen as heavily weighted towards securing investment.

In terms of people, as previously mentioned, success is identified through the employment *opportunities* that have been created for residents to *connect* with and take advantage of. Little is said of the amount of *actual* connections that have been made at present. This speaks to Mele's (2000) discussion of how the rhetoric around urban land-use change rareify the political and economic interests behind such changes by presenting suitable benefits for all users as a positive outcome. However, he argues that when these benefits are presented as universalistic - as something for everyone - they are equally evasive enough to avoid specificity over who will actually benefit and how. In the Salford context, the inability of some to connect to opportunities is then actually used to justify *more* of the *same* types of regeneration and private investment, as evidenced below (Salford City Council 2013d).

What overlays all these evident successes is a recognition that Salford is becoming a city of choice to 'live, work, invest and visit' (Salford City Council 2013d: 6). This recognition of choice is taken as illustrative of Salford as having made its way towards succeeding in its transformation. Being a city of 'choice' has consistently featured in Salford's ambitions. The notion of choice in this context, as mentioned previously, has an

economic undercurrent to it. Choosing to 'live, work, invest and visit' Salford implies a movement of capital or people *towards* Salford from somewhere else. Success is seen in the valid choice of Salford over other competitive offers, sending a message to the wider investment market. To *choose* Salford demonstrates its success in moving away from being a city of low demand; and being *in demand* has significant market value. Implicit in this discourse is that those residents who remained in Salford after its financial decline and deindustrialisation do not represent Salford as a neighbourhood of choice. For many, their economic necessity invalidates *their* choice of wanting to stay and reside in Salford. To see an area in competitive market terms invalidates as fruitless the want of people who reside in a place for personal, potentially non-economic, reasons. Success in economic these terms do not necessarily translate as successes in communitarian terms, as the below quote demonstrates,

> *"But now it's all people who go out to work. It's all people who just want somewhere to get their head down really or to come home to after a night of partying in Manchester. And there isn't that sense of community. It may have improved the housing stock. It might have improved the housing market. But it hasn't improved Salford over much, not in that sense of a place to live." (18 - Community representative).*

To measure success in economic terms can serve to mask the remaining issues that the regeneration may not have solved, not as of yet anyway. As we have seen previously, the benefits for some is intended to be realised at some undefined point in the future. The view from some of the participants interviewed was that in the meantime, improving the physicality of the space and increasing general employment levels in the area will present a façade of improvement that does not necessarily include the existing residents. The below quote exemplifies this point:

> *"I think my only concern with regeneration is that - and it does get better and things will get better and houses will improve, more people will come in working - but that won't change the numbers. It will change the percentage of people not working but it won't change the numbers will it?... its still 800 people and that's the beauty about percentages isn't it.*

*You can water them down can't you by simply increasing people... But you've still got that 800 cohort that within those families don't change... and then it doesn't matter because you're making your tax you're giving them the benefit... still 800 people you're leaving out. Still 800 poor people" (10 - Third sector officer).*

The above participant was referring specifically to an area within Central Salford. The point being made was that the regeneration 'successes' do not specifically need to benefit the local people in order to be deemed a success. To flood the area of Central Salford with incoming groups in tenure blind housing may dilute, rather than ameliorate the underlying problems that the regeneration schemes are designed to tackle. In addition to not ameliorating the issue, it may actually serve to exacerbate some of these problems around housing affordability and a lack of relevant skills.

What appears to emerge within the data is that as the area begins to change, and the image of Salford and what Salford is intended to become changes, many of the local residents may become displaced. Displaced here does not refer solely to the spatial movement of people in to and out of the area, although this may occur. Displaced here refers to, drawing on Davidson's (2009) thesis, the lived-experience of space, or more importantly, the dislocation from the socio-spatial relations within that lived-experience. As Davidson argues, to reduce displacement to a spatial dislocation means that urban planners can counter these claims by preventing this out-migration, as is the case with policies aimed at social mixing. However, this misses the more philosophical dimensions of place as a site of social relations. Within these spaces of relations people should have the 'right to place' and the 'right to dwell' (Davidson 2009:232). Displacement is more than just spatial because it concerns the erosion of place, and the social relations constructed through lived-experience of that place. What we see in Central Salford is the loss of place for some of the existing residents, be that through the creation of areas in which they feel culturally 'out of place' or the residential spaces in which they inevitably have to make space for incoming groups, spaces in which their life styles may be subsequently less tolerated. Their 'right to dwell' is challenged when bringing market value to the area becomes a central regeneration goal. The scale of

change in Salford forces existing residents to consider their place in relation to these changes. As the below quote demonstrates,

> *"In terms of affordability, yep Salford has an affordable housing problem. Which is not that the houses are too expensive, but that people are too poor"* (5 - Council employee).

## 5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to document the changes being seen at a local level in Central Salford from the perspective of those involved in its transformation. It has aimed to understand how Salford was intended to benefit from those changes and who those benefits were intended for. As has been seen, Salford is undertaking a major modernization journey in which local residents are expected to 'play their part'. A new modern 'global' future is on the horizon and change is a key to that future. Local residents are encouraged not to be a barrier to that change, not to be stagnant within that journey. Using this discourse resistance to this journey is reduced. People who are not supportive or who demonstrate immobility to this change are posited as failing to understand or fully grasp the inevitability of where Salford is going. Their resistance is foreclosed and renamed as confusion.

It is expected that local residents will acquiesce to these changes by being exposed to it. But as seen earlier in the chapter, some local residents feel 'out of place' within the developments like SQ. There is an exclusionary element built in to this space through cultural and economic barriers. The demarcation of space in its orderly logic designates appropriate use, and this appropriate use incorporates employment. In employment terms local residents are able to engage with the physicality of the space through maintenance and service provision for people who are able to engage with it on a different level, a more content specific level. In this context, local residents are not *dis*placed from this area but *placed* as a crucial underprop to it, an underprop that reinforces division and polarizes groups in this microcosm of Salford's new future.

Salford residents are also not displaced from the area, or at least that is the aim of the regeneration policies. Spatial displacement is avoided in theory through mixed use developments and policies to rehouse in the same area, but not necessarily avoided in practice as has been seen with the increase in affordable rent. However, in seeing displacement as a spatial issue policy makers are able to overlook displacement as a social or relational issue. People still express feelings of loss or dislocation from their surrounding areas as the space is redesigned around them. They experience 'un-homing' through the changing environment and their relation to it and others within it (Atkinson 2015).

What we can also see occurring here is the eschewal of part of the current generation of Salford residents who have what is seen as neither the aspiration nor the skills necessary to allow them to benefit from the regeneration and creation of new forms of employment in Salford. For younger residents the hope is that in the 'future' they will be able to take advantage of what has become available, although of course this is by no means a certainty. However, for particular residents who are beyond education age there is little expectation that they will benefit. It would seem that on this journey particular groups of people will remain left behind.

The success and benefit of regeneration is measured in terms of growth and the potential to secure further investment. Private investment is able to profit from the established rent gap that has been created by previous circuits of capital disinvestment in Salford. The creation of additional employment in the area is regarded as a success by Salford Council in and of itself, regardless of who is actually benefitting from this employment. The numbers of employed signify improvements to an external audience. What can be seen emerging is a larger demographic of economically active residents which in turn increases the economic wealth of the area. But as has been demonstrated, this changing of the demographics does not mean that deprivation has decreased. By flooding the area of incoming residents it has simply served to dilute the concentrated effects of poverty rather than improve the conditions of residents. If anything, this mixing may create an 'us and them' where boundaries are symbolically erected between groups of people.

The vision for Salford and its journey towards being a modern global city is designating as inevitable a particular future for the city. It is reducing the ability of people to dwell in an area through their perceived lack of market value. It reduces the ability of people to dwell in multiple ways by forcing people to succumb to and promote a particular image. However, in the quest for investment and economic growth at the expense of the residents that live there, the Council is eradicating the reminders of what caused the decline in the first instance. It is removing signs of capital disinvestment in an attempt to secure capital reinvestment. Removing these signs encourages policy makers to rely on something to drive their linear trajectory of progress that by its very nature relies on circuits of destruction. This has serious implications for the future of Salford if there are further changes to the economy.

In the following chapter I will explore this issue of capital investment and disinvestment in more detail by focusing on the regeneration of SQ. In this chapter I will explore, using the data gathered from participants, the role of Salford Council in securing the investment to redevelop SQ. It will look at the vision for the site and the involvement of private developers to deliver this vision. In particular it will explore the power dynamics between the Council and private capital and the possibilities for democratic decision making when attempting to deliver growth.

# 6. Articulations of Salford Quays: From car park to MediaCityUK

## 6.1 Introduction

The last chapter looked at the effects of the regeneration of Salford on local residents and questioned who the main beneficiaries were. This chapter intends to focus on the redevelopment of Salford Quays (SQ) specifically, through using key documentation and interviews with some significant actors who were closely involved, to understand the how and why behind this regeneration. The reason SQ was chosen as a focus over other regeneration projects in Salford was due firstly to its identification as a representation of how Salford intends to transform. In this sense it can be thought of as a microcosm of Salford's intended future. Secondly it allows for an analysis of how the Council has been involved in the governance of the project and the role that they have taken in its regeneration. Thirdly it is a development that involves a significant private developer in Salford and the wider region in general. This enables us to consider quite clearly the effects of private sector involvement at a large scale.

Essentially that chapter will aim to consider, from the perspective of those decision makers involved, why the Quays has taken the form it has, who has driven the development in this way and how it intends to connect to the social conditions it is intending to ameliorate. In particular, the research questions it aims to address are: what role does the local government play in urban regeneration and what does it tell us about its priorities? How do state and non-state actors engage to deliver regeneration at a local level and what is the impact of this for democratic accountability?

To begin with the chapter will look at the development of the Quays site from the initial decision to renew the space after its closure as a dock. It will trace its development from a governance perspective up to the creation of *MediaCityUK*. It will trace this development through a series of stages which are both temporal and conceptual. It will argue that the authority responsible for the site itself never had a clear vision of what it was to become, allowing it to be market led rather than anything which was planned according to local demand. One of the key reasons behind it taking this form was the changing political landscape to one which curtailed the ability of local government to

reverse the impacts of deindustrialisation through redistributive social policy. The consequence of this was a reliance on private investment to deliver regeneration, something that was at first forced but then engaged with willingly. The reliance of investors meant giving them the power to determine the form the Quays took, something which incrementally moved further away from meeting local need. What we will see as a result is the creation of a MediaCityUK in which local residents do not have the required skills to be employed in the jobs created.

In the context of this discussion this chapter will move on to describe how, throughout this process, the local Council can be seen to commit more and more to a growth agenda, adopting an entrepreneurial role through which to compete for increasingly mobile capital (Harvey 1989). Drawing on Davidson and Iveson (2014) I will argue that by invoking the language of 'necessity' the Council demonstrate a fatalistic attitude to private investment. It is expressed as the only available means to regenerate the site. Because of this necessity the Council is more willing to compromise its otherwise statutory controls so as to smooth the investment process and provide a suitable environment for it to go. Through these public-private interactions the Council is also forced to bear some of the risk of speculative investment. It is argued in this chapter that this quest for growth results in regeneration which moves further away from the need to tackle structural conditions. Instead this is tackled through a specially created public sector programme as a separate project, rather than the development itself, allowing us to question whether or not it is imbued with any regeneration intentions.

This chapter also documents the emergence of a key private developer in this area; Peel Holdings. This company has development interests in the region, of which the SQ site forms just one of many. Peel's relationship with Salford Council will be discussed in this chapter, highlighting how its size and power as a land owner and the network of elite business people it connects with give the company a bargaining power over the Council. It will be discussed how the involvement of Peel allows them to shape the project in their interests through the uneven power relations they engage in. Here we will begin to see challenges to democratic accountability and responsibility through this relationship.

In order to justify the disconnect emerging between the local residents it intends to benefit and the development that emerged interviewees employed a legitimising discourse in which the key sites in Salford are promoted as regional/international/global drivers of growth. By employing this discourse of scale they are able to justify the development and public sector financial involvement as being regionally beneficial, rather than locally beneficial. In this flexibility over scale there is also flexibility over the brand-identity of Salford as a place. Here we see it referred to as Manchester. This is again justified as necessary to secure business investment, arguing that Manchester is a more competitive brand. Through this changing identity of place beyond one which is territorially demarcated, Massey (1995) is drawn on to understand how this is constructed through the power relations that allow a new determining of Salford's identity. Those uneven power relations, who span the bounded geography of Salford are articulating a new future for Salford, one which is heavily influenced by unaccountable private elites.

## 6.2 Becoming Salford Quays

### 6.2.1 Stage one – Inviting the private sector

One of the themes emerging from the interviews with participants involved in the redevelopment of SQ was the lack of a coherent and specific sense of what the Quays would develop into. The Salford City Council purchased the majority of the docklands in 1983 after its closure as a working port. Initial conceptions of the space included mass council housing and a large carpark, neither of which came to fruition (Goodey 2010). A suggested reason for this was that the government at the time would have been unsupportive of non-private sector led developments, especially ones which would involve the provision of council housing (correspondence with participant 1). There was recognition that despite this being initially a Council-led regeneration initiative, the redevelopment of the Quays would need to be driven by the private sector to be seen as legitimate by the national government and subsequently, the market. Because of this perception the Council joined up with a private sector developer, Urban Waterside Ltd, in a partnership arrangement in 1984. One of the docks was transferred to the

ownership of Urban Waterside to be developed, with the agreement that they would secure substantial private investment in addition to public sector investment.

> *"So we got Ted Hagan [private developer] and we set up this Urban Waterside Company and he bought up a couple of bits of land and he fronted a lot of the discussions with ministers and with other private sector companies. He was a real supporter of the Council in those early days and obviously because of government policy there was no money then for public sector housing so we had to get housing developers interested and so we were able to sell it very much as a private sector-led development, although I think it was a public sector vision and it was public sector-enabled" (1 – Elected official)*

The central government was not prepared to provide funding grants to improve the environment at the Quays until it was matched by private sector investment (Struthers 2003). The irony identified by Henderson et al (2007) was that Salford Council had to financially underwrite parts of the private finance in order to secure its investment. The Council had to assume the financial risks in order to generate the funding. John Willis, then the chief executive of Salford Council, reportedly stated that, "At the City Council, we had sleepless nights over the guarantees we had to give, but they were never called on" (The Lowry n.d.). This requirement of private sector involvement reflected a core belief within the Conservative government that local Councils could not and should not be delivering urban renewal. Private delivery vehicles, like the newly created Urban Development Corporations, were the preferred model for urban policy implementation; they were deemed to be market responsive, de-bureaucratised and accountable only to central government, bypassing local planning requirements (Imrie & Thomas 1999).

The initial plan was that the Quays could become a popular mixed-use waterfront destination, an appealing leisure space much like waterfront regeneration projects occurring in the United States, particularly in Baltimore, Boston and New York (Jones 1998). The specifics of what the development would include were not overly prescriptive and the Council drew advise from architects Shepherd, Epstein and Hunter in 1985 who

had previously been involved in designing the vision for the redevelopment of the London Docks to conceptualise in what way it could materialise,

> *"The potential of the site is there for all to see. What is not so evident is the way in which this potential can be realized. For this reason the City Council commissioned architects, with their experience of similar schemes in London Docks, to prepare a redevelopment plan for the area" (Salford City Council 1990: 3).*

The plan itself set out in the framework that the Quays would be a mixed-use development where people 'live, work and enjoy recreation' (*Ibid:* 17). Primarily the aims were for development around housing, office and work spaces, hotels, leisure and tourism (including those for sports) to be undertaken mostly by the private sector, with the Council being involved as a 'promoter and coordinator' (*ibid:* 25). Here, Salford Council can be seen as adopting an entrepreneurial role, moving from what Harvey (1989) describes as managerial to entrepreneurial governance, as described in chapter two.

As can be seen in the early stages of the development of the Quays, the local Council involved private developers as a method of financing its production. Funding through the Derelict Land Grant from central government was not approved until private investment was secured (Struthers 2003), although the project was underwritten by public funds,

> *"…the regeneration had to be dressed up as being private sector led although it was always underpinned by public investment in the infrastructure, the vision was laid down in Local Authority plans, the design consultants were employed by the Local Authority, but somehow you had to, at that time, you had to dress these things up to get government to give you some money" (1 - Elected Official)*

The partnership here is construed not as a choice but a necessity in accordance with the new funding arrangements. The Council alone was unable to make the required renewal efforts within the restrictive framework established by the government.

During the late 1980's development on the mixed-use site was underway, shaped by the vision of Shepheard, Epstein and Hunter (which included a hotel, cinema, some private housing, offices and leisure centres). At the same time other developers began to commit to investing in the space (Salford City Council 2008a). Developers began to build large-scale office complexes on parts of the site, increasing the scale of production. But this production was also speculative,

> *"So in the progression of development at the Quays there were a series of relatively low-density housing and industrial schemes built around 6, 7 and 8 Dock. And then there was a sort of gear change to these bigger multi-storey developments at Trafford Road Swing Bridge and the Anchorage and what was called Harbour City with the Victoria building. Between the three of those [developers] dropped about half a million square feet of speculative office space on to the market. And if you work roughly on about £100 a square foot to build it, that's a big investment in the area."*
> *(16 - Private developer).*

As can be seen the development was very much seen to be supply- rather than demand-led making the space attractive for investors with no clear direction or real stipulation over the type of economy or labour market that was to be created,

> *Interviewer: Was there a clear vision for what types of jobs and what types of businesses [would be on the Quays]?*
>
> *Participant 1: I don't think there was. Funnily enough there was an early feeling that it might attract media companies and given the fact that MediaCity is there now, that was more prescient than we imagined at the time. I think the honest answer is that we didn't know (1 - Elected Official).*

There are obvious implications here about the social benefits for local residents who, as it has been previously mentioned, have in general a particular set of labour skills. The overall vision for SQ at this point was place-based rather than territorially targeted, echoing Harvey's (Harvey 1989) identification of place over territory as a feature of entrepreneurial urbanism. There is no specific development plan here to replace in some way the type of employment that was lost that matches the skillsets in the surrounding areas.

Kramer (2011) has argued that what we see occurring in renewal efforts like this are the basic underlying principles of neoliberalism. Drawing on Logan and Molotch's notion of the 'Growth Machine' Kramer explains how, under neoliberalism, coalitions of public and private actors come together to extract profit from particular land at the expense of alternative, less profit-driven uses. Privatism underpins the idea of growth machines. Here, this logic of growth is justified by claiming that in order to improve an area suffering from the effects of deindustrialisation it is necessary for the public sector to produce a useable piece of land through providing tax breaks and a developed infrastructure. This will then encourage much needed developers and speculators to privately invest in the area. In turn, newly-created jobs and increased property values will inevitably 'trickle-down' to those in the surrounding areas. However, as Kramer argues, what is often absent from this logic is "any mention of the kinds of policies or strategies that are to be implemented in order to ensure that promised financial gains flow back into the public sector" (2011: 243). In fact it is suggested that these types of privately funded regeneration efforts aimed at local growth can serve to actually exacerbate existing inequalities. Salford Council adhered to such an ideology by conducting reclamation works in the early 1980's and designated part of the docks as an Enterprise Zone to exempt businesses locating in the zone from development land tax and rates and offer them 100% capital allowances (Salford City Council 2008a). The types of development that would directly benefit local residents were not so obviously specified.

### 6.2.2 Stage two – The cultural turn

A review of the Quays development plan was conducted in 1988 and it was proposed that a flagship development was needed on the site. Whilst some building had taken place, it was suggested that what was necessary in place-making and promotional terms was a large-scale development signaling the transformation of the wider Salford area and acting as a catalyst for change; what had occurred so far was insufficient to have the intended transformative effects. The catalyst was to be something culturally significant. In particular the Council had envisioned the creation of a performing arts centre after having seen similar developments take shape in other cities, for example London's *Tate Modern* and Bilbao's *Guggenheim*. This perhaps signaled in Salford what has been described as a 'cultural turn' in urban renewal, a concept emerging from these seemingly successful regeneration projects that relied heavily on flagship developments of cultural significance. Designating areas as Cultural Quarters and achieving 'city of culture' status also became seen as legitimate and successful ways to regenerate and transform a particular area during the 1990's (Miles 2005).

The decision to construct something cultural was selected based on these apparent successes elsewhere. As noted by the Council, the decision emerged upon "Realising the contribution that landmark cultural buildings can make to economic development and tourism in major cities across Europe and the globe…" (Salford City Council 2008a: 10). What we saw occurring here was a replication and transplantation of international regeneration strategies in specific localities, regardless of local context and/or necessity. This represents, it has been argued, a global network of regeneration strategies in which cities across the globe follow the same pattern or strategy for post-industrial regeneration (MacLeod 2011). All cities adopt a strategy whereby they each seek to create 'spaces of spectacle' but through roughly the same approach (Raco 2003)

There is an accepted (but, as yet, unfounded) assumption that cultural regeneration in a given area will solve the social problems created by deindustrialisation (Miles & Paddison 2005). Felicity Goodey, the lead on the building of *The Lowry*, conceded that at the time the idea of a performing arts centre was conceived "…at a possible cost of £127 million, the Council had absolutely no idea how it would be funded" (2010: 47). It

was acknowledged that rather than being privately funded, this initiative was to be publicly funded, in large part due to the lack of demand for land amongst the private sector at that time because of the downturn in market conditions (Struthers 2003). Here then, rather than facilitating development by acting as a 'promotor and coordinator', Salford Council was necessarily taking an active role in delivering and financing flagship development. The performing arts centre, which subsequently became known as *The Lowry Theatre* was funded as a millennium project through securing a bid to the National Lottery funding, with some finance also secured from European and Regional public funding streams and the Salford City Council itself (Struthers 2003).



*Figure 18: The Lowry Theatre at night (above). Source - TFIVenues.com*

*Figure 19: The Lowry Theatre and Lowry Outlet Mall (above). Source - Geograph.org*

Thompson (2013) has argued that the inclusion of L.S. Lowry's art and the eponymous naming of The Lowry was much of an afterthought; not something envisioned during its design or creation. The turn to Lowry was to offer an element of heritage and localism to an otherwise locally disconnected space. However, as has been discussed in the previous chapter, the extent to which local residents have benefitted from the development of *The Lowry* is questionable. And yet it is deemed successful in terms of its attractiveness to tourist and the financial contribution this makes to economy through visitors and job creation. The New Economy (2013) estimated that *The Lowry* added £26.9 million to the regional economy but importantly does not identify how much of that contribution goes to Salford specifically. It employs 373 people, of which approximately 70% are part time or casual contracts. 31% of employees live in Salford although the report does not specify if these employees resided in Salford prior to employment at The Lowry (New Economy 2013). It can be assumed that indirect jobs will also have been created in the industries that surround *The Lowry*, particularly

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tourism facilities like hotels and restaurants. The figures for local employment of Salford residents in such industries are not available. The New Economy's report does identify *The Lowry* as being the biggest tourist attraction in Greater Manchester and deems it to have contributed to the marketing of Salford to an external audience.

*The Lowry*, whilst viewed as successful in these ways, was still seen as not having delivered enough to change the composition and demographics of the wider Salford area. As described by Felicity Goodey (2010), "The Lowry was a turning point, it started to engender confidence, but it was not enough" (47). In 2005, Salford established an Urban Regeneration Company (URC), headed by the former BBC journalist Felicity Goodey. The URC can be seen as an amended version of the previously mentioned Urban Development Corporations of the Conservative government. URCs were first envisioned in New Labour's 1999 *Urban Task Force* report which encouraged the creation of public-private organisations that acted at 'arm's length' from political accountability (Kort & Klijn 2011). A continuation can be seen here towards maintaining responsibility for regeneration as a private sector role with public sector financial support.

In Salford, the URC was financed by English Partnerships (the government's regeneration agency), the North West Development Agency and Salford City Council. The URC created Central Salford's *Vision and Regeneration Framework* and acted as the lead on carrying out the plans that were now to include all of Central Salford, with SQ forming a part of it. The importance of the Central Salford URC here is to demonstrate the more formal statutory shift to public-private partnership regeneration in Salford and to also acknowledge the positioning of certain key people in the next stage of SQ development, specifically *MediaCityUK.* As we have seen so far, the Council has employed a variety of strategies in which to develop SQ, at each stage incorporating the most recent developments in regeneration, particularly the move to a cultural flagship. But at this stage there was still no obvious overarching vision for how the space will connect to the local environment or how it will develop in the long term.

### 6.2.3 Stage three – Peel's arrival

In 1987 Peel Holdings, a major land developer in the North West, purchased the 36 mile long Manchester Ship Canal in addition to the Bridgewater Canal estates (on which they built the retail development *The Trafford Centre*) that they already owned. Since this they have purchased, amongst many other things, the Liverpool Mersey Docks and Harbour Company. Together these form one of Peel's major projects, the Ocean Gateway, in which they intend to bring together the Liverpool and Manchester City regions by developing at least 50 projects along the land corridor (The Peel Group 2015). The below figure demonstrates the spatiality of the Ocean gateway and the projects along the corridor.
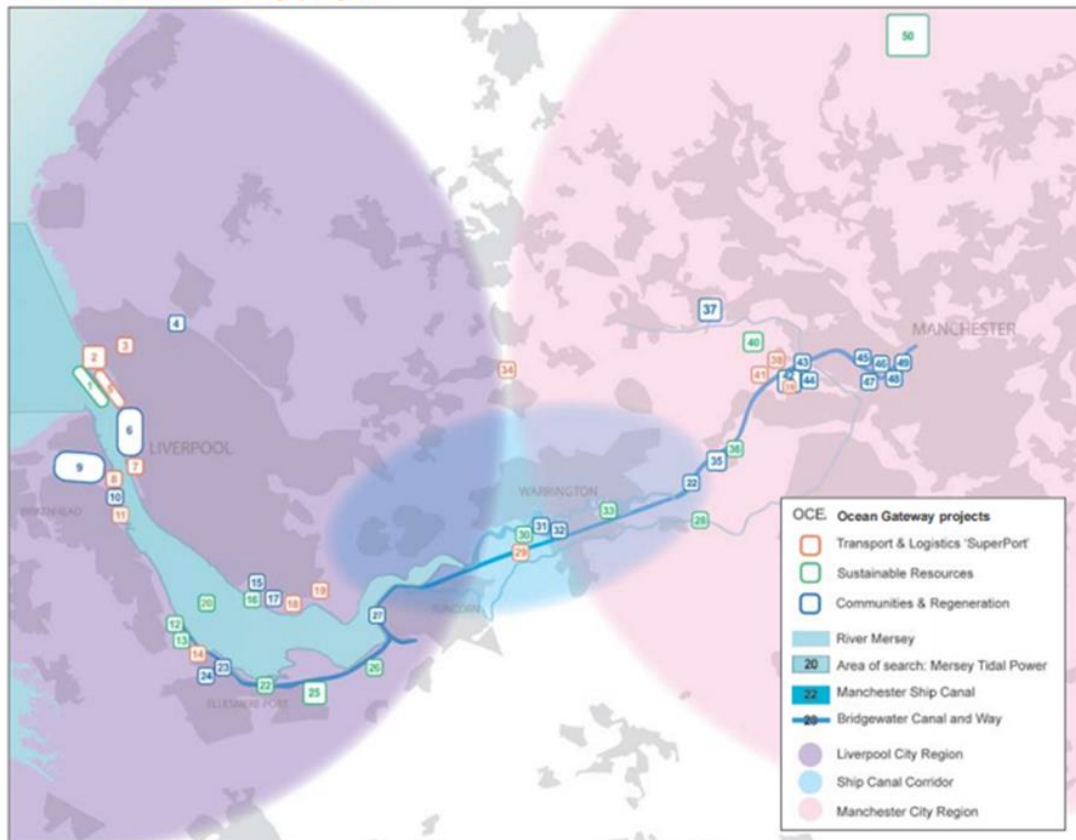


*Figure 20: Peel Holdings Ocean Gateway Plan. Source - The Peel Group, 2009*

The emergence of Peel at this stage of Salford's development established a relationship with Salford Council that has continued and intensified in to the present, as will be elaborated on more in the following chapter. The acquisition of large areas of space in Salford and around the region place Peel in a strategically important position and from which to engage in political decision making which affects its company vision (Harrison 2014b).

The reason for this purchase of the canal was not for the waterways but to acquire the land that sits either side of it. Peel specialises in land acquisition and development which individually may form part of an overall project, but are not directed by any particular development plan, as the below Peel representative stated,

> *"Interviewer: So there's never necessarily a clear idea of what's going to go on the land?*
>
> *Participant 16: That's the way Peel operates, yes. Other companies, they might specialise in building retail warehouses or building shops or building offices and those sorts of companies will go out and buy a piece of land for a particular purpose, to build an office block on it or whatever. Peel buys companies that own land - so we get into all sorts"(16 – Private developer)*

What this speaks to is the notion that the Quays development was never driven by a specific objective or a clear rationale beyond seeking private investment for the site as a goal in and of itself. The private developers and land owners were performing to what appeared to be the most lucrative use of the land at the time, rather than a specific developmental goal. What seems to be missing from these plans, both formal and informal, is a sense of how the Quays regeneration would specifically connect with local residents to achieve the aim of reversing some of the decline created by deindustrialisation. The same argument can also be made for the creation of MediaCityUK, as shall now be described.

### 6.2.4 Stage four – The BBC's on the move

As we've seen so far in this chapter, some success from the development on the Quays site had been experienced, particularly with *The Lowry*. The subsequent Development Framework objectives governed by the URC had set out to regenerate other key sites in Central Salford. However, there was a suggestion that Salford still needed something of more significance in order to provoke the kind of transformation intended by the flagship development *The Lowry*, as the below participant stated,

> *"I think MediaCity is the big project that we were looking for to actually create what we wanted to see happen" (2 - Elected Official).*

The implication was that Salford had achieved transformations to an extent, but that it was still falling short of the kind of flagship development that would bring it all together and mobilise greater change. It is not surprising then that when the suggestion of *MediaCityUK* began to emerge, it was supported wholly by Salford City Council, the URC and Peel Holdings.

In 2004, the BBC committed to decentralising parts of its activities to outside of London, in order to be more efficient, provide economic benefits to a region other than London, and to better serve its northern audiences (National Audit Office 2013). The Manchester region was identified early on as the main target area by the BBC. The move of the BBC was seen as crucial for the North West region in general and for the Manchester City-region as an asset of competitiveness, as acknowledged by the Chief Executive of Manchester City Council, Sir Howard Bernstein, in a statement to the House of Lords Select Committee on the BBC Charter Review,

> *"I think the vocabulary of all parties over the past few years has been the significance of city regions in trying to drive the national economic capacity of the UK. In that context, over the last few years what we have seen is a much greater focus particularly on places like Manchester in a wider sense, not just the City of Manchester, in focusing around those key value-added economic sectors which are capable not only of achieving*

*transformational change but also at the same time improving national competitiveness"* (Manchester City Council 2005: 3).

The BBC development was seen as a key opportunity here to enable the Manchester-city region to act as a competitive area in driving the regional economy, able to compete with city regions like the South East. What can be seen in this quote is the recognition by Manchester City Council of the need to think *beyond* their immediate geographic territory to other spatial scales, a point that will be revisited later in the chapter. Also here is the recognition of the BBC as an investment that can enable transformational change and increase the region's competitive standing. The move of the BBC, then, signals a much wider national objective of the redistribution of regional ability to engender growth through positioning themselves as competitive by developing specific regional assets. This speaks to Healey's (2009) point that in the shift to entrepreneurial state governance the state decentralises power to the regions in order for them to compete for global capital. The state is no longer responsible for the creation of employment for citizens but allows the region to identify and promote their most competitive place-based assets which will enable them to generate local growth; a shift in state responsibility from creating an 'employment dividend' to 'economic dividend' (2009: 834). In Sir Howard Bernstein's quote above we see such an inference of this 'economic competitiveness' line of regional governance. The securing of the BBC to the Manchester city-region was thought of as a contribution to its place-based competitive assets.

In its memorandum to the House of Lords Select Committee on the BBC Charter Review, Salford's URC and Salford Council stressed the importance of the BBC's relocation to the region, stating at this stage that the site in particular, whether Salford or Manchester, was less important than the overall move *(Salford City Council & Central Salford Urban Regeneration Company 2006)*. However, there *was* competition between the two cities for the BBC to relocate. It was something that was seen as necessary for Salford to continue its transformational vision. But prior to its emergence on Salford's radar, there was no suggestion that SQ would be developed in to a *MediaCityUK*,

*"Here were talks going on with the owners Peel about what sort of development would be appropriate [on the Quays], whether it would be housing or commerce and then this opportunity came along of the BBC"(1 - Elected Official)*

After discussions with key people involved in the creation of *MediaCityUK* and analysis of related documentation there was no clear story identifying how it initially began to materialise. Several different MediaCityUK origin stories were given, in which different parties identified themselves as the first point of call. All parties agreed, however, that the initial idea was prompted by the relocating of the BBC to a site in the North.

*"Out of the blue we get a letter from a firm of agents in Manchester saying have you got a site for 300,000 square feet of offices? It didn't say who it was for... And then a couple of months later out of the blue we get a response and it actually came from the BBC's head of property and it said you've responded to this and we've looked at what you've sent in and it's us and here's an RFI, a request for information, in a lot more detail saying we don't just want 300,000 square feet of offices we want some studios and are you interested" (16 - Private developer).*

It can be assumed that before this correspondence the idea of a MediaCityUK was not planned for. What the above quote also demonstrates is that the BBC's relocation was not just about decentralisation but also changing in some ways how the BBC operated. There was a desire to rent buildings and outsource production functions rather than own and develop it all in house. The request was for a plot of land large enough to allow for this scale of development. Another participant asserted that it was the Council, writing to the BBC on another matter that initiated the consideration of Salford as a potential site:

*"[Salford Council] wrote to the BBC about this and they were very interested but the culmination of that correspondence was that they eventually wrote to us and said 'oh by the way why have you never offered us the opportunity to come and look around Salford for potential sites?',*

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*so [Council] wrote back and said well we always assumed that you were going in to Manchester but we are more than happy to help you look at some sites in Salford and they wrote back and said 'ok yeh, we'll do that', and as soon as we got that letter - whoosh  [speed sound]-  that's when we set up the urban regeneration company to pursue it and everything after that is history" (1 - Elected Official)*

As can be seen in the quote, when the BBC indicated their want to consider Salford as a potential site the Council was more than willing to accommodate them and actively set about exploring its feasibility through the direction of the URC acting as a lead. The URC version of events is slightly different again:

*"Manchester thought this was a done-deal so when I began to take a URC interest in the BBC opportunity I got my knuckles wrapped and was told to go away… By this time the BBC had five potential sites in mind, two of which were in Salford, and when the BBC came to us to discuss them the gloves were off and we were plunged into real competition" (Goodey, 2010, p49).*

In this retelling, the URC only got involved once the BBC approached them directly. Whilst previously it was shown that the BBC's move to the region was crucial, 'whatever site' was chosen, it can be seen here that the two Councils *did* compete quite seriously to be the chosen site.

It is difficult to disentangle from these narratives who initially promoted the BBC to consider Salford as a location in the first instance. However, what is interesting is how all actors were independently involved to some extent in communications with them from the outset. MediaCityUK, in all of these accounts, was embraced and fought for right from the beginning. As one developer stated:

*"I think by the time we landed it we'd spent about £1.5 million just on design and stuff, just on spec. It was fairly big stuff." (16 - Private developer)*

Throughout this research there was never any suggestion that there was resistance or hesitation over the move. For all concerned there was a significant sense that they would do whatever was necessary to make this happen. There was an agreed consensus amongst all parties that this was something to be achieved. The plans for the site now began to focus and be tailored towards this end,

> *"When it started we didn't expect to win but we thought it was worth doing just because it would help us for future sites of that nature. As it…went on it became obvious that we stood a chance and we had to work out what our strategy would be" (2 - Elected Official).*

## 6.2.5 Stage five – MediaCityUK



Overview of Media City:UK and its digital environment.

*Figure 21: MediaCity UK design. Source - Joroff, Frenchman and Sanal, 2007*

It was at this point that the vision for an entire MediaCityUK started to emerge. Again, this was not pre-planned by the partners involved but driven specifically by the BBC itself. The BBC wanted more than just offices. They wanted additional studios and media centres and an environment in which these could all work together. It was the BBC that

thus encouraged the URC and Peel (who were leading on the development) to contact Mike Joroff, Professor at MIT in urban planning. In particular, Professor Joroff works with city planners and partners to promote innovative city development. Jorrof and colleagues advise city planners on developing what they refer to as 'new century cities', guided by principles that more resemble "…those of modern enterprises than of traditional city planning" (Joroff et al. 2009: 6). These principles should be inclusive of a strong narrative that directs the future of the city and its intent, guided primarily by an overarching vision as opposed to a prescribed master plan. They should also be agile and able to respond to change, led by partners with a variety of interests, and have a set of devolved powers and responsibilities (Joroff et al. 2009). For Joroff et al (2009) new century cities are ever-evolving clusters of specific business sectors that attract highly skilled people in the knowledge sector who can drive its success in the global economy. Such cities are "…an appropriate response to the current environment of industry transformation, rapid change, and uncertainty" (2009: 6). Joroff and his partners designed a MediaCityUK plan at the request of Peel Holdings to demonstrate how the site could be conceptualised (see figure 21 above).

It was this design of the potential for an entire *MediaCity* and its associated culture that is said to have been a major selling point for the BBC. This plan catalysed the move towards establishing the Quays as a creative city, where people live, work and socialise in the same space and where the entire fabric of the environment is created so that creativity can occur inside and outside at any point in the day. The commissioning and use of the design by Joroff and partners demonstrates how they directed the vision for this regeneration strategy. Peck (2005) argues that this 'creative cities script' is a strategy apt for cities that have tried previous regeneration attempts and are in need of a new solution. He argues that city leaders have uncritically accepted the idea that creativity can lead to growth, and have moved straight on to requiring the necessary 'repertoire of strategies' that leaders can adopt to attract the creative types (2005: 766).

For Peck, the move to urban creativity (engendered here in *MediaCity*) is a new round in the entrepreneurial form of local government strategies aimed at securing external sources of growth seen in previous rounds such as the cultural turn (exemplified by the

first intended flagship *The Lowry*). It works as an urban blueprint which can be mapped on to the cities that choose it. Those who do not, Peck argues, are criticised for not wanting to change, for being stagnant – a sentiment that echoes themes emerging from the previous chapter. Urban creativity works as a 'mobilising discourse' (2005: 765), defining both the problem and the solution, but, like the cultural turn, there is limited evidence of the results. It could be assumed that a MediaCityUK in Salford, with financial backing from the public and private sectors and the BBC as an anchor tenant, could be successful in economic and property value terms. It seems to make sense as a strategy that could incorporate the BBC and other similar digital and media organisations. However, the issue Peck raises about strategies based on urban creativity is that it does not solve the problems it is intended to. It does not necessarily create jobs for those who lost out through deindustrialisation and a steady withdrawal of state subsidy. The creation of something like a *MediaCity* attracts a new class of people who are not just skilled but *highly* skilled, the type of 'skilled sophisticated employees' promoted by Joroff and partners in the design for MediaCityUK (Joroff et al. 2007: 6). What occurs then is the hope of trickle-down redistribution rather than a clear focus on the social welfare benefits necessary from the development.

As described in the previous chapter, where jobs are created for local residents, this urban creativity may serve to construct divisions of labour rather than any social equity. Salford was chosen as the site for the BBC's relocation on the conditions that the media corporation would form part of a bigger MediaCity. How this was built in practice will be the subject of the following section, but what we have seen here is how SQ has had cycles of spatial reorganisation in which capital successively values and then devalues land under new developmental phases of accumulation (Harvey 1993). The closure of the docks symbolised an earlier phase of capital mobility where more profitable forms of production emerged elsewhere resulting in a withdrawal of capital leaving the space to decline. Edensor (2005) argues that in the industrial ruins created by this earlier phase we are presented with the opportunity to critique the notion that capitalist production symbolises a linear form of progression. Here he argues we can see production as "a circular process through which things become obsolete, are thrown away, later recycled or replaced in pursuit of the always new" (2005b: 316).

As the Quays have transformed from a derelict site to a MediaCityUK these previous rounds of production are visibly removed, preventing the opportunity for this critique of progress, the opportunity to consider the consequences of a reliance on private capital. The Council has entered in to a zero-sum game to attract investment away from other areas to develop large scale projects. These projects at first physically engender this logic of urban development but then continually perpetuate it via the need to be seen constantly as a competitive option ready to compete for the next round (Swyngedouw et al. 2002). For Salford then the securing of MediaCityUK is representative of this development logic that enacts place-making at an even greater scale, moving further away from the representation of its locality, as Felicity Goodey notes in her retelling of a conversation with Michael Joroff:

> *"I said, "Do you think we could be world class?" He looked down his nose*
> *at me and he replied, "Well I don't know about that, but I think you could*
> *be globally significant"! And that will do us. We will be globally significant"*
> *(Goodey, 2010, p49)*

What this section has tried to document is the way in which, since the inception of a redeveloped Salford docks, there has never been any clear sense of where the site will go in the future and what it will become. It has progressed from a car park, to a mixed development of housing, leisure and offices, to an international cultural destination, to a global MediaCityUK. Whilst there were strategies enacted along the way there was no masterplan. What appears to be lacking from these flexible visions is the link that connects the regeneration efforts to local need. Each manifestation of the vision is influenced by private developers or speculators or national flows of available capital, in short, it has been market-led. As it has been developed at various stages it has moved further and further away from that which is immediately relevant or beneficial to local residents. That is not to say that the Salford Council did not envision the developments that have taken place, but it is to argue that its vision is tapered to the requirements of investment, a strategy which may not directly benefit local residents.

In the previous chapter I outlined how local residents were described as suffering from a lack of 'relevant skills' to benefit from the newly created job opportunities in

MediaCityUK. What is interesting to see then from the development of MediaCityUK as documented above, is that arguably this site could have just as easily been a different form of production had the market taken it in a different direction. Salford residents might have been encouraged to upskill and educate in an entirely different direction. Or alternatively, Salford Council could have encouraged an employment base which meets the existing skill set of the local residents.

## 6.3 The power to govern

### 6.3.1 The Salford Model

This next section will focus on the governance arrangements around MediaCityUK. To begin with however will be a brief consideration of the regeneration which has taken place in neighbouring Manchester. Much has been made of the 'Manchester Model' of regeneration, most specifically through the work of Jamie Peck and Kevin Ward, both of whom have written extensively on the urban development of Manchester. Most notably, their edited collection 'The City of Revolution' documents in detail the specifics of the 'Manchester Model', which refers to the delivery of urban regeneration. This model has established Manchester as 'the entrepreneurial city *writ large*' (Ward 2003: 125). The model Manchester employed to deliver regeneration was to establish a good private and public partnership in which the Council acted with an entrepreneurial business mind-set. The state was engaged with the development of Manchester through a variety of different spatial scales; through local government, through regional governance (the North West Development Agency), through central government and through the European Union (Ward 2003). This approach to regeneration began with the City Challenge redevelopment of Hulme, an area in Manchester. It was used most successfully to redevelop the city centre after the IRA bombing and was enshrined most formally through the New East Manchester URC (Robson 2002).

The successful delivery of these redevelopment strategies emanated from the creation of a semi-autonomous body that was established to operate at an arms-length from the Council. The body was not an asset owner but a group who would govern the regeneration framework drawing on the expertise of relevant private sector partners.

The group itself comprised of seconded Council employees and private sector elites, known as the 'Manchester Mafia' (Peck & Ward 2002: 14). Their role was to remove planning obstacles and smooth necessary bureaucracy, acting as a short cut to decision making. They stoked confidence amongst private investors through their commercial and 'can do' attitude (Robson 2002). Critically, Quilley (2002) argues that the success achieved in development terms has served to direct the agenda away from that which would tackle the underlying structural problems in Manchester like employment, transport and housing and which would marry up to local demand.

As has been seen so far, Salford Council adopted an entrepreneurial stance early under the arrival of the new urban politics. Salford Council has demonstrated its ability to compete for government grants through programmes such as Urban renewal, Housing Market renewal – Pathfinders, Single Regeneration Budget, and New Deal for Communities and millennium funding. It has also demonstrated its ability to lever in private finance through for example the development of SQ. The Council established the Salford Central URC in 2005. Also in 2005 the Council established a partnership called Urban Vision, along with Capita and Galliford Try, which is a quasi-outsourced planning, property and maintenance company run by a mixture of public and private agents. It acts as the development and building control for the Council and oversees all planning applications and land offerings. It also provides guidance and developments for other councils and private organisations (Urban Vision 2012). It would appear then that Salford Council is willing to defer some responsibility for one of its main statutory controls to partnership agencies.

MediaCityUK was able to be realised, in a large part, due to the people involved at different spatial scales, all working to the same ends. Much in the same way that Manchester had its elite 'mafia', Salford had its own well positioned key players whose interests appeared to overlap considerably. For example,

- Peel and the North West Regional Developments agency (NWDA) who offers considerable backing to the MediaCityUK project, including financial, share some of the same executives.

- Peel's Deputy Chairman Robert Hough become Chair of the NWDA in replace of Bryan Gray who later became chair of Peel Media and Chaired the MediaCityUK steering group (Harrison 2014b).
- Robert Hough, who was once the Chair of the Manchester Shipping Canal that runs to Liverpool before it was purchased by Peel, is also the Chair of the Liverpool City Region Local Economic Partnership, of which Peel now have a great deal of involvement. He was also Chairman of the New East Manchester URC 2002-2009 (ExUrbe 2013).
- Jane Deane who also worked for the New East Manchester URC became Programme Director of MediaCityUK in 2007.
- Felicity Goodey, Chair of the Salford URC, former BBC journalist was appointed Chief Executive of MediaCityUK.
- Chris Farrow was appointed Chief Executive of Salford's URC in 2006 and had also previously worked for London Docklands Urban Development Corporation and Merseyside's Development Corporation.
- Barbara Spicer, who also worked at Merseyside Development Corporation, became chief Executive of Salford Council in 2007.

There is a clear alliance here between the governance arrangements at the differing scales. What can be seen is the involvement of private sector people occupying overlapping and unelected senior positions and routinely being involved in local state urban regeneration. This reflects Swyngedouw et al's (2002) assessment that large scale urban development projects often comprise small networks of powerful elites occupying the positions necessary to make these developments happen, something they call the 'field of power', in which others are prevented from accessing. Swyngedouw et al (2002) take a critical stance on these networks of power, demonstrating how they foreclose the ability of other non-networked people to challenge the process or to seek out its benefits for outside interests. We can see that for MediaCityUK there were certain individuals who would be able to draw on their positions and connections to strongly promote and lend support to the MediaCityUK development. We can also see these serial urban regeneration professionals moving between projects in different cities applying their knowledge at different sites - for example Chris Farrow who had worked on two previous waterfront regeneration schemes (London Docklands and Liverpool Docklands). It is useful to question then how much autonomy the local Council

is able to exert within these fields of power and how able it would be to challenge the process if required.

The delivery of a MediaCityUK was to come from Peel, but the catalyst for this delivery was the securing of the BBC to that location, something which was led by Salford Central URC, namely Felicity Goodey, former BBC journalist, in conjunction with Peel. The URC took the lead on behalf of the Council acting as an intermediary between Peel and the BBC,

> *"We asked [URC] to lead for us on that. Of course because it was a private company, although all the shareholders were public sector, it had certain freedoms the way they were able to talk to people and I think they were very trusted by the private sector because a lot of the personnel had made their reputations in private sector organisations.… they basically fronted the discussions with the BBC to make sure that the BBC came to Salford and act as a sort of liaison with Peel. So all the discussions really through that sector but you know, we had good relations". (1 - Elected Official).*

We see here the replacement of elected representatives with technocratic experts who are seen as better able to make these decisions and negotiate these deals. As Swyngedouw (2010) argues, this transition works by "broadening the sphere of governing, while narrowing, if not suspending, the space of the properly political" (2010: 2). As more non-representative actors make the decisions and conduct the bargaining and negotiating with other non-representative actors over how this site should be developed the space for political argument over whether or not it should be developed in this way is reduced down.

That said, it was recognised by Peel that Salford Council had to be involved and was *assumed* to support the development, even if it were not necessarily expected to take a lead role,

*"So I spoke to [Council Executive] and said 'we need you on side for this'.*
*It was a bit of a no-brainer for Salford. A big piece of land and a developer*
*who can afford to build it and do it." (16 - Private developer).*

The Council, as Peel expected, were accommodating to the requirements of the BBC and the MediaCityUK vision. Its malleability and its responsiveness was something that the Council claimed it could provide over its bigger and more selective neighbours, Manchester,

*"And that was our approach to this, yes we were smaller than Manchester*
*but it meant that [the BBC] could get a hold of people more quickly who*
*would be more responsive to their needs and it would mean more to us*
*and consequently we would be more flexible about what we needed to do"*
*(2 - Elected Official).*

The above participant expressed a theme emerging from those closely involved in the development of MediaCityUK that this was an opportunity not to be missed in Salford. Because of this those involved were prepared to be flexible in their working arrangements and usual procedures. Swyngedouw et al (2002) suggest that large scale urban development projects are often conducted within a 'framework of exceptionality' (2002: 527). They state that projects become designated within an exceptionality framework if it involves particularly significant features (like its financial scale, its timescale or its profile) and that because of this exceptional status these projects are less democratically governed and require a non-regulatory approach to its progression. We can think of MediaCityUK as occurring within this framework of exceptionality. The Council was willing to work to what the BBC and the developer wanted and was more dynamic to respond to the needs of the situation. It was suggested that the Council's statutory requirements for a development like this were not fully implemented in order to smooth the process. For example the usual requirement a developer needs to comply with before planning permission is given was waived in the MediaCityUK context because it would have delayed the early planning permission for the site which was reported to be a big selling point for the BBC. Planning permission at an early stage

would have demonstrated that the Council was supportive and that the build could begin immediately,

> *"The traditional way of doing it is you've got to do everything before you start work on site. That's a control for the Local Authority to make sure that things actually get done. Now, here, because we'd worked so closely and they'd been involved all the way through we didn't need to have that control. Because if the BBC were not going to come, we weren't going to build it so it didn't really matter" (16 – Private developer).*

The quote demonstrates the power balance between the private developer and the public sector authority. Planning permission is a control that the Council ultimately hold even within private-public partnerships. Here however, it can be seen that Council control was relaxed so as not to act as a barrier to the investment. This in its self is not necessarily that exceptional. The requirement for planning permission is often a source of negotiation and the Councils partners are well versed in trying to find a route around them. However, what is interesting about MediaCityUK is that the Council was not negotiating with a developer but instead relying on the developer to secure a third party - the BBC. Constraining the developer who is both the land owner and the main financial investors would jeopardise the ultimate aim. In this scenario, the Council was necessitated to work with the developer, relinquishing power when it must and acting in a framework of exceptionality (Swyngedouw et al 2002). The role of Peel Holdings in the delivery of MediaCityUK and the role of the private actors in Salford's URC highlight a broadening sphere of governing beyond the usual political representatives (Swyngedouw 2010). It also highlights the narrowing scope for democratic politics as controls are waived or given away in the quest to secure necessary investment.

### 6.3.2 Bargaining tools

Kantor and Savitch (1993) provide a useful way of conceptualising the power relations between public and private agents when working together. They suggest that the relationship hinges around particular bargaining advantages that may differ dependent on externalities like the market conditions that make a particular place more attractive

or less attractive to private interests. Sought after places would allow the Local Authority more bargaining power, whereas places that struggle to secure investment may find they have much less bargaining power and thus need to reduce their controls. The extent to which a council commits to a growth agenda will ultimately shape this relationship and how much the council is willing to compromise on its more social democratic responsibilities i.e. choosing to follow a different policy approach (*ibid*). It can be argued that Salford has committed to this growth agenda by perusing strategies that speak to bolstering the local economy. The Council sees its role as understanding what Salford need to offer to private business to be an attractive investment for whatever sectors are looking to invest which may serve to work against the actual needs of the local people,

> *"[Salford Council] is demand responsive, so it's not about bringing in business which matches the local skill base but business which is looking for a place to be" (29 - Council employee).*

Nowhere is this clearer than the SQ site where over the years of its development it has sought to grow through drawing in available investment which does not necessarily meet the needs of local residents.

Salford Council appeared to have limited bargaining advantages over the MediaCityUK development. This is not to say that the Council was attempting to limit the development, because it was not. But it does acknowledge the inherent power imbalance between the partners over a development that was regarded as something that should benefit the local residents. The Council's reliance on Peel limits its bargaining power and encourages it to relax its controls i.e. its democratic responsibilities. For example, the Council's planning obligations in its construction handbook states that a developer must contribute to a construction partnership which helps develop local resident's skills (Salford City Council 2014e). However, the Council waived the requirement for Peel to contribute to training costs for construction workers due to the number of jobs they were promising to deliver to the area (ExUrbe 2013). Neither was Peel required to contribute the several millions of pounds stipulated under a Section 106 agreement (The Salford Star 2012a). They were exempt from having to designate

any of their newly built housing as affordable housing, rationalised due to the large contribution the company were already making. Nor did the Council make any stipulations over employing local labour or local contractors during the development, as the below response demonstrates in answer to that specific question,

> *Well, [the Council] didn't. And we asked them specifically not to. Because*
> *we didn't want any obvious barriers in the way" (16 – Private developer).*

This is in spite of the fact that Salford Council in conjunction with the NWDA invested at least £61 million pounds of public funding to Peel for the development (Salford City Council 2011a). What can be seen here then is the Council compromising its usual statutory requirements in order to secure the investment and smooth the development process, both procedurally and financially, not creating what Peel would have seen as barriers. It could be assumed that were the Council to have more bargaining power, it could have enforced these policies rather than reducing its ability to exercise control. However, in not doing so it demonstrates a strong need to secure this private investment. It suggests that the Council see it as imperative not to jeopardise Peel's involvement. It feeds in to the idea that there are no other alternatives to the neoliberal logic of market-intervention to deliver regeneration opportunities (Deas 2012).

### 6.3.3 A long-term partnership

As a major land owner in the region and in Salford in particular the relationship between the Council and Peel is a familiar one which has its ups and downs, as the below quote demonstrates,

> *"What's the relationship with Peel? Love/hate. Simple as that, love/hate"*
> *(4 - Elected Official).*

For a private organisation who owns a substantial amount of land in Salford there have been numerous times when they have come in to conflict over pursuing their interests, as demonstrated in the introductory chapter to this thesis. However, they are at times seen as a means to an end,

*"Peel Holdings, you'll hear a lot about them as you start to study this because some people think they're the devil incarnate, other people just recognise that we have to live with them" (2 - Elected Official).*

What is reinforced here is the power that comes with being a major land owner. It was not only their land ownership that put Peel in such a good position but also its ability to complete the development to meet all the BBC requirements, something discussed with a hint of envy by one participant,

*"The second thing that Peel did was they said 'well we need to set up a new company to manage this', so they created Peel Media and within a few months of them just being a property company who knew nothing about new media they had recruited in to this new company some of the top movers and shakers on the media front from around the world, just headhunting people, and you had a company with all the skills and experience to be able to deliver exactly what the new media companies that moved in to the area wanted" (1 - Elected Official)*

The power that Peel heralded as a key player in this was also not lost on its representatives. Whilst ultimately this was considered a partnership development by the MediaCityUK consortium (Peel, Salford Council, Salford URC and supported by the NWDA), the actual ownership and physical development was delivered by Peel Media. This gave it a confidence over the whole project that it could project to the BBC,

*"Some of the other developers were a bit shaky, because developers are by nature a bit shaky. But Peel was able to say 'we're a multibillion pound company. We run this place'" (16 - Private developer)*

This confidence was also experienced by the Council, who has also been able to benefit from this,

*"You have to be very careful but at the same time you can lever in finances which are not available to you. So I had a number of meetings with [Peel] in which I obviously counted my fingers after I had finished with them, but*

*the great thing about Peel is that they are quite difficult to negotiate with*

*but once they agree to do something they will do it" (2 - Elected Official).*

This quote speaks to an underlying theme of fatalism emergent through the interviews conducted, the idea that the only way to improve local conditions is through growth, and the only way to achieve growth is through having to bargain to differing extents with private investors. That is not to argue that this is always against the wants of the public sector or that it never involves elements of resistance, but it suggests that this principle has become an unquestioning normality. This speaks to the 'invocation of necessity' as described by Davidson and Iveson (2014:2), the necessity to act quickly and with urgency and can be seen in the quote below,

*"Now, if you'd say would I rather that you educated people in Salford and*

*got them to higher standard of education before the BBC came, of course.*

*But it's like anything, you take your opportunities when they come and*

*they don't necessarily come in a nice neat order" (2 - Elected Official)*

The primary importance here is the taking of the opportunity. What is absent from this sentiment is a plan which is guided by local necessity. Here the local need is a bargaining disadvantage. In securing the investment the Council is compromising the people it should be making decisions on behalf of. The Council did create a separate MediaCity Public Sector Support Programme Partnership of only public sector agencies whose remit was to ensure that the local area benefit from the creation of MediaCityUK (Partners In Salford 2007). The Partnership was initially made up of the Council, the Salford URC and the NWDA. The Council now is the only partner that still exists. However, this partnership is interesting as it demonstrates that Peel were not expected to deliver the community benefits of the regeneration, instead seeing it as something to be retrospectively delivered by the public sector partners only.

Tackling these problems as external to the development itself demonstrates how these aims were not wholly built in to the overall project objectives. Here then we can question how much MediaCityUK was intended to regenerate the local area as opposed to the specific SQ site. Featherstone (2013) argues that the use of the capitalist economy

to regenerate cities inevitably creates a surplus of people who are unable to engage with these specially developed and protected enclaves. For Slater (2014) this is again a fundamental feature of false choice urbanism. He argues that the compulsion to seek investment at all costs will neglect critical questions that challenge the purpose and beneficiaries of such investment. Slater draws on DeFilippis who argues that,

> *"reinvestment needs to be understood through the lens of questions such as: What kind of investment? For whom? Controlled by whom?" (in Slater 2014: 518).*

For Slater these questions speak to power, rather than choice. The power to decide what type of investment is one which is situated in the hands of a few rather than those who are designated as potential recipients of such investment within their spatiality. We can see in the regeneration of SQ how it has incrementally moved away from being directly beneficial to many of the local residents (as seen in the previous chapter) and more heavily controlled by private interests who subsequently are not responsible for ensuring the improvement of local structural conditions. If we consider Defilippis' questions from above we can think about the kind of investment we have seen here. Primarily it has been market led and speculative in nature. The link to the local has come secondary, with strategies of upskilling and training as an additional component rather than a fundamental feature. It is developer-led and forms a strategic part of Peel's overall Ocean Gateway project which operates on a wholly different spatial scale to Salford, one in which they negotiate very effectively with other powerful elites. They have a significant amount of bargaining power that does not necessarily allow room for the Council to resist. Whilst this was required by the Council for the MediaCityUK development, Peel's stake and increasing power in the area means that it now wield a great deal of political might that might not be required by the Council in the future, but will be very difficult to resist.

## 6.4 Compromising the borders

### 6.4.1 Legitimation through scale

This section will now turn to consider how the SQ regeneration has been justified by those involved in its development. Swyngedouw et al (2002) highlight from their experiences of analysing large scale urban development projects across Europe that one of the key features is the lack of resistance from local groups to the projects. They determine that this is the result of particular discourses from the partners involved that frame the projects as legitimate and beneficial. One of the themes emerging from the interviews conducted during this research was the utilising of a discourse of scale to legitimise the project. Differing geographical scales were drawn upon to divert from the question of local benefits and refer instead to benefits at a Greater Manchester conurbation or a regional level,

> *"I think it's a difference that's been made to the sub regional economy more than Salford if that makes sense. If you, obviously it's made a real big difference to Salford, but you can't think of Salford as being a self-contained economy" (1 - Elected Official).*

To see SQ as part of a broader economy is to legitimise a contribution that may be felt externally to Salford i.e. to people who commute from and live in Manchester or further afield, and to feeder industries that are not located in Salford for example construction companies. Drawing on these scales allows SQ to be situated within a larger relational network,

> *"Obviously Salford's going to benefit from it, but the principle benefit we knew would be for the whole of the North West region" (2 - Elected Official).*

This discourse legitimises the choices made and the potential for benefits to be accrued by people outside of Salford primarily. But what that also does is construct 'mental maps' that define a particular space in which this regeneration occurs and where its beneficiaries reside. Wilson and Wouters (2003) argue that these 'mental maps' are

spatial constructions of form and meaning. These conjured up spaces can in turn assist in shaping the real world by determining them as a focal point of action. The geography of Salford as a bounded entity is capitalised on when specifically necessary, but also submerged within a wider regional geography when it is not. For example one participant described Salford as being attractive to external developers because at the time Salford could still benefit from having cheaper land rents than Manchester (something which is beginning to change) (participant 29 – Public Sector Officer). In this respect, being 'Salford' is vitally important. However, when it comes to pitching the city to investors the local Salford skill base is seen as a barrier. Therefore in this instance within the same conversation,

> *'That's where I give [investors] the Greater Manchester figures' (29 - Council employee)*

Here the discourse of scale allows Salford to be flexible and malleable, defining and redefining to meet the needs of the external party. The cheaper rent comes from Salford, the skilled employees come from the Greater Manchester conurbation. Of course, this is justified as pragmatism,

> *"Within an economy there is what we call a "travel to work" area and you can't just say Salford people will only be employed by Salford Council and Salford industries and Manchester people will only be employed by Manchester Council and Manchester industries. It just doesn't work that way" (19 - Elected official).*

Here people are expressed as moving between cities within a regional spatiality. It is not to assert that this is wrong or specific to the Salford context, but that these scales are manipulated in discourse firstly to legitimise the lack of immediately local benefits and also to promote Salford in particular ways, ways which may favour some over others.

### 6.4.2 Manchester? Salford? Manchester?

One of the other ways in which these 'mental maps' are constructed is through the manipulating of Salford as a territorial identity. As noted in the case study chapter

(chapter three), Salford has formed part of many territorial boundaries at a variety of spatial scales since regional devolution began. Parts of Salford form the Regional Centre, an area of significant importance to the wider city-region (Government Office for the North West 2008). The Salford part of the Regional Centre can be seen in figure 22 below.

**SPATIAL FRAMEWORK**



*Figure 22: Map of Salford's spatial framework. Source - Salford City Council, 2004*

The map indicates that the Regional Centre boundary runs around the areas in Salford of greatest significance to the economy; SQ, the Irwell riverside and Chapel Street (other sites of significant financial investment and the University of Salford). It conveniently circumnavigates the residential areas that surround these sites, places of extreme deprivation like Ordsall and Langworthy. That is not to say the Regional Centre does not include residential buildings, as it includes the majority of the private housing and apartments that have been created at SQ and along the riverside. This Regional Centre

has been 'summoned up' as a newly designated spatial entity and does not map on to existing wards or parliamentary boundaries but instead creates a new and particularly powerful area of concentrated competitive assets (Healey 2009). One participant claimed that the identification of a Regional Centre was deliberately constructed so that Salford did not have to incorporate reference to Manchester within its plans,

> *"There used to be a big rivalry between Salford and Manchester. **Salford would never use the word Manchester**. It coined the term Regional Centre. So in documents it would say the Regional Centre when it meant Manchester because it wouldn't use the word Manchester. They were like that. Now it's more knitted together" (3 – Planning Professional)*

Now the term Manchester is used to refer to Salford where economically necessary,

> *"It's up to businesses how they describe their address and people get unduly anxious about this issue but the way you call a place is whatever will be recognised by the audience that you're targeting so the reality is that Manchester is an international brand. People all over the world have a good idea where Manchester is and that's why Salford city Council is a member of the Manchester marketing or MIDAS or the group of local authorities that promote the brand of Manchester" (1 - Elected Official)*

By using discourse that positions Salford as operating in an international market then it legitimises using the Manchester name. The business decision to identify as Manchester is one that Salford Council will not challenge,

> *"What I won't do is tell them you cannot have your hotel unless you actually say it's in Salford because that's a sure bet that they will stay on the Manchester side of the border. So I don't go around shouting you must change your name but at the same time I would put gentle pressure on them to say acknowledge you're in Salford" (2 - Elected Official).*

> *"So if Salford has to call itself Manchester to make something happen it will do so" (3 – Planning Professional).*

Here again we see the 'invocation of necessity' (Davidson and Iveson 2014) justifying the lack of power to exercise control. The necessity to secure capital that may move elsewhere highlights the inability to enforce controls. Through the Council's lack of bargaining power it compromise the identity of its residents. This was seen most fundamentally with the SQ and the developments within it like MediaCityUK which was marketed wholly as 'MediaCityUK Manchester'. Whilst the BBC itself refers to its position as in Salford, the actual MediaCityUK is always branded as Manchester (see figure 23 below).



*Figure 23: Marketing flags around MediaCityUK, Manchester - Authors own photo*

Massey (1995) has argued that in an increasingly globalising world we cannot conceive any more of cities as particular bounded entities, as containers of urban life. Rather, we need to conceive of the relational interactions that move across these boundaries. Massey conceives places then not as territories but as articulations of a specific set of relations that have emerged together at that particular time. The identity of a place is not fixed or rooted in history but constantly changing and contested through the multiple relations existing at any one point in time. If we think of place as relational,

Massey says, we also have to think of it as fluid, as always in formation. It is not static. Because of this, is can be changed. However, these relations are also shaped by power. Some have the power to determine which history of a place is dominant, which borders are maintained and which future is asserted. Others are subject to those decisions and assertions. If we think relationally then we can see how other regeneration programmes have appeared in Salford after having come from somewhere else. The identity of Salford has been directed by regeneration in places like Baltimore and Bilbao and shared through relations with people involved in these different projects as they move around the networks of regeneration practitioners. The creation of MediaCityUK in Salford has emerged through a relational politics between several key agencies, as a culmination of power being asserted in uneven ways.

Salford's transformation, its 'journey', is being shaped by relations that are beyond the place of Salford. It is being set on a trajectory that identifies a particular future, one which may negatively impact on some Salford residents. Different boundaries are being drawn or reinforced due to these uneven power relations. Healey argues that the reimaginings of place, like city-regions, are conceptualised and fed back through these relational webs, having real material effects. These concepts, she argues, "...are selective in their focus of attention. Some relations and integrations are emphasized, while others slip out of the limelight" (Healey 2009: 833). We can see in the discourses of scale employed by participants how some concepts are enforced and called upon at the expense of others e.g. the region over the local, the Regional Centre over local neigbourhoods. The region is enforced as a spatial reality in order to justify the successes achieved at MediaCityUK.

The power to shape these spatial identities is located within the relations between the private investors and the public sector agents involved in the regeneration effort. If we consider the regeneration of SQ through this relational lens then SQ was not so much a site waiting to receive investment, necessarily accepting what it could, but instead a deliberate articulation of the politics played out through these power relations. These decisions determine the direction of a particularly selected space in time and how it will change the course of that space for those involved. However, as we have seen, the

decision making powers are increasingly being handed over to non-representative actors who may have their own interests in mind over that of the local community. We may see Peel claiming and defining SQ as an element of their overall Ocean Gateway project rather than as a site for delivering local regeneration benefits to Salford residents.

## 6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to follow on from the previous chapter in order to try to understand, from the perspective of the decision makers involved, how SQ came to embody a materiality that is disconnected from the local residents it was intended to benefit. Through focusing on the stages of inception from the beginning of its development up to its most recent stage as a MediaCityUK it has been argued that the site itself never had a clear overarching vision as to what it would become. Whilst it was always recognised that it could become 'something', and there were strategies in place to make this happen, it was not pushed in any particular direction. Instead, it was left to the market to determine its form. This relied on the market to have a social objective in order for it to benefit local residents. However, it has been argued that this social objective only minimally materialised. It is not to say that there are no Salford residents who benefit from SQ or that they all feel excluded, but that this connection is partial. As the site developed it became something that was further and further away from that which local residents could easily benefit from. The social objectives of the regeneration were to be delivered as an add-on to this development through a public sector partnership, indicating that the site itself was unlikely to deliver direct benefits.

The Council has acted in an increasingly entrepreneurial manner through the development of the Quays. It has demonstrated its ability and wants to engage with private developers in order to fund a successful regeneration programme. However, through doing this it has been argued that many of the democratic controls that the Council has to ensure democratic accountability have been relinquished in order not to hinder its development. The development was treated in a 'framework of exceptionality' (Swyngedouw et al 2002). By treating the site as exceptional, it less democratically

governed and requires a non-regulatory approach to its development. In effect, this sought to reduce the responsibility of the Council for its delivery, instead turning to private developers to do so. Through this process we see the space in which to politically engage reduced to a widening sphere of non-representative private governance (Swyngedouw 2010).

The call to exceptionality in which political engagement is reduced speaks to a fatalism over the necessity to secure private investment as the only option for regeneration and development. The notion that investment may move elsewhere if not immediately secured feeds in to a 'no alternative' neoliberal logic (Deas 2013). It creates a 'constant invocation of necessity' in which quick action is necessitated over the consequence of losing out (Davidson & Iveson 2014). In acting quick to avoid being subject to failure restricts the Council's ability to exercise democratic decision making. It adds a sense of urgency in which the logic is to act rather than take time out for political debate. In doing this the democratic institutions legitimacy is challenged through its articulation of its impotence; it must act as its only option. For Salford Council this necessary action reduces its bargaining power over how the site should look. It conjures up a consensual approach in line with the views of the private developers and private actors involved.

In order to legitimate and justify the increasing disconnect between SQ and the social benefits it should deliver, the Council has adopted a discourse which essentially compromises the geographical boarders of Salford. It claims a position within a much wider regional economy through which to situate itself. By drawing on wider spatial scales beyond the Salford jurisdiction the Council can claim that the development is benefited and successful. By widening the pool of users and targeted beneficiaries the Council can avoid having to focus solely on the lack of benefits for the local residents. By summoning up new spatialities in Salford based on assets rather than areas there is a lesser immediate connection between the developments and its respective residents. It becomes part of a Regional Centre which is part of a much broader regional economy and regional strategy. It is bigger than Salford residents and thus is legitimised as servicing the needs of those external to Salford in the first instance. In the previous chapter the benefits to local residents were given a temporal dimension, they were to

be delivered in the future. In this chapter they are given a spatial dimension, they are to be delivered more widely, not just for local residents.

In addition the Council is also compromising on the identity of Salford by representing it as Manchester as and when deemed necessary. It has been identified previously in chapter three how the renaming of places as Manchester has caused resistance from local Salfordians. It can be seen here however that this is described as a necessary feature of securing capital investment. It forms part of Salford as willing to act in a manner that is seen as best for the city, rather than for any individual or local wants. The statement from the Council is that in the future when Salford are able to command more from developers that this will change, that places will be drawn to Salford in its own right. Whether or not this will happen remains to be seen. It may be, as Massey (1995) has argued, that these newly articulated spaces like the Regional Centre may continue to be defined by those in power to do so. The relations between the networks of actors that are materially manifesting in Salford may retain Manchester as the dominant identity if it is the best articulation of that space for those actors. The more involved and instrumental private actors become in the decision making in Salford the harder it may become for Salford Council to exercise its democratic control, particularly over organisations like Peel Holdings who are acquiring more and more land through which to assert its dominance in the area. There are implications here for democratic accountability within urban development.

The following chapter will explore this further. It will take the practices that Salford Council has engaged in with regards to SQ as an exceptional development project and demonstrate how it has become increasingly normalised as standard practices in delivering growth in the city. Using examples and highlighting how the urban policies under the coalition and subsequent conservative government have encouraged this method of regeneration, the chapter will demonstrate that Salford Council are employing increasingly risky strategies as a normal process of regeneration. It will argue however, that regeneration has also shifted substantially and fundamentally away from one which seeks redistribution and equality to one which is focused on economic growth in areas that are already subject to investment and regeneration strategies.

# 7. Borrowing from the future –risky strategies for growth

## 7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter traced the decision-making process that led to the development of Salford Quays (SQ). In particular, it focused on how SQ materialised as something which was, I argued, disconnected from local residents. I argued that in being market-led, the development was shaped around speculative development rather than local needs. In the quest to secure development it designated the site within a 'framework of exceptionality' (Swyngedouw et al. 2002), reducing the Council's controls and statutory requirements so as not to jeopardise the investment, increasingly seen as a necessity in a neoliberal order. The chapter traced the increasing involvement of the private sector to deliver growth, with social objectives being side-lined in the process. The need to deliver local benefits was embedded within a wider spatial discourse in which the region was prioritised over the local.

In this chapter, I want to consider these themes further. Taking in to account current austere conditions and a substantial change to urban policies, I am specifically interested in how regeneration might be delivered in Salford in the future. To do this, consideration will be given to the increasingly risky forms of entrepreneurial governance being conducted in order to secure investment to the city. It will argue that this model is moving away from being one where risks are conducted under exceptional circumstances, to one where risks form the bedrock of urban regeneration. In doing this, I will argue, developers are gaining not only financial incentives but secure investments, leaving the speculative risk to the public sector, a reverse of traditional roles. I will consider the implication of this for regeneration and the social benefits it is intended to provide.

It will also be argued in this final empirical chapter that a post-political consensus around neoliberal urbanism has intensified under the Coalition government elected in 2010. Under New Labour, there was an explicit, although open to criticism (see Lees 2008), focus on exclusion, deprivation and redistribution as part of their urban regeneration agenda. However, it has been claimed that under the Coalition government the policies

around regeneration have fundamentally changed to focus specifically on delivering economic growth, leading Southern to claim that 'This is the end of "regeneration" as we know it' (2013: 399). It has been argued that regeneration through spatially targeted policies tackling particular needs has been replaced by growth initiatives that target areas designated as most able to deliver added value to investment (Pugalis & McGuinness 2013). It is a policy initiative that works on a 'payment by results' practice that rewards those councils by allowing them to financially benefit from any growth created (O'Brien & Pike 2015), something, it is argued, that will encourage the most risky investments (Waite et al. 2013). It is not to assert that generating growth and tackling local deprivation are in opposition to one another. Growth can indeed improve local circumstances for local people which addresses their needs. However, the research has shown that growth will not *naturally* 'trickle down' to satisfy local demands. To do so there needs to be a specifically explicit strategy for connecting people to not only *more* jobs, but *better* jobs; those that offer decent pay, job security and some future prospects (Stott & Campbell 2014).

This chapter will consider these governmental urban policy changes at a national level and identify how they will impact Salford at a local level. Primarily it will seek to answer the research question identified in the methodology: In what ways can we see regeneration moving away from a process based on spatially targeted need towards the delivery of economic growth? It will outline the policy changes, in particular the introduction of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and the increasing involvement of private sector actors. It will identify how these partnerships challenge representative democracy by deferring to private actors to make policy decisions about spatial requirements. It will raise the issue of the government redefining once *politically* defined spatial boundaries, to boundaries based on economic configurations. The chapter will explore the emergence of a corporation, Peel Holdings, and its bid to create its own Local Enterprise Partnership to cover the non-state spatial region that it owns. This will raise questions about asset ownership and the challenges this poses to political accountability and responsibility as Peel Holdings try to establish itself in a space of direct political engagement (Harrison 2014b).

This chapter will then go on to discuss the other changes under the coalition, namely Tax Incremental Financing and Planning Gains, the first of which incentivises growth through 'earn back' models and the second which restricts a local council's ability to raise capital through other means. This chapter will explore the outcomes of these changes for regeneration and the ability of Salford Council to generate socially beneficial gains, arguing that the result speaks to a post-political logic that forecloses the room for politics by instigating a 'no alternative' mantra (Deas 2013). This 'no alternative' response forces negotiation with private developers for investment and commits councils to long-term contracts that serve to 'lock out' politics in to the future (Raco 2014). At the same time, it normalises the Councils' 'everyday entrepreneurialisms' (Peck 2014) which see it taking increasing risks to ensure economic returns.

The chapter will then explore some of the risk-taking behaviour that Salford Council is undertaking to continue its urban development projects under 'austerity urbanism' (Peck 2012). This includes increased levels of unsupported financial borrowing in order to underwrite development projects. This financialisation, it will be argued, exposes the Council to more risk and absorbs that which would traditionally be taken by the private sector. Using Zizek's (2009) concept of 'borrowing from the future', I identify how the crisis inherent in capitalism which keeps it continually expanding so as not to reach its logical endpoint, forces 'borrowing from the future; by way of escaping in to the future' (Zizek 1997: xv). I explore how the Council is taking on the responsibility for managing financial crisis by 'borrowing from the future', making financial commitments to private developers in the present that must inevitably be paid for by future generations, increasing the risks as it goes along. This further removes the scope for political engagement.

Finally, this chapter will discuss the potential outcome of a regeneration agenda that is focused on economic growth by revisiting some of the sites in Salford where growth is *not* being encouraged, where development has stalled by the loss of capital which now bear the scars of 'gentrification interrupted' (Wallace 2015). It will highlight the spaces where investment is not going and where the Council is not taking financial risks to develop them. These are what Bauman (2000) calls 'empty spaces', spaces that are

considered meaningless to those who see no economic value in them. It will highlight the impact of investment promises that are based on speculation rather than the needs of the local area. Drawing on Davidson's (2009) notion of the 'right to dwell' highlighted in the first chapter, I consider how a person's right to dwell is challenged when they reside in a space of interrupted economic development, a place inscribed with the promise of enforced progress. These spaces, Kitchin et al (2014) argue, are the 'new ruins' of the 21st century, the result of unregulated finance and speculative development that are created on the expectation of future use, a borrowing from the future that fails to materialise. Returning to Massey's (2001) notion of space and time in which a trajectory of development forces a place onto a singular linear timeline, removing the multiplicity within that space, I explore where these 'empty spaces' might fit within Salford's 'Journey'. Analysing these spaces in Salford that have been designated as 'meanwhile sites', I explore how this discourse of the meanwhile includes these spaces within a foreclosed spatiotemporal trajectory of development. This foreclosure again speaks to a wider post-politics where alternatives are locked out.

## 7.2 Institutionalizing growth

In this next section I draw mainly on Salford Council's own documentation supplemented by empirical data gathered during interviews to consider how the changing urban policy landscape under the Coalition government and subsequent Conservative government has had, and continues to have, an impact on Salford. In particular, I want to consider how the changes to policy require a refocusing of Salford Council's priorities in how development is conducted within the city.

### 7.2.1 Democratic representation?

Deas (2013) has suggested that there have been three key changes established by the Coalition government that relate to urban policy and will inevitably have an impact on Salford. The first is the introduction of the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) which has been created to replace Regional Development Agencies. The second was the Regional Growth Fund (RGF). This is a government fund that can be bid for and that is intended to increase private sector job creation. The third change identified by Deas was

the ability for local authorities to retain some of the business rates that they earn. All of these mechanisms encourage a commitment to incentivising growth through use of public sector money. They also encourage a focus on those sites with growth potential, and not necessarily with high levels of social need, which challenges the social function of regeneration initiatives.

The LEPs were first set out under the Coalition government's white paper 'Local Growth: Realising Every Place's Potential' in 2010. The paper focuses on entrepreneurial forms of growth and innovative methods of economic recovery, defining the problem as an overreliance on the public sector and centralised decision-making. The solution is incentivising growth, reducing barriers to growth, and supporting the private sector to deliver growth. The LEPs are a partnership of business and civic leaders responsible for strategising how to deliver reform and drive private sector led growth in their areas. LEPs would be able to bid directly to the government for funding and would set their own geographical boundaries, meaning they would not have to conform to pre-existing jurisdictions but could create new geographies of 'natural economic areas' (Department for Business 2010: 12). For Harrison (2014a), LEPs were the Coalition government's attempt at 'neoliberal state spatial restructuring' in which governance moves away from political jurisdiction towards economic spatial scales. The then government's preferred version of sub-regional economic development was full partnership working between private and public sectors, with a private sector lead.

In Salford's case, the LEP sits over the 10 Local Authorities in Greater Manchester and thus follows the usual political administrations rather than any novel economic spatiality. The Greater Manchester LEP (GMLEP) is accountable to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA). However, the GMLEP is intended to offer guidance and business leadership to the GMCA and is empowered to 'set the strategic course, determine local economic priorities and drive growth and job creation within the city region' (Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership 2015: 3). There is a clear focus, then, on growth decided by private interests for the benefit of the local. The GMLEP can apply for different pots of money but has been awarded just under £500 million of Growth Deal funding from central government to enable them to achieve local

growth through the delivery of certain identified projects across Greater Manchester, including in Salford (*ibid*).

The idea behind LEPs is that they are able to deliver growth at a local level and are seen as the best place to identify need and make local decisions, rather than being centrally directed. There is, therefore, an element of devolution here. For Greater Manchester, the priority within the Growth Deal is to enable economic growth *and* service reform to allow people to live independently from a reliance on public services and to increase the conurbation's own revenue for public spending, ultimately creating a self-sufficient conurbation. In its *Plan for Growth* the GMCA states:

> *Greater Manchester is currently a "cost centre" for the UK, requiring over £22 billion of public spending but only generating £17.8 billion in taxes. The cost of providing public sector services is becoming increasingly unsustainable, with a greater proportion spent on the costs of dependency and less on opportunities to increase growth and reduce the demand for reactive services (Association of Greater Manchester Authorities 2014: 7).*

This above demonstrates, through an encouragement of devolved responsibility for growth, the desire to move away from redistribution at a national level. Under the GMLEP, the idea is to promote enough competitiveness and growth not to rely on central government, signaling a clear narrative shift away from equity through redistribution. The LEPs can be seen as a move away from representational democracy, with the lead on decision making being taken by non-elected private executives for local spending of public funds. Whilst the GMLEP is accountable to the GMCA, which is a representative body, personal correspondence by the researcher indicates that politicians on the GMCA and GMLEP boards put their 'political and ideological differences aside' in order to make necessary technocratic decisions. This speaks to Swyngedouw's (2010) assessment that new forms of governmentality have arisen in which more actors are involved in the governing process, but there is less room for engaging in discussions that would be considered properly political. For Levi-Faur (2011) this represents a transformation from representative democracy to indirect representative democracy, wherein 'citizens elect representatives who control and

supervise experts who formulate and administer policies in an autonomous fashion from their regulatory bastions' (in Raco 2015b: 32).

The RGF was established by the coalition government to be competed for primarily by LEPs but also other public-private partnerships. However, importantly, during the last two bidding rounds only private organisations were able to submit a bid, restricting government funding purely to the private sector (Department for Business 2014). The intention of the fund is to assist projects that are able to generate economic growth and in particular create private sector jobs in areas that rely predominantly on public sector employment (Deas 2012). The RGF works as a support to unlock investment or loans for businesses that require additional funding. What is interesting about the RGF is that it is about strengthening the private sector to provide employment so as not to be reliant on the public sector, but through a publicly funded mechanism which enables the private sector to offer this. It has been stated by Lord Heseltine, the Chair of the RGF Independent Advisory Panel, that the "Regional Growth Fund is not about regeneration" (in Communities and Local Government Committee 2011: 14). It is not about regeneration in the sense of reversing decline but in the sense of targeting an area that will be adversely affected by government cuts through generating private sector growth (Deas 2013).

For Salford Council there has been RGF money available through the GMLEP which successfully bid for and pooled some resources to distribute out in line with the Greater Manchester Programme of development. In addition to this, in the RGF's second round, Salford Council secured £15 million to help finance one of Peel Holdings' developments within their Atlantic Gateway (previously the Ocean Gateway), a space explored earlier in chapter 6. The development in question was for the infrastructure necessary to support the building of Peel's 'Port Salford', an inland port facility and distribution centre in Salford. As part of the development, Salford Council applied for RGF funding which they provided to Peel for the development. The Council also provided Peel with a £4 million grant and an additional £11 million loan, both to be funded by the Council through unsupported borrowing (Salford City Council 2012c). What we can see here is the Council using the RGF as a mechanism to support development by a private company

which implies a continuation of the move away from redistribution based around social needs to one where funding goes to those areas spatially identified as areas with potential to grow. The implication of this is that there will be more uneven development as those sites that demonstrate economic opportunity will be selected for funding over those which do not. This signals a fundamental move away from the social benefits of regeneration. For Pugalis, policies like the RGF which are geared towards 'buying jobs' instigate genuine concern that 'regeneration has been abandoned – for the next few years at least' (2011: 7). Of course targeting sites of economic growth potential is not in and of itself a problematic strategy. It is a response to identified sites of potential shaped by local circumstances. However, the implication of this is that sites that suffer from deprivation and low demand - the types of sites targeted through earlier national regeneration funding like New deal for Communities and the Housing Market Renewal - will no longer be able to lever in the investment that would be necessary to improve social conditions. This is because the investment would be less likely to generate economic returns. Generating growth as an economic strategy does not necessarily mean that it will be redistributed across other parts of the city; growth is not naturally inclusive (Stott & Campbell 2014).

**7.2.2 New state players?**

The challenge to representative democracy create by the LEPs was perhaps best exemplified when Peel Holdings prepared a bid to central government to be designated as a private sector-led special purpose LEP. Their proposal identified their Atlantic Gateway project mentioned in chapter 6 as a 'natural economic area' as requested by the Coalition white paper (The Peel Group 2010). Peel saw an opportunity within the proposals for the LEPs to secure more autonomy over their development by way of fitting 'with the grain of new thinking and new arrangements' (*ibid*: 3) opened up through the changing governance landscape. Whilst Peel's proposal did include the potential for future partnership with local authorities, the purpose of applying for LEP status was to allow more autonomy and a more direct working arrangement between the project and the local authorities. One of Peel's strengths was in its largescale landownership of huge swatches of land in the region and its ownership of most of the

region's strategic assets, making the corporation an already significant political voice (Harrison 2014a). A key desire of the bid was to gain access to funding streams that could be sought directly by the Atlantic Gateway LEP rather than having to go through other local authorities, like the example of Salford Council loaning Peel RGF funds (The Peel Group 2010: 10).

Designating the project as an LEP would, it is claimed, signal to the wider investment market that this development is more established and more secure. This would allow Peel to lever in more investment than if each project were delivered individually, subject to planning approvals. The support of the state would give the project credibility as a coherent programme and would alleviate some of the risks that would otherwise be associated with it. With the LEP proposal, Peel sought to create a space in which it could secure decision making powers and a platform from which to directly politically engage. It also challenges the idea of politically bounded territories which are democratically represented by continuing the government's request for geographical boundaries which are economically shaped (Deas et al. 2015).

Peel's proposed LEP, which would include parts of the Liverpool and Manchester city-regions and sections of Cheshire, was reportedly a surprise to the other LEPs. As Dembski (2015) notes, it was under pressure from these other LEPs that Peel ultimately withdrew its proposal. The LEPs in question feared not that Peel's bid was a threat to democracy but that it would challenge these other LEPs in delivery of their growth targets. However, whilst Peel did not continue with this proposal, it *did* negotiate an Atlantic Gateway Partnership Board which is private sector-led and includes representatives from each of the three respective LEPs. The role of the board is to work "on issues which have cross-LEP significance and which add value to what the LEPs do individually" and ensure the Atlantic gateway plans feature as significant projects within the respective LEP strategies (Atlantic Gateway n.d.). The LEP proposal by Peel is important to consider because it casts light on the new heights to which the private sector is being elevated within the decision-making forums of contemporary urban development. Rather than purely as partnerships or coalitions there is recognized scope for the private sector to lead on securing investment and making regional placed-based

decisions. Whilst decision making is still ultimately up to democratically elected groups, Harrison (2014b) asks how long this can be sustained as private investment becomes more necessary and local government power is undermined under austerity?

Harrison, drawing on Cox, makes a useful conceptual distinction between spaces of engagement and spaces of dependence. Spaces of dependence are those sites of local relations that offer placed-based resources and necessities for our day-to-day lives. The way in which those spaces of dependence are constructed or shaped is decided through the broader relationships of social power in the spaces of engagement, such as sites of politics or media outlets. For Cox, the space of engagement is 'the space in which the politics of securing a space of dependence unfolds' (in Harrison 2014a: 2323). By Harrison's reckoning, Peel had its space of *dependence* (the Atlantic Gateway) and was attempting, thorough the establishment of an LEP, to solidify its space of *engagement*. What is important here is in how the governance of the landscape is changing and may change further as private entities increasingly own large sites of significance. It opens up questions over the imaginings of new spatial entities and how these might be governed in the future. It also highlights how moving towards regions based on economic importance opens up room for non-democratically elected representatives to engage in its governance. As new sites are created and potentially bounded based on their economic value, it forces us to consider how these sites will be treated as a priority over others that sit outside of these boundaries.

### 7.2.3 Depletion of Assets

As noted above, asset ownership is crucially important to the restructuring of state spaces and to the power to engage in how they are controlled. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Peel Holdings holds such a large range of property and land assets in Salford that it is crucial to the development of SQ. However, Peel is not the only land owner in Salford. One of the ways that the Council often engages with developers is that it offers up either land or building stock for developers to buy or lease generating money for the Council to be used elsewhere. This transferal of assets into private hands has been ongoing for some time but has been encouraged even more so under the Coalition government. In 2011, the then Communities Secretary Eric Pickles promoted the sale of

assets as a means for local councils to save money under austerity whilst simultaneously offering up more land for development opportunities (Levitas 2012). The issue of land ownership emerged as a theme throughout the interviews conducted as a potential future problem. As one participant stated,

> *"The problem we may have in the future is that the Council owned all of this. It's now sold it either to [developer] who've sold it to owner occupiers or to housing associations. So the Council now has no asset value or no asset here. So if this community nosedived again as it has done before we can't go back and do it. We could do what we did because we owned it all but now we don't own it… So if it were to go down the spiral again we couldn't do what we've done again without going in and buying everything which would cost an absolute fortune. So the importance of asset ownership is key in regeneration. If you own it you can do something with it. If you don't own it you can't." (3 – Planning professional).*

A compounding problem is that developers will often sell their development on to other developers or management companies who then may sell it on elsewhere. A developer who was originally working with the Council may offload the property onto other developers and that chain of contact can break down. This can cause a problem with regards to the maintenance of land and buildings, and the management of sites, as the below quote demonstrates,

> *"…different organisations and agencies own the land and it's really complicated… So it's a right mess, when you need something doing its very difficult to find whose responsible for stuff sometimes um, which means the Quays isn't really managed as one entity by anybody, it's all over the place, it's a right mess… finding the owner of a bit of private land isn't all that hard. Landowners usually respond if there is a problem you can usually get some sense out of them. There's so many of them on the Quays, and sometimes you might contact a landowner and they'll dispute ownership or they say we are just acting as an agent on behalf of such and such a company in Belgium, it's just, its hard work really over there so we*

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*just have to improvise and work around things as best we can" (22 – Council employee)*

These problems highlight the issue of making decisions at a point when opportunities arise that ultimately have to be dealt with at a future point, most likely by someone else. There is a risk being taken that have, along with a financial pay off, extended and substantial consequences. This is particularly important in the case of asset sale and ownership.

However, rather than just being a financial or management issue, the issue of asset sales for one participant is an issue for democracy,

> *"The important point for me is the shift of ownership from local government, from democratically controlled land and building to non-democratically controlled organisations…The Council many years ago bought lots of that land and brought it into public ownership and democratically controlled. That's shifting back now from public ownership to private ownership in one form or another. Non-public ownership. And I think that that is depleting the resources of local government, let's put it that way without being too critical… So the squeeze in public sector when it comes to local government is forcing the offloading of land and holdings and so on, which means that our successors will have less property resources than when we took over" (19 – Elected official)*

The sale of assets here, then, represents two problems. The first is that these fragmented spaces of ownership are difficult for the Council to manage and control. The second is that it depletes public sector assets for future generations of people and places them into private ownership for private profit. Raco has argued that since the 1990s, privatization has changed to include not only contracted-out service provision of public services but also the 'ownership, construction, and management of public sector assets and their conversion into investment opportunities' (2013: 49). In the case of welfare services, these privatised developments are then increasingly being leased back to public sectors for public use. The most obvious example Raco uses for this is the Private

Finance Initiative (PFI), which began under John Major's Conservative government but was utilised more widely under New Labour. PFI operates by having a developer build the facilities necessary to deliver public services (health care facilities, transport infrastructure, schools and housing, for example) and then leasing them back to the public sector at a cost over a period of around 30 years.

In Salford, the Council entered in to a major PFI contract for housing granted under the Coalition government with a private developer to provide refurbishment works to over 1000 Council-owned properties which the developer will then manage for 30 years. The whole project has a value of £400 million. The same developer is also building an additional 1,600 homes within the refurbished area, capitalising on its regeneration to sell private housing. A PFI contract should demonstrate that the public sector will achieve value for money. It should also account for all possible risks which should be assumed by the private sector developer (Froud 2003). The long-term contract of the PFI raises the issue of what Raco has termed 'post-political rigidity' (2015b: 35). Raco uses this term to describe the increasing prominence of contractual governance, in which government departments and local authorities enter into long term contracts with private sector partners to deliver services. The nature of these contracts results in the public sector being unable to change policies or divert from the course of action already set. It is a process which serves to 'lock out' politics for the duration of its lifecycle (*ibid*: 35).

The notion of post-politics was alluded to in the previous chapter with regards to the 'no alternative' neoliberal logic (Deas 2013). Post-politics is about reducing the room for political engagement that challenges a neoliberal orthodoxy which offers market solutions to social problems. Instead, a space is created in which decision making is reduced to the administration of pragmatism and consensus. As Allmendinger and Houghton state, "the post-political condition is held to be one where contestation and conflict is supplanted by consensus-based politics in ways that foreclose all but narrow debate and contestation around a neoliberal growth agenda" (2012: 91). The previous chapter also raised Davidson and Iveson's argument that democratic decision was being reduced to the 'constant invocation of necessity' (2014: 1). Acting out of necessity,

which restricts the ability to exercise considered democratic decision making, was a post-political feature of what Ranciere called the articulation of a state's impotence. This 'no alternative' logic can be seen in the justification for the use of PFI in Salford:

> *There was no other game in town, to be honest. Because [the PFI area] got so many Council properties and so many high-rise blocks you would not be able to bid anywhere else to get monies to bring all those properties up to Decent Home standard. So the only way we could get monies to be invested was through PFI (4 – Elected official).*

What we can see above is a post-political logic in which long-term contracts are made with private investors, the consequence of which is to further 'lock out' politics for a foreseeable future period. The knock on effects of the depletion of assets and reduction in the ability to engage politically for future generations could be considerable.

### 7.2.4 Decentralising responsibility

The other main development under the Coalition is for local authorities to be able to retain a greater sum of the business rates that they generate. This is intended to devolve greater responsibilities to local authorities and to encourage a greater growth agenda. According to the Coalition government, the previous business rate system in which all rates are returned to the centre to be redistributed back out to authorities is a system which encourages dependency and discourages enterprise,

> *"We have ended the complex and unfair system which redistributed the proceeds of local growth which meant Councils had no incentive to support local businesses, and which encouraged a "begging bowl" mentality that kept them dependent on central government" (Department for Communities and Local Government 2013a: 3)*

This statement highlights the shift from redistribution based on needs to encouraging entrepreneurial governance, blaming this 'dependency' on government distributed funds for a lack of growth. The implication here is that redistribution stifles enterprise. We can see the same dependency discourse applied here to local authorities that were

previously applied under New Labour to remove welfare from those people who were seen as dependent on it. There, the provision of welfare was blamed for a lack of individual productivity or aspiration (Raco 2009). The changes under the new system reward those authorities that deliver growth by allowing authorities to keep half of any increases they generate locally. There will be measures in place to redistribute from councils who begin in a stronger position to councils who do not, recognising the existing unevenness within authorities. This will be done through the identification of funding levels for each authority, with growth going considerably above these levels being redistributed to those where growth is considerably *below* them (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012a).

The Department for Communities and Local Government's changes also open up new streams for raising additional levels of income by encouraging local authorities to fuel business growth. For Salford Council,

> *"…it is apparent that the scheme does provide the Council with an opportunity to stimulate economic growth whilst at the same time directly increasing its business rates revenue. This… will provide the Council with the opportunity to find innovative ways of attracting businesses into the area. This could be in the form of financial incentives linked to business rates designed to help establish business projects in Salford with the aim of providing long term sustainable revenues"* (Salford City Council 2013c: 10)

What the business rate retention system does is further responsibilise authorities for generating their own resources to be more self-sustaining. However, this will emerge through the commitment to using local public funding to lever in additional private investment. This encourages riskier business strategies which may or may not prove to be successful. As Bailey et al argue, 'While it means a share in the returns for success, it also means exposure to the risks of failure' (2015: 576). Exposure to the risks of failure for local authorities means a potential impact on delivering the necessary services it must provide to local citizens. It also forces a continuation of providing support for those

investments that are most likely to generate returns, rewarding areas already deemed successful. As one participant noted,

> *"Developers willing to take the risk in the current housing market are few and far between so they cherry pick the projects that are going to bring the quickest and most reliable return" (22 – Council employee)*

The question this method raises is how much the Council will seek to encourage the development of the sites that deliver greatest return as it will be these sites that increase business rates. Where is the incentive in this policy to divert investment to areas that are less likely to deliver?

This system of tax retention is also occurring through the Coalition's system of Tax Increment Financing (TIF), which allows authorities to invest in infrastructure projects through borrowing money to invest initially against the future projected increase in tax raised by said infrastructural investments (Sandford 2014). This method of financing infrastructure is negotiated between a Local Authority and central government under the Coalition's 'City Deals' which were intended to devolve more responsibility over some policy areas like regeneration and transport and create new financial strategies for cities to unlock growth for infrastructure investment (Waite et al 2013). Greater Manchester negotiated a City Deal in 2011 with a TIF measure called an 'Earn Back' mechanism. This unique form of TIF works by generating £1.2 billion in investment from the local authorities in the Greater Manchester conurbation from which up to £30 million per year can be earned back for the next 30 years from central government in tax receipts if they are able to deliver a set level of Gross Value Added (GVA) growth. This is what O'Brien and Pike refer to as a 'payment by results' investment approach (2015: 6). According to the GMCA who is responsible for the city deal,

> *"This programme is unique in two respects: investment is prioritised on the basis of net GVA impacts at the GM level; and most of the £1.2bn programme finance is being provided locally through Prudential Borrowing against revenues and a levy on the local authorities, pro-rated to population" (2012: 8)*

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Here we can see that the 'Earn Back' model is initially predicated on £1.2 billion pounds of prudential borrowing by Local Authorities. The ability to generate is entirely subject to this initial investment being able to deliver enough growth to meet the government-agreed baseline of GVA. This then means that local authorities are taking a financial risk to fund those Greater Manchester-located projects that are most able to return the initial investment, potentially creating more uneven development. Strickland (2013) argues that the TIF and earn-back models of financial investment are inherently risky and speculative because they rely on debt in the present to generate potential but non-guaranteed returns in the future. It is a speculative risk strategy that has implications for future finances. These risks will be most significant for areas that do not financially perform as well as others. He argues that within the current funding system created by central government, Local Authorities have to operate within this financialised model due to limited realistic alternatives, again reflecting this post-political consensus. This model then incentivizes growth by rewarding those who manage to deliver it.

However, rather than incentivising growth, argue Waite et al, what may actually be occurring is a model that incentivizes the most risky entrepreunerial forms of governance or authorities 'with the largest risk appetites' (2013: 776). Authorities prepared to take the chance on an investment will be most likely to generate returns, but may also be likely to over-commit public resources that, if the development does not succeed, will have to be paid back by future revenue. What this model also encourages is constant reinvestment in those areas that are proving to generate growth and drive up value, as is the case with Greater Manchester's 'Earn Back' model (Greater Manchester Combined Authority 2012),

This revolving fund will be channeled back into projects that can generate additional growth, with the potential for reinvesting into spaces already identified as successes rather than those that are more in need and less financially valuable. This could serve to create greater spatial unevenness. This financial incentive to encourage innovative methods of growth on a 'payment by results' basis speaks to Peck's (2014) argument that urban policy has reached a 'saturation stage' of urban entrepreneurialism. By this, Peck is suggesting that innovative entrepreneurial forms of urban governance that were

once enacted to increase the competitiveness of a city are now business as usual forms of governance. They are, as he calls it, '"everyday" entrepreneurialisms' (2014: 387). Risk has become a systemic feature of urbanism in which the public sector is taking on risk in order to secure economic growth.

## 7.2.5 Negotiating gains

At the same time as the councils are being encouraged to take more risks as government funding is being constrained, the usual channels through which the public sector would deliver development is also being curtailed. One important feature of this is the Town Planning Act 1990s Section 106 Planning Gains that has been undermined in the Coalition's National Planning Policy Framework (2012b). Not only do the changes to the Planning Gains reduce the amount of funding any council can raise, it also reduces the control local councils can have over the development. The problem of planning gains is not a new issue created under the Coalition government. It has been an issue since the 1990s (Christophers 2014). However, the problem has increased under the changes made to the relevant policies.

The Local Authority is the body responsible for granting planning permission for developments to go ahead and, as such, it has statutory control to stipulate the planning obligations developers have to satisfy in order for a development to proceed. Introduced under the Town Planning Act 1990 these planning obligations are known as Section 106 agreements. They are contributions from the developer to the local council to go towards local necessities, for example affordable housing or infrastructure (Crook & Monk 2011). Section 106 agreements enable a redistribution of the economic gains a private developer may make on developing land to the rest of the local area and provides contributions towards amenities to accommodate incoming groups of people (residents or workers). It is a method of making developments beneficial to the local council by incentivising the planning permission through financial contributions (Mulliner & Maliene 2013). The Section 106 agreement is also one of the main ways through which a council can deliver social provisions like affordable housing. However, if payment of these section 106 obligations jeopardises the ability of the developer to deliver the scheme *and* make a satisfactory profit, then it may be exempt from having

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to pay it. If the developer can claim, through a viability assessment, that it makes the scheme 'unviable' then it may be exempt. The ability to submit viability assessments has been incorporated within policy documents since the mid 2000s (Christophers 2014) but the issue was reinforced through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012 in which it was stated,

> *"Plans should be deliverable. Therefore, the sites and the scale of development identified in the plan should not be subject to such a scale of obligations and policy burdens that their ability to be developed viably is threatened" (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012b: 41).*

The Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013 introduced the ability of developers to renegotiate or appeal previously determined Section 106 agreements if they felt it made their scheme unviable. The Coalition government has also removed the need for Section 106 agreements on developments of less than ten units (Brownill et al. 2015). All these changes have made it more difficult for Local Authorities to command Section106 contributions on developments and thus challenge the ability of councils to deliver, amongst other infrastructure, affordable housing. It has also challenged the power of councils to enforce statutory controls over developers, as the below quote demonstrates:

> *"Well the problem with section 106 is that it is a defense- defense is the wrong word. If you can argue that if you had to pay that section 106 that makes your scheme financially unviable, then that's a loophole out. Obviously housing schemes now don't have the profit attached to them certainly not in the North West they used to have, so it's harder to push for that because the developer will turn around and say 'well what profits, you know, I can't use my profit, I'm not making any profit, I'm only just making profit'" (5 – Council employee).*

What is interesting about Section 106 is not just that it demonstrates the power play between the private developer and the Council, with the developer seemingly having

the upper hand, but that there is an agreed level of profit that makes a development acceptable, as the below quote demonstrates:

> *"…as an authority and as officers we have to acknowledge at the end of the day the private sector aren't going to do anything for free unless there's a profit in there and this evil word profit does exist and they've got to make a profit and you've got to accept that the bare minimum is probably 15%. Once you start to drive down below that they will not be interested"* (11 – Council employee).

Two things are important to note here. Firstly, this interviewee from Salford Council acknowledges that, by enforcing contributions, the Council risks the withdrawal of investment. To prevent withdrawal, the Council must smooth the way for investors even if there is no direct contribution to the local infrastructure. This issue was raised in the previous chapter in relation to MediaCityUK. Here we saw the Council operate within a 'framework of exceptionality' (Swyngendouw et al 2002) where by the Council legitimised compromising on its statutory requirements and democratic responsibilities to secure the development. However, whilst it may be feasible to conceive of MediaCityUK as exceptional in development terms, we can see in the quotes above that this framework is also extended to other developments, where contributions are necessarily waived to secure investor interest. Secondly, it is important to consider the requirement of the developer to make a certain level of profit that is, to an extent, enabled by the Council through viability claims. The NPPF acted in favour of developers by stating that Section 106 contributions, which are set by local councils, should not be so high as to hinder the development of schemes or prevent "competitive returns to a willing land owner and willing developer" (2012: 41).

Here, it is interesting to see the unquestioned inscription of a competitive profit into the planning framework. Christopher (2014) has analysed the emergence of companies who specialise in producing economic viability assessments on behalf of private developers. He traced the emergence of the economic viability model to London-based company Three Dragons which, in 2001, produced a toolkit enabling developers to validate their developments. The toolkit stipulated that a development should include a 15% profit as

a minimum. This figure has since been incorporated arbitrarily as a baseline figure which can be increased during times of economic difficulty. As seen in the previous quotes, that 15% is taken as an industry standard and has emerged as a non-negotiable and accepted figure. The concept of an accepted 15% profit for all development, Christopher argues, contradicts the notion of entrepreneurial investment. By guaranteeing profit the level of risk usually associated with speculative or entrepreneurial forms of private development is reduced or negated. There is no risk if profit is guaranteed (Christophers 2014).

The only negotiable element in the development, then, is the Section 106 and the necessary social contributions of a development. This is the outcome, Christophers argues, of a neoliberal ideology which naturalizes the market as the provider of solutions to social problems. If the 'market' cannot naturally produce affordable housing or necessary infrastructure without damaging its economic value, then it does not get produced. This is the logic we can see working through the viability assessments that inscribe a 15% minimum profit. By enshrining viability within the National Planning Policy, the government is arguably endorsing this position of managing risk on a developer's behalf, reducing social burdens that would encroach upon this. So what effect does this have in Salford and how able is the Council to exercise its planning gains in light of this?

Salford Council in its most recent Assessment of Residential Viability (2015) outlines a bench mark profit of 17.5% of gross development value to be considered as reasonable for a developer to make. It acknowledges, however, that a higher level of profit will be considered as acceptable where schemes are of higher risk (Salford City Council 2015d)). Again, here the Council is not only acknowledging but *accommodating* a higher risk investment and rewarding riskier developments with higher profit thresholds. Presumably this is to encourage development in those areas of lower residential value. We can see here how the abstract 15% profit figure established by Three Dragons has been absorbed into the wider planning framework. The figure identified by Salford Council of 17.5% is slightly lower than in 2013 when the Housing Viability Assessment stated that 'Having regard to current market conditions where levels of risk are high', a

figure of 20% profit was the most appropriate benchmark (Salford City Council 2015d: 18). So there has been a decrease in expected profit by taking account of market volatility. The higher threshold of profit may seek to encourage investors at less secure economic times. Interestingly here we can see the reversal of traditional forms of competitive tendering like that of the PFI scheme where developers had to demonstrate value for money to the council. In this instance it is the Council having to offer value to the developer and secure investment by making its own competitive pitch. This reversal perhaps speaks to the broader depletion of local council power that regeneration policy has established.

What we can see occurring here, then, is an expectation from central government that, within its planning controls, Local Authorities must consider reducing risk along with the statutory requirements for developers to contribute to local housing and infrastructure. This reinforces a discourse of necessity and dependence on private investment to deliver growth, with a potential for accrual of social benefits only private economic benefits have been accounted for. The *Salford Star*, Salford Council's most public critic, conducted an assessment of all Salford planning applications in a 12 month period and calculated[3] that on account of viability issues, the Council waived approximately £19 million and over 800 affordable homes (The Salford Star 2015). These viability assessments produced by developers are unavailable for viewing by members of the public and are not included amongst the Council's other published planning documents, raising the issue of transparency and accountability to the public. To give an example of the negotiation between the Council and a developer it is useful to look at one of these planning applications in a little more detail.

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[3] These calculations are approximate and based on the council viability assessment equation but conducted by Salford Star. Thus, there may be differences between the Salford Star's calculations and the developer's calculations.

*Figure 24: Middle wood locks plan. Source - Scarborough Group 2014*

Middlewood Locks is a development proposed by the Scarborough Group, a global real estate investor, on currently unused land in Ordsall, Central Salford on the border of Manchester (see figure 24 above). Planning permission was first sought in 2007 but the development never progressed due to financial difficulties. Planning permission was extended in 2014 and the Scarborough Group proposed to develop a large mixed-use scheme of housing and commercial properties. In its pitch, the Scarborough Group proposes to sell the site to a high-end consumer market as being '…close to the many bars, galleries, theatres, delis, museums and shops such as Mulberry, Harvey Nichols and Selfridges' in a space that is considered to be premium value land (The Scarborough Group 2014). It is reported that the £700 million development will include over 2000 new homes, office space and commercial space such as restaurants, bars and hotels (Jupp 2014).

For its extension of application submitted to Salford Council in 2014 the Salford Council Officer Report stated that for a scheme of this size and value that there should be a total of £8,361,884 in planning contributions paid by the developer. However, in the report the *developer* directed the Council to the requirements of the NPPF in which the Council may 'take a flexible approach in seeking levels of planning obligations and other

contributions to ensure that the combined total impact does not make a site unviable' (Salford City Council 2014d). The developer also commented that the economic challenges developers face post-2007 mean that any increase in planning obligations challenges the cost of delivery. Because of this the Council agreed to contributions of £1,951,897. In this application, the developer approached the issue of planning contribution from the position of negotiation. Other applications also express the same rhetoric, outlining the position of the NPPF in acknowledging Section 106 from a starting point of negotiation rather than as an assumed and expected requirement.[4] These negotiations also have to take account of the level of risk a developer will claim to be taking, ensuring that the Council can accommodate a predefined level of profit and eroding social contributions.

Whilst viability assessments are considered somewhat of a loophole for private developers, Salford Council has instigated a model whereby it may be able to reclaim some of the contributions that have been waived if a scheme subsequently becomes viable over the course of development, for example, if the scheme makes more profit than was originally proposed. This coverage is called a 'clawback' mechanism and works by having particular 'trigger points' during the development where the developers will submit updated viability assessments to the Council (Rowlands et al. 2006). This mechanism has been written into the Council's 'Planning Obligation – Supplementary Planning Document' (2015e). This allows the Council some powers to benefit from future gains made by the developer, something that was quite heavily resisted by developers during the documents consultation (*ibid*). However, it will remain to be seen how this actually operates in practice, with the onus on the developer to produce the

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[4] For an example see application reference 14/64851/FUL 'Affordable Housing Statement' for the Wilburn Street development of approximately 500 homes which begins by stating the national planning policy and then comments that whilst the scale of development will mean affordable housing is sought by the council, 'it is clear from the above national and local planning policy guidance that there are exceptions where a non/reduced provision of affordable housing (or equivalent contribution) and planning obligations may be appropriate' **(p6).**

reappraisals of viability as the development progresses. It will also be difficult to utilise the clawback mechanism given the changes to the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013 allowing developers to renegotiate or appeal Section 106 agreements.

What can be seen emerging in the above is this normalization of what Swyngedouw et al (2002) call exceptionality measures usually reserved for specific exceptional development projects. In the previous chapter, this was seen occurring in relation to SQ as an exceptional project. However, what was applied to a *specific* project is beginning to take place as a regular feature of development. In reducing the ability of the Council to demand planning gains through the NPPF, the Council loses its statutory regulations and conventional planning tools. Instead, it takes a position in which it reduces the enacting of an urban politics which hinders development. This is legitimized under the belief that this is a necessary response to the need to act competitively (Davidson and Iveson 2014). The reduction of democratic decision making is argued here to be no longer constrained to exceptional developments but has become a normal function of all urban development in Salford. It is instead, as I want to explore in more depth now, what can be understood as a *framework of normality* in which the need for growth forecloses the need to enforce democratic decision making and statutory rights.

So far in this chapter, I have sought to demonstrate how the changes in urban policy under the Coalition and subsequent Conservative governments are fundamentally changing regeneration. This change sees regeneration move away from targeting spaces based on local social need to those which are prime contenders for economic growth. It is argued that this will see the continual redevelopment and investment in spaces that are already subject to growth and thus are less likely to be sites of social need. Embedded within this change are policies that encourage the rebounding of spaces to ones that map onto economic terrain rather preexisting political boundaries. We have seen this on a small scale in the previous chapter through the creation of the Greater Manchester Regional Centre, however it is being encouraged at a greater geographical level through the develop of the Greater Manchester LEP. In doing this there is an opening for *non*-state spaces to be created alongside the LEPs that are led by private actors, as was the case with Peel Holdings.

Broadly speaking, the increasing inclusion of non-representaive actors taking the lead on planning and economic decision making is a key feature of a post-political logic that seeks to foreclose the possibility of a proper politics. Instead, a consensual growth agenda is favoured. The 'rigidity' discussed by Raco (2014) also forecloses the possibility of politics into the future, by contracting out services to the private sector for long-time periods and by locking out the ability to negotiate with developers over planning gains. This creates a position wherein decisions made now are restricting politics for future generations. Through this growth agenda, the public sector is increasingly taking on a role historically reserved for the private sector by acting more entrepreneurially and absorbing increasing risks that smooth the way for nervous capital. I have already demonstrated how it is adopting a 'payment by results' method in line with government policy and waiving its statutory controls over development. However, it is also important to analyse as part of this story, how the Council is navigating a curtailed budget in order to deliver capital projects under the conditions of 'austerity urbanism'.

## 7.3 Framework of normality

The previous chapter identified SQ as operating within this 'framework of exceptionality', reducing the requirement for political decision making in favour of immediate action. However, the current chapter has highlighted these same elements as systemic under the changing conditions of urban development. I have argued that these exceptional measures have become a normal feature of urban development in Salford, operating instead as a 'framework of normality' in the quest to secure investment. This section will highlight those exceptional measures that are consistently being normalised under a period of austerity, using the examples of increasing risk taking and unsupported financial borrowing.

### 7.3.1 Taking a risk

Under the current conditions of what Peck (2012) terms 'austerity urbanism', strict government spending and imposed government cuts aims to reassure cautious investors and bring confidence back to the wary markets to encourage economic growth. Under austerity urbanism budget cuts are imposed on the local state. Local states, then, have

begun a process of crisis managing their budgets, as funding streams are cut. What occurs here is devolution of risk onto the local state. This, for Peck, is a 'staple neoliberal maneuver' of pushing the crisis back on to the state to solve (2012: 631). Salford Council can be seen to be embodying this neoliberal austerity logic by continuing to deliver capital projects and encourage growth. The Council's method for doing this within a reduced funding environment is to provide financial guarantees to private developments, acting as a safety net of sorts for the projects. One of the ways in which the Council is taking these risks is by committing a level of financial investment to a private development over a contracted period to ensure the development goes ahead. Unlike the contractual PFI mentioned above, in some instances these developments are not directly delivering social welfare but are purely about delivering economic gains.

An example of this is the Council's lease of a building from a developer in 2014 to secure a £56 million pound development essential to a regeneration project. The development, called the *Embankment Development*, comprises two office blocks and a carpark, and sits within the Greengate regeneration area. Greengate is an identified key site in the Regional Centre which sits directly on the border between Salford and Manchester and is intended to improve linkages between the two cities. The Greengate regeneration is intended to unlock £400 million of private investment to deliver a new 'corporate centre' of offices and residential units. It is tasked with contributing to

> "…the successful delivery of the Manchester City Centre Strategic Plan, which aims to promote the growth of the Regional Centre" (Salford City Council 2014b: 10).

*Figure 25: The Embankment Development design. Source – Ask Developer image, 2014*

The development is a joint venture between Ask Real Estate and Carillion PLC. However, in order for these developers to secure enough external funding to complete the development, Salford Council committed to an 8 year pre-lease agreement for one of the two tower blocks to be developed. This agreement by the Council, called a 'wrapper lease', was enough to secure the investor Tristan Capital to contribute the required additional finance to deliver the build (Ask Properties 2014). Tristan Capital commented that,

> *"Salford City Council's vision in providing an innovative 'wrapper lease' has been instrumental in unlocking the potential for this part of Greengate, given its ideal location within walking distance of the heart of Manchester. The lease from Salford … has enabled the joint venture to secure construction finance to kick-start this exciting development opportunity"*
> *(Jupp 2014)*

Here, we see the Council acting as an *enabler* to secure private investment and facilitate development. The Council is demonstrating that the development is secure by

committing to paying rent over an eight year period. At the time, the lease agreement was framed as urgent, something necessary to secure fleetingly mobile capital,

> *"The development of the Greengate Embankment is a one-off opportunity to attract premium office development into the Salford part of the Regional Centre. In agreeing to vary the Agreement for Lease, it will allow the Council's development partner, ASK to secure the development finance needed to deliver the first phase, Building 101" (Salford City Council 2011a).*

We can see emerging here a discourse of urgency and necessity which potentially overshadows some of the more democratic considerations of risk, with the commitment to future payments being made from the revenue budget. We can also see the Council acting as a guarantee that funding will be secured for at least 8 years to absorb much of the speculative risk. The public sector supporting the private sector is not a new phenomenon but a well-documented feature of neoliberal urbanism that has been occurring for many years. As Brenner and Theodore (2002) argued, the ideology of neoliberalism emphasises unregulated market laws free from control or constraints operating to its own market logic. However, in reality, these processes are always embedded within and subject to the regulations and institutions within which they occur. Thus we cannot think about neoliberalism operating in its purest ideological form. Instead we should think of its various incarnations as 'actually existing neoliberalism' (2002: 351).

What is also important to mention is that the Greengate Embankment development also formed part of another, broader development agreement in which this was a milestone to be achieved. The risk of not developing the Embankment would have put the Council in a position where it would have been required to repay funds committed in an earlier project (Salford City Council 2011a). The Council had to deliver *this* scheme or risk defaulting on the commitments made in a *previous* scheme. A domino-like pattern then begins to emerge wherein this becomes a normalized way of providing and securing investment through decisions that at one point may have been seen as legitimate but starts to become more risky as further commitments are made because of it along the

way. To stop behaving in this once-exceptional way places the entire agenda at peril, with one crisis being averted by entering into another risky situation, pushing potential economic problems further into the future. Zizek (2009) calls this 'borrowing from the future', a fundamental feature of capitalist progression,

> *"…the very dynamic of capitalism blurs the frontier between "legitimate" investment and "wild" speculation, because capitalist investment is, at its very core, a risky wager that a scheme will turn out to be profitable, an act of borrowing from the future" (2009: 36).*

For Zizek, the risk of crisis inherent in capital investment is what keeps it continuously expanding. Without this accelerated continuation of self-revolutionising, the system would reach its endpoint. In order to *avoid* this crisis which is internalized within capitalism, Zizek argues, it pushes further into the future the requirement for it to settle its debts, to reach its conclusion. The ever-present prospect of this crisis forces it to reproduce by 'borrowing from the future; by way of escaping in to the future' (1997: xv). The dangerous outcome of this risk taking, for Zizek, is the 'fetishistic denial' on the part of those who are doing it. There is an awareness of the potentially unsustainable nature of this behavior, but it continues to happen through blind irrationality. As Zizek puts it, 'I know very well the risks I am courting, even the inevitability of the final collapse, but nonetheless… I can put off the collapse a little bit longer, take on a little bit more risk, and so on indefinitely' (2009: 37).

Parallels can be drawn between Zizek's logic of expanding capitalism and the actions of Salford Council in securing developer interests. The economic crisis here is being managed by the Council as it attempts to smooth the way for capital. It commits *now* to something which will have to be repaid in time to come, borrowing from the future in order to alleviate the limits it currently faces. In doing so, the risks incurred have had knock-on effects (having to meet additional milestones for other projects) which have forced the Council to make more commitments that await to be addressed in the future, adopting a 'fetishistic denial' about the risks this entails, as can be seen below:

*"So what we're having to consider is how do we de-risk the financial position? What we're looking at in this and in many other cases is to actually use what's called the covenants strength of the public sector. So the Council is seen as a good bet. The Council won't go bump. So if the Council says 'we'll take the building' the man with the money will lend the money. He says, 'great, I've got the Council. Yeah, done, no problem. Because they'll pay me the money forever. No problem'. But the Council then have to let the building on the open market so the Council is then in the throes of taking a letting risk, which Councils shouldn't really do. Councils shouldn't be doing this kind of thing. But if you want the economic activity, maybe we have to"* (3 – Planning professional).

The question of whether or not councils should be doing this is more ideological than practical. Practically, as we have seen, it is being encouraged, even rewarded for acting in this manner. The broader question of whether or not councils *should* be doing this is absent from the documentation analysed. This absence suggests a consensus over decision making that forecloses alternative options or questions of politics by adopting a framework of normality in which this method of regeneration necessarily becomes the norm. Deas (2012) argues that this is a feature of a post-political urban environment, where questions of *how* to deliver growth foreclose questions of *if* we should deliver growth. Expansion becomes the unquestioned ideology. For Deas, this kind of technical rather than political form of decision making 'restricts the room for open debate or meaningful forms of dissent through discursive promotion of neo-liberal strategies to which (in Margaret Thatcher's maxim) "there is no alternative"' (*ibid*: 11). The interview quote above exemplifies this fatalism of a 'no alternative' discourse in positing that if the Council wants this investment, it may have to operate in this manner.

## 7.3.2 Is it prudent?

The above section has posited the argument that the Council is normalizing the process of taking on increasing risks in order to deliver growth. In this section I want to consider the form that these risks are taking and the impact this has on the Council's ability to continue its regeneration efforts. This requires a brief overview of how Local Authority

economic governance operates in practice. All Local Authorities have two sources of expenditure: capital and revenue. They are kept as separate budgets for financial management purposes but both budget streams are funded through mechanisms such as government grants. The *capital* expenditure relates to spending on fixed assets, infrastructure and developments, often over a long term. Any receipts from sales of Local Authority assets go back in to this account. *Revenue* expenditure relates to providing services and is funded through income from rent, taxes and other government streams. Whilst capital expenditure should not be used to support revenue, revenue budgets can be used to finance capital projects (Sandford 2014).

Capital expenditure has for a long time been funded through government grants, capital receipts from the sale of land and assets and also in part through borrowing money (through the Public Works Load Board or by issuing municipal bonds) which was tightly controlled through the 1980s and 1990s by central government. This control was mitigated to some extent by the introduction of the Public-Private Partnership and the Private Finance Initiative during the 1990s but was relaxed considerably by the introduction of the Prudential Borrowing Framework (PBF) in the Local Government Act 2003 (Hood et al. 2007). The PBF gives greater control to Local Authorities for their borrowing arrangements and removes the necessity to have approval from central government when doing so. Local Authorities can determine their own level of borrowing so long as it complies with a Prudential Code which encourages borrowing limits that are prudent for the specific authority. The Prudential Code was created by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountability (CIPFA) and allows the Local Authority, in accordance of the code, to determine and self-regulate their financial borrowing (Bailey et al. 2012). This form of borrowing is unsupported, in that the repayments are not supported by government grants. Instead, the repayments are made by the Local Authority either through 'invest to save' (where investing now will be paid for through savings that will be made because of this initial investment) or through the revenue budget. The limits that are set are created by taking in to account finances and interest rates over the subsequent three years.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (2013) has stated that Local Authorities have increased the amount of unsupported borrowing they are utilizing since austerity began. In 2008-09, the borrowing debt figure stood at £55.1 billion. By, 2012-13 the same figure stood at £83.8 billion, an increase of just over 50% (Department for Communities and Local Government 2013b). This has increased due to grant cuts from the government and to enable Councils to continue to deliver their capital expenditures (*ibid*). This debt figure was forecast to stand at £90.0 billion by the end of 2015-16 (Department for Communities and Local Government 2015). Salford Council has also been using large amounts of unsupported borrowing to enable it to continue with its capital programmers. Prior to 2008, this borrowing was done purely on the 'invest-to-save' basis. However, after 2008 it began to be used more for the general delivery of the capital programme (Salford City Council 2013f). The Council has identified that investments funded through capital receipts from the sale of assets is less likely at this time as asset values are low. For Salford Council, then, borrowing has become a more accessible source of funding development, but with a view to this being a temporary solution:

> *"The Council's strategy has been to use prudential borrowing to fill the funding gap left by the reduction in capital receipts in the recession, with a view to using capital receipts to repay debt (rather than finance new expenditure) as soon as they become available. Levels of unsupported borrowing are therefore higher than they might have been in a non-recession economy, but this can be seen as a temporary situation that will be restored once capital receipts start to flow" (ibid)*

Here, the Council expresses that it will use capital receipts where they become available not to reinvest into other capital projects as would have been done previously, but to service accrued finance debt. The risk here, then, is that where capital receipts do not materialize the majority of the repayment will have to come from the revenue budget. It may also create a cycle where by borrowing occurs in the first instance with repayment coming from the potential of capital receipts, rather than capital receipts funding expenditure in the first instance. Whilst this method was purported to be used as an

interim measure, it has continued and is projected to continue as the primary means of funding capital expenditure. According to the latest available Council budget,

> *"Over the 3 years to 2014/15 some £100m of general support from unsupported borrowing will have been used to support the capital programme that needs to be funded from the revenue budget, and a further £26m is planned for use in 2015/16" (Salford City Council 2015a).*

The risks of unsupported borrowing is managed through the Prudential Code. However, as previously mentioned, this only accounts for risks for up to three financial years ahead. So what happens when the council financially commit over a longer term period than three years? And how much borrowing can be withstood by the local council? Bailey et al (2010) argue that the Prudential Code enforces a very narrow and purely financial focus on public borrowing, which is arguably a much broader socially and politically important. Hood et al (2007) have argued that the code does not allow for the consideration of long-term impacts of this borrowing, which appears as an oversight given the usual long-term nature of the assets delivered. They also argue that this form of financing pushes more risk and responsibility onto local rather than central government. Whereas other methods of financing capital projects such as the PFI involve long-term commitments in which government funding is guaranteed, all financing under the PBF is financed by the local council. This type of financing of capital projects, Hood et al (2007) argue,

> *"…reduces the overall responsibility of central government for local capital investment programmes and effectively transfers this responsibility with all associated risks to local government" (2007: 2007).*

This borrowing is posited as a strategy in the short term as austerity continues to play out. However, this strategy relies on the assumption that conditions will return to 'normal' or pre-economic downturn levels. But, as Levitas (2012) has argued, if austerity is a 'neoliberal shock doctrine' used to justify a reduction in public spending and the greater involvement of private actors into public service provision, then there are no guarantees that there will be any kind of return (2012: 322). Again we see here the

future become a source from which to enable current development by borrowing funds that will need to be repaid but by pushing this repayment to a future date. It is a strategy that incorporates a level of risk which is not fully accounted for and commits now to something to be continually dealt with into the future. In doing so, the Council restricts its future movements because it has to account for these decisions taken now. These decisions are reduced to financial necessities in a period of economic stagnation which fail to account for political and social impacts.

What has been described in the sections above can also be thought of through this frame of a 'post-political rigidity' (Raco 2015b). Salford Council does engage in these long-term contracts with private sector companies through for example the Private Finance Initiatives. It also engages in financial deals, investment and borrowing strategies that also commit the Council to a future trajectory for a particular time period. These commitments often feed into other strategic plans which compound the risks associated with them, increasing the necessity to contribute more. These decisions are being made now but ultimately exceed beyond now into the future where they may have to be continued or resolved by other actors. This process of entrenched exposure to risk and the need to manage these risks leads to what Peck has termed '"defensive" entrepreneurialism' (2012: 400).

## 7.4 An uneven spatiality

So far, then, I have been interested in what the turn in regeneration away from public need to economic growth has facilitated. I have considered the actions, interests and policies that have underwritten this change. It makes sense in this next and final section of the chapter to consider the implications of all these factors for those spaces across Central Salford that are *not* currently designated as spaces of growth. In particular, I want to consider those spaces that were once sites of regeneration or that once formed part of a developmental plan that has failed to materialised, has stopped or has stalled. What happens, under the new growth agenda, to spaces that are *not* growth generators? When considering this I want to revisit chapter five, drawing on Massey's (2001) notion of space-time, discussed the journey that Salford was taking and the

residents that were intended on taking it. However, in this section I want us to consider how we conceptualise the 'journey' from the perspective of those spaces that are unlikely to be subject to investment under the new growth initiative described above. These are spaces with no designated 'future', in the sense that they are not being regenerated and may be unlikely to do so in the imminent future. The spaces that I am referring to here are the sites that remain derelict, empty or closed down due to discontinued regeneration and redevelopment projects. As Tonkiss (2013) argues,

> *"Given downturns in speculative investment on the one hand, and the turning screws of government austerity on the other, many cities are bearing the physical scars of disinvestment, disuse and decline; in vacant and abandoned spaces of private rescission and public retreat"* (2013: 321).

There are numerous sites across Salford that bear these scars of disinvestment, but more importantly they are symbolic of spaces that were once investment opportunities. They are sites that were subject to promise of a particular, unmaterialised future. Some of these spaces are born out of government-sponsored regeneration projects like HMR or NDC. Some are spaces that were regeneration projects with private developers that have not been completed and are not yet subject to any completion timescales. Others are development projects implemented by private developers that have now stalled since the economic recession. These sites can be seen across Central Salford in close proximity to spaces of continual investment like SQ. Generally, they represent stalled attempts at renewal, and are the byproduct of a regeneration effort which sees some places develop at a greater speed than others, even after they have been designated as redundant within the new vision.

These sites were mentioned during the interviews conducted as a source of contention for local residents and unsettling for the local residents who live near them, as the below quotes demonstrates,

> *"There are some different priorities that I'm certainly picking up. They are about heritage and development and open space and the community are*

*very, very keen and it's very important for them to see that those open spaces or vacant sites are developed" (6 – Council employee)*

*"Very, very destabilising for a local community. They don't like empty sites that are uncared for on their doorstep. Nobody does. You don't. We don't. If it's a nice open piece of land equally and it's cared for to some degree, they like that" (19 – Elected official).*

There are many sites like this in Central Salford that are not currently intended for development. One particular site is an estate that was due to be redeveloped under NDC but has since remained in a suspended state of closure (see figure 26, 27 and 28 below).



*Figure 26: New Deal for Communities – Author's own photo*

*Figure 27: New Deal for Communities – Author's own photo*



*Figure 28: New Deal for Communities – Author's own photo*

*Figure 29: New Deal for Communities – Author's own photo*

Many people in social housing were moved from this estate to facilitate its demolition over a decade ago in 2004 (Wallace 2015). After people were moved from the area (which included some compulsory purchase orders), NDC money ran out. Whilst some houses were built across the other side of the river which includes some affordable housing (see figure 29 above), this estate remains in a state of liminality. Some houses still contain residents who continue to live within this estate. The area fenced off in figure 27 separates the estate from the river. It contains much of the earth that was removed from the development sites where NDC houses were built which has been placed within this fenced off location. As can be seen in the photos, it is overgrown and closed off to use. This estate represents what Bauman (2000), borrowing the term from Kociatkiewicz and Kostera, calls 'empty space'. Within 'empty space' there is no meaning which is not to say that they are meaningless to those who may live in them, but that they are not designated with meaning in relation to current progression. They are the

'left over' sites that are of no current value. 'Emptiness,' Bauman argues, 'is in the eye of the beholder'' (2000: 104). In this instance, emptiness is seen by the Council and the developers who have evacuated from this space by virtue of its now economic meaninglessness. They are the places that are left out of the newly designed mental maps which weave around the areas main assets carving out the less prosperous place. As Bauman (2000) says 'Cutting out such places allows the rest to shine and bristle with meaning (2000: 104).    These empty spaces are notable because of their lack of maintenance of the external space, something which is a source of frustration for local residents, as one participant stated,

> *"It really pisses me off the fact that this has just been left and [NDC] don't give a fuck. They haven't got a plan. There not bothered. They just say 'oh the housing markets burst there is nothing we can do'. It's not good enough… The difference between here and [new NDC houses] if you go up there there's lights every 10m it's absolutely gorgeous. The ground; there's no grass growing out of the floor. It's well maintained, it's a total difference to what we live with... Salford Quays is like that. You won't find this, look at the rubbish on the roads; you will not find that on Salford Quays. You won't find unkempt trees. You won't find lights that aren't working all that in Salford Quays. There's a hell of a lot of investment that goes on up there because it is the BBC" (17 - Community representative).*

Edensor argues,

> *"Work goes into the sustenance of an object over time. It is cared for, cleaned and polished, to bestow upon it an illusion of permanence, to keep at bay the spectres of waste and decay" (2005b: 317).*

However, on this estate, as there are questions of its permanency, maintenance has slipped and the spectres of waste and decay have begun to emerge. Grass is growing through cracks in the road that would not ordinarily be there, trees overhang and debris has begun to accumulate. This is at odds with the other NDC development pictured above in which the space is well maintained. Similarly spaces like SQ are also

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meticulously maintained by a dedicated landscaping company that ensure the site is well manicured throughout the year (The Landscape Group 2015) and to signal this illusion of permanence. What some participants identified is the differential treatment between these spaces - one which has investment and another which does not, an issue acknowledged by decision makers also:

> *"And also it's down to the Council, to be quite frank, to actually sweep the streets, and repair the potholes. All too often Councils have had reduced maintenance and areas have got neglected... footpaths and things that Council had are full of weeds, potholes, broken fences, broken lamp columns. They've just given up" (3 – Planning Professional).*

For the above areas of 'empty space,' they are experiencing what Wallace (2015) refers to as 'gentrification interrupted', the lived reality of a stalled regeneration project that is not likely to be reconsidered within a growth agenda at any point currently. It sits waiting, unacknowledged and unmaintained. However, the notion of gentrification interrupted still signals and demarcates these sites as 'in progress'. They have stalled, but temporarily, until capital is bought back in to this space. When a space is designated according to an economic logic then a person's right simply to dwell, outside of the notion of value, is challenged. What can be seen in the photos of the estate above is that it has been inscribed by an aesthetic of capitalist value in waiting. It is tainted by its partial closure. What is visible in the estate is the interruption of the journey towards economic value. To reside in that space is to be constantly reminded of this interrupted process. It limits the right to dwell (Davidson 2009).

The HMR also cleared many sites in Salford that were never rebuilt. Many of these spaces are no longer subject to a regeneration programme and are again left in a position of suspension between what they were and what they were intended to be (see figures 30 and 31 below).

*Figure 30: Housing Market Renewal clearance site – Author's own photo*



*Figure 31: Housing Market Renewal clearance site – Author's own photo*

As the above pictures demonstrate, there are large vacant swathes of land that were once the site of housing and public engagement. These sites exist across other cities in the North that were subject to HMR which ceased in 2011 under the Coalition. According to one participant who was involved in the HMR he was,

> *"…completely disappointed. I mean, it was a 15 year programme where the money got turned off at year 8. And the way it was often perceived was it was a clearance demolition programme and it was something where that was in the media. That was in the mindset." (20 – Council employee)*

In parts of Central Salford, these sites remain empty without any current plans for reinvestment. Within the same ward only streets away is a housing development in partnership with Salford Council that has built over 1000 houses (see figures 32 and 33 below). The development achieved strong success before the recession, transforming a large residential next to the river. According to the developers,

> *"Located less than a mile from the city centre of Manchester, and within the Salford Crescent Corridor investment area, New Broughton Village has rapidly become one of the most sought after areas for all sorts of people – bringing together a genuine community of everyone from young professionals to growing families, with home styles and sizes to suit them all" (Countryside Properties n.d.).*

*Figure 32: New Broughton Village. Source – Countryside photo*



*Figure 33: New Broughton Riverside, Aerial view. Source – Countryside properties*

The 'Riverside' housing is Countryside's latest development, and makes use of its riverside location. One of their selling points, as can be seen above, is that these developments are within Salford's 'investment area'. This housing is being sold for upwards of £200,000. Within the same vicinity, then, there exist side by side these different land use developments. Some are being invested and maintained and, others which are vacant and undeveloped.

The same redevelopment area houses another site suffering a similar fate. The Mocha Parade is a small shopping area that serviced the needs of local residents. It is a small parade of local shops with housing above. The Council had planned to redevelop the shopping area. Within the plans to develop a new shopping centre the housing above the shops were closed and the people who resided within them were forcibly moved out (see figure 34 below). Since that time there has been little development but it has been reported that the shops beneath have suffered from loss of trade (see The Salford Star 2012b).



*Figure 34: Mocha Parade shops – Author's own photo*

According to the Salford Council website, last updated in 2011,

> *"The Council and Countryside Properties are extremely confident that the original ambitious aspirations for the scheme will be achieved, despite difficult economic conditions. It may take longer than originally anticipated to complete the redevelopment, but our next priority will be to*

> *secure redevelopment of the area around and including Mocha*
> *Parade"(Salford City Council 2011b)*

That the parade is to be included in a future redevelopment scheme could be seen as a positive. However, there are no time scales. Again we can see a space in which promises have not materialised and which, in the interim, are left in a mid-way point with people experiencing a lived reality of regeneration failure. For Kitchin et al (2014) these unfinished estates represent the 'new ruins' of the 21st century. Unlike traditional ruins where capital has exceeded its use and then moved onto a new spatial fix, 'new ruins' represent evaporation of intended capital before value has been extracted from the space. These sites are not in a process of ruin because they are not necessary or no longer in use, but because they were packaged up for a speculative future than has failed to materialise. They represent a failed future promise. Kitchin et al were speaking specifically about housing developments in Ireland that began development before the economic crash but were never completed. Whilst there are sites like this in Salford (see figure 35 photo) the above examples are sites where people *did* live. They are sites where people were moved from or kept from or remain surrounded by.



*Figure 35: Unfinished Salford development – Author's own photo*

In Kitchin et al's (2014) analysis, these unfinished developments represented the culmination of unregulated finance, neoliberal housing policies and speculative development gambled on the expectation of future use rather than current need. The same assessment can be applied to Salford. However, in Salford these spaces were most often already in use. Thus, people in these areas were told that they would be subject to change and that it was based on their needs, regardless of whether or not it was based on their choice, making us question who the development was actually for, as one developer put it,

> *"We got a lot of grief [from the residents] and it was all about 'we just want somewhere nice to live'. They didn't want the world they just wanted somewhere nice to live." (3 – Planning Professional)*

There is an opportunity within these spaces to expose the fragile notion of linear capitalist progress and to highlight its cycle of destruction and production. In its suspension it allows room to 'multiply the readings of the city' as Lebfevre requested (in Edensor 2005a: 4). These ruins offer an opportunity for engaging in a progressive urban politics. However, as will be seen below, these spaces are still inscribed within a linear progressive temporality, even if they are currently in limbo. For some cleared spaces there has been some investment to improve its current state. These are areas that are labelled 'meanwhile sites', sites that are currently derelict and waiting for investment and in the 'meanwhile' will be subject to improvement (Salford City Council 2015c). Many of these sites are within the currently developing PFI housing regeneration area called Pendleton. As the Council states, these meanwhile sites are being maintained to improve their aesthetics and their usability by local residents until a time determined in which they will be subject to development, as the below participant suggests,

> *"They've come up with a scheme of "meanwhile areas". This is housing talk. And their idea is it will be built on eventually but in the "meanwhile" they're going to beautify it. Make a park, make a natural garden, pasture or something, you know, so it's more acceptable, so it doesn't stick out like a sore thumb" (18 – Community representative).*

The idea of a 'meanwhile site' comes from a social movement in which an unused space or building is taken over by local people in order to make it productive again, in an alternative not-for-profit way. Organisations like The Meanwhile Foundation, a national charity originally set up by Brent Council in London, support interest groups in setting up temporary projects in the gaps that open up within the process of neoliberal capital development (The Meanwhile Foundation 2015). Meanwhile projects focus on art installations, charities, gardening groups and the like. The government has produced guidance which sets out a range of leasing options over town centre units for a temporary time period by non-commercial groups (Department for Communities and Local Government 2009). Whilst this guidance relates to city centre shopping units, the concept has been equally applied to outdoor spaces of dereliction. The idea is to make use of empty sites that are seen to blight the landscape. However, it has also become a form of urban activism, the reclamation of space for communitarian uses in the interstices of longterm profit seeking development (Tonkiss 2013).

The form that 'meanwhile sites' have taken in Salford has been in improving these cleared sites and creating spaces where local residents can plant and grow food. In partnership with a charity called Newground, the sites designated as 'meanwhile' within the Pendleton development have been improved (see figure 36 below). The planting pots are designed to be moved as and when the site gets developed. One meanwhile site that had been created has already had to move its residents on due to development of that site coming to fruition (Newground 2015).

*Figure 36: Salford 'meanwhile site'. Source – Newground photo*

Tonkiss (2013) argues that these temporary uses indicate a 'makeshift urbanism' in which delays in development can be utilized to create spaces of hope, of commonality amongst local groups who can benefit from this reuse of space in socially desirable ways. It creates a space which is free of economic valuations, a space where people can dwell. However, Tonkiss argues, these meanwhile sites, whilst socially beneficial, may serve to 'keep sites warm' for profit-seeking development (2013: 318). They could serve to lay the foundations for developers or, ironically, attract previously uninterested developers which would run counter to their activism ideology. More broadly, the very notion of a 'meanwhile site' serves to include these spaces within a foreclosed trajectory of development. Whilst it momentarily opens up these spaces to a multiplicity of use, this occurs on a larger timescale of development where its future is already set. Any more multiple or dynamic use of this space is only temporary until funds can be mobilized to continue its linear journey. The potential for something different is fleeting because alternative uses can only exist, by their very purpose, in the meanwhile.

## 7.5 Conclusion

In the introduction to this chapter I proffered a stark warning from Southern that 'This is the end of 'regeneration' as we know it' (2013: 399). For Southern, regeneration was

changing as a response to, but not necessarily because of, austerity. Austerity, Southern argued, was a banner under which to enact more fundamental changes in ideology that accompanied the Coalition government's focus on a reduced state and neoliberal growth. It is, as Levitas (2012) has argued, a 'neoliberal shock doctrine' used to justify cuts to public spending and local state power. In exploring this change this chapter has highlighted some of the relevant changes to planning and urban policy that the Coalition made after coming into power. In particular it raises the issue of increased private sector involvement through LEPs and an attempt to shift political jurisdictions by initiating the creation of new economic spatial scales. Whilst in Salford the LEP operates over traditional Greater Manchester geographical boundaries, we saw the attempts by Peel Holdings to form its own LEP in the gap of potential that these changes opened up.

Peel Holdings was not successful in the attempts to create its own LEP. However, this does raise important questions regarding the possibility of new non-state spaces of important private sector assets governed by non-representative actors engaged in the politics of planning. It forces us to consider the implication of an increasing number of private actors driving economic growth when economic growth takes precedence over other forms of urban change. How long will local authorities be able to withstand challenges from private institutions when their own powers are being increasingly curtailed? Peel Holdings is a unique example in this context as it is one of the biggest landowners in the region. But under the Coalition and Conservative governments, the disposal of land and assets is being heavily encouraged, leaving more scope for either the monopolizing of an organization like Peel, or the increasing power of other private organisations.

The reduction in the power of the local state is being compounded by other policy changes at a national level that are encouraging what I have argued can be understood as a framework of normality. Under this framework, local councils are expected to bypass statutory requirements and democratic controls over developments. I have demonstrated how, in the Salford context, reducing the ability of the Council to enforce controls over developers serves to usher in a notion of necessity, a fatalistic response to capital in which it must be secured at all costs. This 'invocation of necessity' results in

the loss of democratic decision making as it stands in the way of immediate action, jeopardizing scarce investment opportunities (Davidson and Iveson 2014). What we see occurring here can be equated to a 'post-political consensus' which in effect *creates* the very conditions it is proposed to resolve (Swyngedouw 2010). They are not responses to global neoliberalism but further entrenchments of it, further enforcing a post-political commitment to a neoliberal growth agenda (Allmendinger and Houghton 2012).

This is reinforced through the necessity to engage in long-term contracts with private developers as the only source of available funding to deliver development in the area. This can be seen through contracts like the Private Finance Initiative. The result of this is the inclusion of private developers as providing social necessities, with the public sector transferring large sums of money and assets into private hands. This, as it has been argued, is a challenge to democratic accountability now and into the future. The depletion of assets may be a problem for future generations, restricting their ability to make changes. It also, as Raco (2014) has argued, locks out the ability to engage in politics for the duration of the contract. However, in Salford, not only are these contracts being entered into for social rewards, but also to stimulate private development, as was the case with the Greengate example. Here, then, we see the Council shifting its priorities by focusing on delivery of economic rewards through unsupported borrowing. This results in risk-taking associated normally with the market in order to offer security to private developers, reversing the traditional model of private entrepreuneurialism. Here the Council is acting as a risk taker, normalizing 'everyday entrepreuneurialisms' (Peck 2014). The Council here takes on responsibility for the eventual crisis associated with capitalist development (Zizek 2009). To escape its inevitable endpoint, argues, Zizek, capitalism must forever push its limits further in to the future, borrowing from it and escaping into it. In the actions of Salford Council we see it pushing its endpoint in to the future, borrowing now and committing now to something that will have to be paid off later. Any risks associated are pushed forward, renegotiating and recommitting as and when they need to, locking out the possibility of making changes as it goes along.

This 'commit now, pay later' form of capital financing is further being reinforced through a 'payment by results' style of government funding. This arrangement rewards those

councils with the biggest 'risk appetite' (Waite et al. 2013) by making funding conditional on GVA growth. The ability through growth to generate their own income is to encourage self-sufficiency and remove dependency on the centre for redistributed grants. This discourse moves government further away from any notion of redistribution based on need to self-sufficiency based on growth. The implication is that local regeneration strategies will be continually focused on those areas with the most growth potential, drawing crucial finance away from places of deprivation to those places that already display signs of economic success. There is a potential then that this will further increase spatial inequality, contributing to the very thing that urban regeneration intended to ameliorate. It is through this that we see these changes to regeneration as a social practice becoming reduced to purely economic gains.

Whilst the Council is taking financial risks to ensure development continues in the most economically important areas, there are signs emerging that this is creating spatial inequalities amongst those areas that Bauman (2000) calls 'empty spaces'. These are the sites that allow us to see the impact of speculative development based on potential future gains over identified local needs. These spaces of interrupted gentrification bare the marks of failed promises and are the 'new ruins' of the 21st century, waiting in limbo for investment (Kitchin et al. 2014). They exemplify the false choice urbanism that Slater (2014) identified where capital is both the cause and the solution to the problem. It is in spaces like these that we can consider the fragmented and disjointed temporalities that have been set in motion. In these spaces we can consider the multiple readings of the city as something other than of economic value and modernist progress. We can consider it as a place to dwell, as a site of dynamism and multiplicity (Massey, 2001). However, in the labelling of these as 'meanwhile sites' they are entered in to a foreclosed trajectory of development in which the future has been designated, but until the time that they are again given meaning, they wait suspended in the trajectory of speculative neoliberal urban development.

# 8. Conclusion

I began this thesis setting out the view of several research participants that highlighted the scale of change that parts of Salford have undertaken. Here, Salford was referred to as schizophrenic, a metaphor to indicate the polarisation between parts of the city; the modern architectural spectacle of SQ and MediaCityUK versus the abandoned ground of clearance sites and boarded up estates. It was this polarisation, both of which have been created as a consequence of the same regeneration initiatives enacted since the 1980's, which this thesis has attempted to understand. Arguably, a simplified but central tenant of the thesis was the fundamental question of 'how did this unevenness occur'? Of course this polarisation is much more nuanced than the above sentence suggests. In between and surrounding these spaces are areas neither as shiny nor as empty. Some of these places have been redeveloped completely as new build housing estates; others have not been changed at all. Some of the areas have been redesigned as mixed use development spaces including offices and apartments; others have been left as high rise residential blocks either in their original form or with newly added cladding. Some people will have experienced no change. Others will have experienced it absolutely. And others still will have experienced it to varying degrees. Ultimately what I want to avoid is the assertion that this polarisation has occurred fundamentally with residents now either on one side of the divide or the other.

However, it is vitally important that these differences between places are considered. These differences allow us to understand and reflect upon the changes that are taking place regionally, nationally and even globally. What we see in Salford is an articulation of these wider relations and interactions that are taking place. It is a story which manifests because of significant local specificity, but also one that can speak to the changes that are occurring across a range of cities not only in the UK but across the globe. It is a good example of the pattern of urban development that is seen occurring elsewhere. And it is important because although Salford is not a World city or a global city, it is a city that is hugely uneven within a concentrated localised geographical context. If we can think of Salford as a fairly typical northern post-industrial city, the fact that it exhibits such spatial difference as a result of the *same* regenerating epoch is

consequential. And that is the point to remember throughout this narrative of change; that regeneration in one concentrated area could have such divergent outcomes.

Across the entirety of Salford exists unevenness and inequality. The Western part of the city has always been, since its inclusion within the city's boundaries, a much more privileged space with greater wealth and health. It was noted in the chapter three how the life expectancy of wards in the west was 10 years higher than certain wards in the east of the city. However, the reason that the majority of this thesis focused on the east of the city, Central Salford, was because this whole area was subject to a programme of regeneration to even out some of these inequalities, as a result of which, new and even more proximate uneven disparities have been created. What I intend to do in this chapter is draw together the themes that have emerged from the three empirical chapters that proceed it to think more broadly about their consequences. It is a synthesis of the key arguments made throughout to attempt to consider what the implications are for Central Salford in the future and for urban regeneration in general. Fundamentally this chapter raises questions of the foreclosure of Salford and its intended future.

This foreclosure is manifest in several ways; firstly the linear trajectory of future development narrows the scope of possible futures, forcing all on to a singular trajectory of which some people/areas will inevitable fall outside of; secondly the commitment in the present to financial and contractual commitments in the future forecloses the possibility of the Council to divert from this course of action, locking the Council in and locking out future democratic decision making and political engagement; thirdly, the changes to local government funding streams compounds these foreclosures by reducing the scope for alternative action as devolution over financial responsibility increasingly means local authorities must fund their own futures through locally generated economic gains.

This discussion chapter will aim to unpack these claims, drawing from the empirical data already discussed to highlight these points. But what I also want to explore in this chapter is the changing role of the Local Authority, not just in Salford but elsewhere in the UK, to understand how local authorities are taking an enhanced role in the

expansion of financial capital under conditions of austerity. I will consider how Local Authorities are acting as a source for receiving market debt, acting as a necessary outlet for financial capital. This debt is then used speculatively to generate economic gains through capital development, compounding the risks already taken whilst ensuring financial returns for private developers. The outcome of this, I will argue, will be high levels of Local Authority market debt and an increase in uneven spatialities both within and between cities, as the most lucrative of land developments are prioritised over others.

## 8.1 Foreclosed future

In this section I want to highlight the way in which Salford both spatially and temporally is being foreclosed, narrowed and flattened, leaving little room for those who do not fulfil the cities new vision to engage in. The first empirical chapter, chapter five, was framed as a journey, a journey that the city had been set on course to take in which it will be transformed in to a 'modern, global city'. The reason for this framing was twofold. Firstly it was a direct appropriation of the language Salford Council was using in their visionary prospectus, 'Salford 2025: A Modern Global City'. In this document Salford's end goal was set out by Salford Council, as was its transformational agenda of how it intends to get there. It was a journey that every Salford resident was incorporated within and expected to make. But the notion of a journey also highlighted a broader conceptual theme, one of 'progress'. The language used to describe Salford by the research participants evoked this discourse of progression and of temporality, a linear movement from past to present to future. It was a language that incorporated movement forwards but also backwards. The problem Salford had faced was identified as a spiral of deindustrialised decline. In this regression the wheels of industry slowed to a halt and then began to reverse, as the benefits that had been accrued and the working and affluent residents, participants argued, left the city. To reverse this decline required the mobalisation of residents that were conceptualised as stagnant, immobile and living in the past. There was a considered attempt to change the traditional image that 'old Salford' conjured up. One policy maker interviewed commented that external representations of Salford created an imagery of a "working class theme park", a

romanticised notion of working class tradition that "nobody wanted to live in" (participant 2 – Elected official).

The picture of Salford painted by the research participants is of course one articulation of Salford's past. It is one telling of the story of Salford that necessarily points us to a particular understanding of the present and indeed the future. As the story starts from a period of decline then it logically follows that it moves within a temporal narrative towards growth and progress. Of course there are other narratives of this story, one I have alluded to as a story of identity, the loss of culture or a narrative of displacement. Again though, this is just another articulation of the history of Salford. A full audit of the perceptions of the residents in Central Salford would likely expose a range of reactions to the changes that have taken place, some positive and some negative; because, cities by their very nature, are not homogenous entities. They are sites of difference and contain a myriad of otherness; different people experiencing the city in different ways (Amin & Thrift 2002) and what I do not want to do in this thesis is overlook that complexity. However, what I do want to argue is that in the re-envisioning of Salford by the planning decision makers there is being created a very narrow articulation of Salford, a very specific reading of the city, in which people are expected to exist within. What I mean by this is that in the redesigning of the city there is less room for a myriad of otherness.

I take the term articulation here from Massey (1994). For Massey, space is constructed through an intricate network of relations that exist within it, across it, beyond it and even before it, in to the past. The form that Salford takes has occurred because of the influences and decisions that have been made within a wider structure. Places are thus not bounded or enclosed, insulated and made from within, but are a 'subset of the interactions which constitute space, a local articulation within the wider whole' (*ibid*: 115). Space is an articulation of a place at that particular moment within that wider network. If we think of places as articulations then they are always in progress, open to the possibility that they will change as new relations and influences emerge. It is in this openness that there exists politics, as Massey argues,

*"There are always relations which are still to be made, or unmade, or re-made. In this sense, space is a product of our on-going world. And in this sense it is also always open to the future. And, in consequence, it is always open also to the political. The production of space is a social and political task. If it is conceptualised in this manner, the dimension of space enters, necessarily, into the political (for **if the future were not open there would be no possibility of changing it and thus no possibility of politics)"** (Massey 2009: p17, emphasis added).*

It is within this possibility of politics that the identity or meaning of a place becomes the dominant articulation. It is through this negotiation that one view of a place becomes hegemonic over others.

For Massey, space is a dimension in which there is the simultaneous coexistence of multiple things and thus space is inherently social. In this sense, as mentioned above, the making of space is a social task but also therefore a political task. It is in this multiplicity of space in which we encounter others that we are forced, Massey argued, to ask the most fundamental of socio-political questions; "how are we going to live together" (2009: 18). However, of course the answer to this question is tied in to power and politics, or more importantly the power to do politics which again has a spatial element to it. For Massey, a truly democratic politics is the ability of *all voices* to engage and be recognised and legitimised as equal within these power-relations. It is an equal distribution of power-relations that allows for and takes account of the multiplicity within spaces. The final point that I want to highlight from Massey which I have mentioned in previous chapters is that when we think of space as time, i.e. developing or progressing in one particular direction, we reduce difference and multiplicity by forcing in on to a single linear path; a path which is singular in its future and in its retelling of the past (2001).

I draw on Massey here to make two key arguments about the regeneration of Salford that emerge from chapter five. The first is that in the re-envisioning of Salford and the articulation of Salford that this is producing, there is a narrowing of the multiplicity of difference in the city. The city as a site of simultaneity, of otherness, is reduced. As the

city is redesigned to attract capital and incoming middle class residents, the scope to engage in the new forms of economy and cultural products is being curtailed for residents who are unable to exist within those spaces (Fuller 2012). This leads on to a second and related argument. In conflating space with time, in placing Salford on a journey, the future or Salford is also narrowed. There is one main trajectory that is prioritised over any other around which the city is being geared towards. People in Salford are considered in relation to this trajectory and whether or not they are able to be part of it. What I am suggesting here is that Salford, both spatially and temporally, is being foreclosed. In defining one version of the city as dominant, there is an 'ontological flattening' of its diverse meanings (Lauermann 2015: 1). So how do we see this occurring in Salford?

We saw in chapter five the regeneration of Central Salford in a quest to be a competitive city, 'a city of choice', and a city where everybody benefits. Redesigning and reordering areas that would be conceived of as spaces of decline formed a necessary part of this. Bringing back a market for housing, through for example the housing market renewal and diversifying the economic base of the city were key components of this regeneration. However, we also saw that local residents were not necessarily benefitting from these regeneration initiatives and that many felt excluded from it. But instead of engaging in the production of that space in a way that opened up the future to varied possibilities, the response to this from the participants interviewed sought to close down this resistance. Local residents were seen as stagnant and resisting change, parochial and living in the past. The implication was that these residents' views did not sit well within the new vision for Salford.

Demonstration of actual resistance to the changes were closed down by discursively reducing them to a misunderstanding of what was going to happen and that they would understand at some point in the future once they had seen the outcome. What is happening when resistance is being reduced in this way is that they are being delegitimised or not recognised as valid voices. Allen (2008) argues that practitioners symbolically dominate those who resist the process, as practitioners are the ones who have been designated with a legitimate voice in the process. Any resistance is

invalidated by those who have the power to impose meaning; this being a form of symbolic violence in Allen's terms. We see here then the literal foreclosure of open politics, the reduction of dissenting voices. Another response from participants was that many local residents did not have the necessary education or skills to obtain the new forms of work. People, the participant's state, will get jobs *in the future*. They will be upskilled *in the future*. They will have these opportunities *in the future*. This, Raco et al (2008) call the 'politics of space-time'. Here decisions are made over who benefits first and who benefits last. The power to make these decisions is bound up in politics. Those with less power and less ability to engage in decision making are most likely to see their benefits deprioritised in favour of others. So for these people they are still enforced in to this future trajectory, they are not able to change or follow another route.

All of the above responses explain the dislocation between local residents and the regenerated spaces in ways that consistently frame the discussions in relation to the new vision for Salford. The residents are understood by policy makers in relation to this transition that is taking place. But they are understood in ways that see them as outside of this notion of Salford and what Salford is becoming. It is up to them as residents to merge on to this path. If they do not have the skills to work in the newly emerging professional and financial services economy or in the new media city then they need to upskill. If they feel out of place in spaces like MediaCityUK or the Lowry then they need to be exposed to it. By pathologising an individual's inability to succeed as a form of individual failure, the ability to challenge it is again restricted. An individual's failure or success is still viewed through this narrow temporal lens of change; they succeed or fail in relation to this future image. The dominant articulation of the future is unchanging and not open to the possibility of politics in any meaningful sense (Massey 2009). Temporally, the future is closed.

But spatially it is also closed, or at least narrowed down symbolically. I have argued that symbolic boundaries are created within the redesigning of space (Coleman 2003). It is through these boundaries that define legitimate and illegitimate behaviour that difference is no longer tolerated. Through the erecting of these boundaries there is a symbolic narrowing of space as it restricts behaviours to that which fall within the

designation of acceptability in that space. These behaviours, it has been argued, have a cultural and economic form. It is the reimagining of space for a middle-class audience (Atkinson 2003a). I drew on Davidsons (2009) notion of the 'right to dwell' to conceptualise this idea. The right to dwell is about more than just the right to be in a space, or the right not to be physically displaced from it; it is about the right to shape and produce the space in which one dwells. It is the right to experience and live in a place outside the notion of it as a commodity, outside of its economic and competitive valuation. It is the right to be engaged with that space as a place to live even as the fabric of the area is being changed around you. The right to dwell here represents a dislocation of people from place as that place is regenerated in ways that erects boundaries (Davidson 2009).

If we recall Massey's (2009) most fundamental of socio-political questions; "how are we going to live together?", we can see that this question is not really open to suggestions or debate. The answer has already been given. We can reflect here on the symmetry of the discussion raised during the methodology chapter (chapter four) when I described how the Council was restricting access to data and employees. I discussed the temporality of political sensitivity which may serve to hinder access for research (see Desmond 2004). But what this represents more importantly is the general foreclosure of the ability to engage in Salford's decision making process or the awareness of its outcomes. Access to Council information is being restricted at an increased level with certain committees (including the regeneration briefing) having a closed session within every committee meeting. The Information Commissioners Office in March 2015 placed Salford Council, along with two other authorities, on a Freedom of Information Request monitoring list due to its failure to respond to information requests by members of the public (Information Comissioners Office 2015). There is a parallel here between the foreclosures of Salford spatially and temporally but also politically. There is a narrowing of the available information and transparency of the Council. This represents what Allmendinger and Houghton (2012) call a post-political planning condition, a system which is "focused on carefully stage-managed processes with subtly but clearly defined parameters of what is open for debate" (2012: 90).

What we have here is a process of inscribing Salford with a new image, a new vision and a new future. This inscription however, narrows the space for some Salford residents to engage within in, which is crucially important if this is the future trajectory for Salford. It creates a divergence between the 'new' Salford and any residents who are unable to follow that path. Local residents who cannot engage are in many ways dis-embedded and decontextualized from Salford's future; emptying it of their needs. If what we see occurring here is the outcome of the regeneration strategy, what we see below is how it was created. These are the strategies, narrow in scope that added to the divergence of space. What I want to argue in the below section is how these strategies have developed in a way that seeks opportunities for investment over local needs, creating this divergence. These opportunities require exceptional measure that once utilised, become a normative process. If we think of the above section as the narrowing of Salford in a way that restricts its use from local residents, we can think of the below as the narrowing of Salford which restricts its use from the Council itself. In regenerating Salford the Council lock itself in to a future trajectory which is then maintained but also compounded via additional contractual agreements. I shall explain what I mean by this in the section below.

## 8.2 Foreclosing entrepreneurs

Through exploring the creation of SQ I tried to demonstrate how the space could be seen as a palimpsest of global urban regeneration strategies that act as a blueprint for the various cities that apply them: mixed use development, waterfront development, the cultural turn, creative cities (Quilley 2002). The space itself is an indicator of the regeneration 'repertoire of strategies' that Peck (2005) identifies as a feature of urban regeneration. We also saw how Salford Council came to behave more and more entrepreneurially, engaging more so with private developers and seeking to secure investment. In was during this chapter than I began to demonstrate ways in which the Council was reducing its statutory powers of control in order to remove barriers to development. Here I drew on Swyngedouw et al's (2002) concept of a 'framework of exceptionality'. The purpose of using this term was to allow me to draw parallels with the measures that were being taken by Salford Council to develop SQ but more

specifically MediaCityUK. The exceptional measures used here were the designation of a privately led Urban Regeneration Company to lead on the BBC bid in conjunction with Peel Holdings. This was taking the lead on behalf on the Council under the assumption that it would be better placed to make these negotiations. Peel Holdings were not forced to meet the usual requirements to secure planning permission. They were exempt from having to provide affordable housing and from having to pay any Section 106 planning gains. Nor did they have to provide training costs or enter in to a labour contract. There was a resignation on behalf of the participants that this was a necessary occurrence in order to secure the development; it was as Davidson and Iveson (2014) argue an 'invocation of necessity'. The exercising of considered democratic decision making is supplanted by the urgency to act quickly.

It is this urgent action that we can see taking place throughout the development of SQ; each stage of development attempting to reach a critical point that would competitively position Salford city against other cities. This fatalism over securing investment, Slater (2014) argued is a 'false choice urbanism'. Here, investment is posited as the opposite to disinvestment, it is what is needed to solve the problems of disinvestment. What this false choice does is negate the political issue of capital flows and the way that capital accumulation creates uneven development as necessary to its continuation. Investment and disinvestment are not opposites but both fundamental features of capital which serves to first value, devalue, then revalue land again. If we were to take our story of Salford, not from the point of decline, but prior to that, from the height of economic productivity, then perhaps the solution to the problem may appear differently. It may offer a warning not to follow the same path, not to rely on an economic growth agenda that may produce the same outcome of obsolescence. When the destructive result of capitalism is visible in space its presence allows for an engagement and critique of this process. However, when these spaces are rebuilt in a manner that removes these signs of decline, the past can be easily forgotten.

What I want to posit here is that the creation of MediaCityUK was in many ways serendipitous. It was a confluence of factors that came together and took shape within SQ for reasons that were outside of the control of Salford Council. But why is this

serendipity important for our understanding? I propose that this is important because it demonstrates the necessity to secure the *opportunity*. It was not a long term plan of Salford Council to become a Media City and in it being presented as an opportunity to grasp; the development became more exceptional, of more magnitude, in which Council compromises needed to be made. Additional benefits for local residents were worked out at a later date retrospectively. The unforeseen opportunity of securing the relocation of the BBC also highlights the zero-sum game of inter-urban competition cities take part in (Peck and Tickell 2002). In 'winning' the BBC Salford Council is taking part in the very process of capital circulation that placed it in its position of decline in the first place. It also compounds the fate of other cities equally competing for investment. If Salford has won, then someone else has lost. We could immediately think here that the losing city was Manchester, but of course the BBCs northern relocation could have effectively gone to any other northern city. As Peck and Tickell (2002) commented, "In selling themselves, cities are therefore actively facilitating and subsidizing the very geographic mobility that first rendered them vulnerable, while also validating and reproducing the extralocal rule systems to which they are (increasingly) subjected" (2002: 393).

But more importantly this 'opportunity' was about attracting a substantial investment to the city. The BBC was the anchor point around which Peel Holdings and Salford Council were to create an entire Media City. Creating a Media City rather than just a BBC building was a selling point that Peel in conjunction with the Salford URC was able to offer. And in creating a whole Media City around one anchor tenant means generating demand. This then requires a speculative risk, creating something much bigger than the guaranteed financial commitment of the BBC. This speculation on potential future demand is a process of making what Moreno (2014) calls "financial claims on the future", building something in anticipation of a return (p264). With this being the catalyst, rather than an obvious exhibition of market demand or a surplus labour force, there is an increased necessity on behalf of the developers to generate business interest. In the case of Media City, this involved amongst other things, additional financial output from the Council in terms of loans, the commitment to renting buildings and the sponsoring of the philharmonic orchestra; exceptional measures for an exceptional

development. The commitment made to the developing of MediaCityUK by the Council locks it on to a course that must be maintained by further investment and speculation. It makes it difficult to allow the site to fail. So when for example the North West Development Agency was closed by the Coalition government, Salford Council had to take over its commitments to MediaCityUK so as not to incur any associated risks, which included additional financial contributions (Salford City Council 2015b). But is locking on to a particular course of action a problem in itself? What I am suggesting here is that actions are problematic when they are speculative to an extent and are based on opportunity rather than local demand.

## 8.3 'No alternative'?

So how can we understand the commitment to this 'opportunity' if it was knowingly not obviously going to deliver immediate local benefits? It can be assumed from this that the potential for polarisation within the city was foreseen. So why, we can ponder, would the Council commit so heavily to securing the BBC? Harvey (1989) argued that faced with such necessity to secure investment,

> "...it is by no means clear that even the most progressive urban government can resist such an outcome when embedded in the logic of capitalist spatial development in which competition seems to operate not as a beneficial hidden hand, but as an external coercive law forcing the lowest common denominator of social responsibility and welfare provision within a competitively organised urban system" (1989: 12).

Harvey made this observation over 25 years ago, but the description seems just, if not more apt now than it did then. Salford Council sought out this development even when faced with the knowledge of its possibly polarising associated risks. The question that this raises here is whether the Council should have resisted securing the BBC and its associated MediaCityUK in the absence of other alternatives? Just imagine for a moment a situation in which Salford Council had said 'no'. It would appear entirely against logic for the investment to be rejected even knowing it may not directly benefit local people. This is exactly the 'false-choice' that Slater (2014) wrote of: secure the investment and

manage the results whatever they may be. But what would have been the outcome if the Council had rejected the deal as unsuitable for the area? Or alternatively enforced its statutory controls and fully embedded some social provisions for local people? (Or perhaps this is still operating within the false-choice logic?) Of course we cannot know the answer to this question but it bears some consideration.

This question is particularly pertinent under the changing conditions of urbanisation and welfare provision rendered by austerity since the economic crisis. How far have the possibilities for acting outside of this ubiquitous ideology been curtailed? How much can it be argued that cities like Salford are operating within a post-political condition? In chapter seven I argued that the exceptional measures mentioned above had become normalised amongst Salford Council. Moving from a framework of exceptionality we begin to see emerge a framework of normality. Exceptional measures are now being applied to routine developments, and in doing so are no longer, I argue, considered exceptional measures. The borrowing of unsupported sums of finance to lever in private investment is one example of this. The lack of assertion in securing planning gains over developments is another. The direct leasing of private development buildings (for example the 'wrapper lease') that tie the Council in to contracted financial agreements is another. The deprioritising of local benefits in favour of developer returns is yet another. These are behaviours that are depicted by the Council as necessary to continue a committed capital programme of development. This represents, as Peck (2014) argued, a 'saturation stage' of urban entrepreneurialism wherein "'everyday entrepreneurialisms" have become a normalised, unremarkable and routinized feature of urban policy (2014: 397). But just because these are normalised features of urban policy does not mean that they are not also hugely important to our conceptualisation of notions of equality and democracy. In fact, in becoming normalised we should be even more concerned with what this may imply for our cities in the future.

So what are the implications of a framework of normality for the local Council and urban regeneration? What has to be acknowledged is that this normalisation process has been happening over the course of time but has happened at the same time as other consolidating factors that compound these issues. Firstly there is the issue of the

absence of any regeneration grants under the Coalition and now Conservative government that are targeted at sites of deprivation. Or that are at least based on social need (Southern 2013). The whole funding landscape has changed in a way so as to enable growth, but more specifically to reward growth. All the growth funds from the government have to be awarded based on the Local Authority's ability, in conjunction with the private sector, to deliver growth (Deas 2012). This is being made easier through the requirements of areas to establish Local Economic Partnerships where decisions are taken by private actors. Simultaneously, the taxation of local councils has changed also to allow local councils to keep a higher rate of return on their business rates. Business rate retention is one method of this. The council then necessarily has to generate gains in order to continue to fund public services and urban regeneration (Muldoon-Smith & Greenhalgh 2015). In addition to this are post-crash conditions of austerity where the capital financiers are hesitant to lend and developers are hesitant to speculate (Peck 2012). Under these combined conditions are a unique set of circumstances which solidify this normalisation process. What we see coming out of this are local authorities acting in a heightened position of financialisation and risk taking. This signifies an enhanced role for local authorities to act as a linchpin for financial capital. I shall unpack this in more detail below.

## 8.4 Facilitating finance

When I began this thesis my thoughts were that urban regeneration was being conducted in a manner that bypassed Local Authorities. My initial analysis of the situation occurring in Salford was that they were being sidelined by both the central government via a reduction in funding and by private actors through their increased involvement and prominence in decision making and leading on development and also in the privatisation of public assets. In the introduction to this thesis I narrated a situation that occurred between Salford Council and Peel Holdings in which the Council's core strategy was challenged to the point of removal. I initially took this as a sign that the Council was becoming obsolete, losing its power to private sector developers in favour of the national commitment to private economic growth. It felt like a story of shrinkage, a reduction in power, legitimacy and ability. Whilst there are elements to this

narrative that I still believe to be occurring, particularly on the point of the shifting power relations to private actors, I see that the *role* of the Council is not diminishing but actually becoming central to the private growth agenda under conditions of austerity. It is not to say that the local government was not previously important to the expansion of capital in to urbanisation (Harvey 1989, Peck and Tickell 2002). But this process is being compounded in new ways under austerity.

Peck (2012) has argued that austerity urbanism has become a new urban condition, "a state of normalcy at the very cusp of crisis" (2012: 651). In particular Peck identifies, using the US as his analytical ground, but which is applicable to UK cities also, that there would be devolved responsibility to the local state for economic growth and social development but without the associated financial capabilities to deliver, seeking market alternatives instead. In response to this local services will have to be reduced, impacting hardest on those already most disadvantaged. Because of this reduction in financing, entrepreneurial governance will become a fiscal necessity. And of course all these features will emerge unevenly across cities affected (Peck 2012). Many of these features have been described as emerging in Salford and undoubtedly across other UK cities. But what I want to highlight here is the role of the Council as an arbiter of financial capital, but one which also acts in a way which absorbs risk in the process.

I have previously mentioned how Salford is engaging in increased forms of unsupported financial borrowing from the private market and that this has increased substantially since the economic crash. It is being compounded by a lack of asset valuation from which to generate capital. But even if this ability returns, an eventual lack of assets to sell due to large scale privatisation may mean this form of financing becomes the norm. At any rate, as the data have demonstrated, borrowing capital to be repaid through sale of assets may inevitably have already consolidated this as the standard chain of events. This form of borrowing is not only true of Salford Council but of other councils across the UK (Sandford 2014). What we can see occurring here is the Council acting as a reliable resource for financial capital to use as an outlet in the wake of the economic crash. As the research participants demonstrated, the Council is seen as a reliable source for finance. Of course, this process of financialisation comes with increasing risk, risks

that are not mitigated with corresponding financial controls, opening up a potential future problem (Bailey et al 2010). Unlike the PFI that contracted the public sector to long term payments but that also attempted (though some may say unsuccessfully) to mitigate for risks over the course of the contract, the Prudential Code that manages unsupported borrowing only mitigates for three years ahead. This is the case even when the loans themselves are long-term. The latest information publicly available in 2009 states that the Council's market debt (approximately £300 million) matures between 2050 and 2080 (Salford City Council 2009b). This means financial borrowing that will be paid back over the coming 40 years and subject to any market fluctuations that may occur over this time.

The outcome of this financial borrowing, certainly for Salford Council, is that it is then using these sums to loan or underwrite private development. We have seen examples of this within the thesis, for example the 'wrapper lease' for the Greengate Embankment. This is just one example of many. So what we see is the Council acting as a borrower of debt which enables the continuation of market lending and is seen as a safer option under austerity conditions than lending directly to private developers. However, the Council then passes this money on to the private developer, once many of the risks have been removed, to enable the continuation of development. Here it is acting as borrower and a lender at the same time. It is a crucial linchpin in the financing process keeping capital projects going. But of course this compounds the risks the Council is taking. The initial borrowing of the money is one risk. It is then used to invest in another speculative development, which is a further risk. Embedded within this of course is a level of profit guaranteed for the developer but not the Council. If the development forms part of a larger regeneration initiative then there is a chance, as with the Greengate Embankment, that not developing will create knock on effects to other projects. The Council then acts as an intermediary keeping the process going. It borrows the capital, filters out the risks to be borne by itself, and then passes the capital on with protected profit.

## 8.5 Decentralised risk and responsibility

This process of financialisation is being compounded by the changing financial landscape for all local authorities as they are being given more power to generate its own economic gains through the Business Rate Retention Scheme, which includes the 'earn back' model of taxation that Salford is covered by which involves a form of Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) that many other local authorities are also engaging in (Strickland 2013). The TIF works by the authority borrowing money to invest initially against the future projected increase in tax raised. This is literally borrowing from future revenues (Strickland 2013). This represents a fundamental change in how local authorities are funded, replacing central redistribution with locally generated finance. It means entirely providing public services through local economic rates of return and the ability to generate such returns (Pugalis & Bentley 2013). These changes come from attempts to decentralise state finance in favour of local control, encouraging local authorities to increase its business rates through development (Muldoon-Smith & Greenhalgh 2015). But they also usher in increasing unevenness as additional tax is only generated by economic gains. There is very little incentive, or finance, in this model, to be able to develop areas that are unlikely to increase the business rates of an area. The best way to increase business rates is by developing floor space to then be built on. This is more lucrative than improving existing stock. Therefore the most likely developments are in those spaces where floor space is at a premium (Muldoon-Smith and Greenhalgh 2015). It is in these areas that will then be encouraged or promoted to developers. It is through these methods that cities will be reliant on tapping in to and generating money from land values in order to fund their regeneration and public services in the absence of any other government economic investment. It is thus crucial for us to consider what may be the consequence of this financial change.

It may be the case that whilst city leaders will be encouraged to develop already premium areas increasing the unevenness *within* cities, there may also be unevenness increasing *between* cities, as those with the strongest economies will generate greater growth. It may also serve to increase the rate of borrowing seen above to encourage this growth (Strickland 2013). We can see how this change in income generation may

encourage even riskier forms of market borrowing which is then used to propel urban development and the delivering of public services. More research needs to be conducted to determine the outcome of these significant changes to local government financing (Muldoon-Smith and Greenhalgh 2015) but it appears that there is a significant shift occurring in the role of the Council, its ability to deliver services and a regeneration agenda and its increasing involvement in financial practices that may instigate significant risks. Regeneration now can only be delivered through these mechanisms, removing the ability to channel necessary funds to areas of deprivation; a challenge that will be faced by local authorities across England and Wales. We can deduce then that regeneration, if it is still to retain that label, has broken away from its earlier conception as something which intends as its *primary* purpose to alleviate social problems. These changes, Southern (2013) argues, signals the death of the 'regeneration' metaphor. The concept of renewal, revival or regrowth can no longer be applied to what has appeared in place of regeneration. The aim now seems to be growth, regardless of what preceded it.

## 8.6 Post-political, empty futures

These measures represent the post-political condition mentioned throughout the thesis. This commitment to growth is fully entrenched through the changing financial landscape which leaves local councils with few viable alternatives to generate income. I have demonstrated examples throughout this thesis of a fatalistic attitude to growth, one in which democratic decision making is relinquished in favour of immediate action often undertaken by technocratic practitioners. A feature of this post-political logic is a foreclosure of politics by instigating a 'no alternative' mantra under conditions of urgency (Deas 2013). Decisions that are made now under this condition serves to 'lock out' politics in the future (Raco 2014). This is particularly so in making long-term contracts that will inevitably have to dealt with by future generations. I have argued that this 'borrowing from the future' is a necessary logic of capitalism, which seeks continual expansion so as to never reach its end points (Zizek 2009). Crisis, an inherent feature of capitalism, is averted by the constant escape in to the future, always pushing its end point so as to never reach it, for example never having to repay in full all the debts incurred necessarily accumulated for its continuance (Zizek 1997). With the Council

increasingly having to turn to the market to fund its own future, it also has to borrow from the future, locking out politics along the way. We can see how Salford Council, amongst other councils, is carrying long term debt to fund current infrastructure. We can also see how they are locked in to contracts with private sector providers for public services. In 20 years' time for example that Council will still be repaying the debts from now, managing the risks that have already been taken and taking on new risk to mitigate any that were realised. All of these features foreclose the ability of the Council to make changes, exercise democratic rights or prioritise local need (Swyngedouw 2010).

The Council is tapping in to the future and using it as a resource to fulfil immediate wants. In this sense the future is seen an open to be filled, colonised and consumed. It is, as Adam and Groves (2007) define it, an 'empty future', one which has been abstracted from its embeddedness in the present social, political and environmental conditions. They argue,

> *"Once emptied, the future can be filled with anything, with unlimited interests, desires, projections, values, beliefs, ethical concerns, business ventures, political ambitions…. It becomes a free-for-all, unbounded, unlimited and thus fundamentally and irreducibly indeterminate. In contrast to the context-bound future, the empty future of contemporary economic and political exchange is fundamentally uncertain and unknowable. At the same time, however, it appears wide open to colonisation and traversal" (ibid: 13).*

In emptying the future of immediate needs, local requirements and obligations it can be used as an open resource to be filled with debt and political restrictions, the implication of which can be concealed under the banner of a future trajectory of progress and a city vision of development.  Adam and Groves (2007) argue that we need to re-embed the future into our current decision making in order to be fully responsible for the outcomes of what we choose to do now. It is a renewed call for sustainability. In the introduction to this thesis I highlighted the coalition government's agenda for sustainable development in the National Planning Policy Framework as one of *positive economic growth*. What I have demonstrated throughout this thesis however enables us to

challenge the terms *sustainability* and *growth* together wherein growth inherently relies on the utilisation of the future as a resource. As Salford Council hurriedly accelerate in to the future to reach their end destination, the view of the present is foreclosed, like being on a fast train, unable to focus on anything external to what immediately surrounds you,

> "…by extending the present to the furthest reaches of the empty future,
> the future loses much of its open character: the passage to it becomes
> ever narrower when much of the future is already used, disposed of,
> borrowed or spoken for" (Adam & Groves 2007: 77).

However, rather than committing to growth in a way that conflates the spatial with the temporal, creating a foreclosed future trajectory, perhaps instead we should stop and focus on the multiplicity of the spatial and what is emerging across this uneven terrain. I highlighted a quote from Davidson and Iveson (2014) earlier that characterised the post-political condition of "'we don't need political debating, we need action!'" (p4). But if instead we take heed of Zizek (2012) it may be necessary to do the exact opposite; to not act but to think. Post-politics is based on the mantra of 'there is no alternative'. It is imperative to consider then, under the changing conditions of austerity urbanism, exactly which other alternatives there are to choose from. What would happen if a Local Authority resisted the neoliberal growth agenda? What scope is there for a city to engage in a progressive resistance politics? This question cannot be answered here, but it demands thorough consideration. It is particularly necessary to begin to identify alternative solutions for the 'new ruins' and 'empty spaces' that currently remain in limbo in Salford, outside of Salford's foreclosed future.

## 8.7 Economic futures

Whilst this thesis is a case study of Salford, it also explores broader questions concerning the development of urban politics and urban economic development beyond Salford. The outcomes that are occurring within Salford are also occurring throughout cities in the UK. Of course there will always be variation. SQ is at once both locally specific and nationally generic. The 'repertoire of strategies' that Peck (2005) has identified as a

feature of most regeneration projects (the waterfront regeneration, the creative cities label, the consumption centres, the mega-events) can be seen to drive the regeneration of Salford, especially SQ. We can see how the city planners sought inspiration from regeneration developments in other cities across the UK and internationally. Many of these features will be applicable to other regeneration projects across the UK and the process will illuminate similar processes.

We can learn from this thesis about the general model of regeneration, how it creates uneven distribution of benefits and how it is changing under current conditions. It is that aspect of the thesis that is applicable to all cities in the UK. The changing form of regeneration and the changing financial landscape for local councils will affect all. It is a fundamental break from previous redistribution processes and specially targeted funds that has far reaching implications beyond just urban regeneration but to all public policy delivery. Likewise the risky financial practices being undertaken by Salford Council is not just applicable to Salford, but is occurring across the UK. In fact, other cities are engaging in this practice at a much higher level of risk than Salford (Debt Resistance 2015). The implications of this are unknown at this stage but require considered attention.

This thesis also raises important questions regarding the urban economic development taking place within Northern cities, in particular the developments aimed at creating the Northern Powerhouse. The recent policy statements announced by the Conservative government around the Northern Powerhouse opens up the possibility for an increased commitment to economic growth but also a more democratically representative form of local governance. In 2014 George Osborne announced the proposal for a 'Northern Powerhouse'; which is comprised of a devolution of powers away from central Westminster towards northern city-regions. These devolved responsibilities will be granted on the condition of a locally elected mayor to preside over the area in question. Essentially this was a deepening of the City Deals already established in 2011 as described previously in the thesis (Nurse 2015). The expressed aim of the Northern Powerhouse is to "…transform Northern growth, rebalance the country's economy and establish the North as a global powerhouse" (Department for Transport 2015: 2). Whilst all northern cities are intended to collaborate to establish the Norther Powerhouse,

putting their previous competitive strategies aside, it is Greater Manchester which has been designated as the focal point in which to begin the 'devolution revolution' (Bovis 2015). The devolution deal will see the Greater Manchester Combined Authority have responsibility for over £1 billion in public expenditure (including housing, planning, transport and welfare) and over £1.5 billion for healthcare spending that was previously the responsibility of the NHS but will now be the responsibility of a Greater Manchester health body (Kenealy 2015).

This devolution represents a fundamental shift in power away from central government and could potentially signify a more balanced form of democratic accountability that takes account of local necessities. In the Manchester context the newly elected mayor will sit above a cabinet of 10 Council representatives, one from each Local Authority within Greater Manchester. The mayor can be outvoted by a two-thirds majority of this cabinet, presenting some form of external control (Kenealy 2015). It is expected that the devolution to a locally elected mayor will have the power to make decisions and shape policy agendas like spatial planning that are more in line and supportive of local need. It should serve the local people by having someone locally elected that they can hold to account much closer to their local areas, improving political trust (Lyall et al. 2015). However, this thesis raises important questions in relation to the potential of the Northern Powerhouse for re-establishing increased levels of democratic engagement and a rebalancing of the economy.

Arguably the Northern Powerhouse is primarily an economic argument to generate additional levels of growth, rather than something with the expressed aim of rebalancing the economy. We could see this as a political strategy in which policies that affect the north can be 'branded' under the Norther Powerhouse label, appealing to northern votes who are traditionally more Labour supportive than Conservative (Lee 2016). It is also in many ways a political positioning which may narrow rather than embolden democracy. The appointing of an elected mayor is the necessary 'compromise' for devolution. It is a compromise given that in 2012 the Manchester voters rejected David Cameron's then call for a city mayor by voting 'no' in a democratically held referendum. As mentioned above, the mayor is intended to increase

democratic accountability and representation at the local level. This could have the outcome of strengthening local needs by handing some decision making responsibility back to locally elected officials, which some argue will help to combat some of the political foreclosure that this thesis has been documenting. As Raco (2015) argues,

> *"…more democratic systems of accountability and control would be more efficient in planning and democratic terms. If policy-makers and communities are given enhanced decision-making responsibilities then resources could be better targeted at those areas of welfare spending where needs are emerging, rather than the imagined needs drawn-up by contract lawyers and risk management experts. There is no better system than democratic accountability for producing outcomes that meet local welfare needs"* (167).

However, as this thesis has shown, more democratic representation does not necessarily mean a greater democratic service. It is likely that a concentration of power within the hands of an elected mayor whose power is conditional on delivering economic growth will continue a growth agenda. This thesis has shown how there is a commitment to deliver economic gains encouraged by an incentivised funding landscape amongst public policy officials. Thus a democratically elected mayor with 'enhanced decision-making responsibilities' as Raco states, will not necessarily result in targeting resources where local needs demand them if their enhanced responsibilities come with a growth mandate. The Northern Powerhouse is less a strategic plan for rebalancing the economy and delivering enhanced representation and more a political and economic argument for growth (Lee 2016).

The Northern Powerhouse may also increase the spatial disparities across Greater Manchester. The mayor will be responsible for the creation of the Statutory Spatial Strategy which will take precedence over other locally devised plans. As Nurse (2015) argues, these strategies have been adopted in London since 2000 and it is the strategic planning which causes the most tension amongst the related districts. The strategy raises questions over how the resources will be distributed, which areas will benefit from development and which areas are less likely to be the targeted sites for growth.

The unequal distribution of investment that is taking place across Salford may be replicated at a Greater Manchester scale with even less scope for democratic leaders to challenge the development plans.

The power devolved to the Greater Manchester city-region can be revoked and the funding under the City Deal can be withheld if the Treasury is not satisfied that the investments are contributing to economic growth (HM Treasury 2014). This conditional devolution inherently compromises democratic institutions. Devolution may represent a further narrowing of democratic abilities to exercise political authority to debate alternative options other than economic growth.  For Lyall et al (2015) this is deal-making rather than policy-making and creates opaque and restrictive policies in which there is very little room for non-economic outcomes. Given the already committed and fatalistic attitude of policy makers evidenced within this thesis, it seems likely that the Northern Powerhouse will consolidate a post-political growth agenda, rather than ameliorate it.

## 8.8 Future directions for exploration

In this section I want to set out some future considerations generated by this thesis. There are several important questions that this thesis has raised that require more detailed research in order to help explain or understand them. The first point I want to raise is that of the post-political mantra that there is 'no alternative'. I want to explore where this pessimism leaves us for the future and how we might seek to offer genuine progressive alternatives. The second question raised is that of the increasing indebtedness of local councils in trying to deliver growth under a devolved financial system. This has potentially severe ramifications and has received little attention to date. The third question is that of the changing regeneration landscape and its implications for growing unevenness. It requires considered attention to see from this point in time, how a city is able to fund development and where that development is focused.

Earlier in this chapter I posited the question of whether or not there really is 'no alternative'. This is a difficult question to answer and given the theme of this thesis it

seems ill-conceived to speculate. However, it is important, under a potentially post-political landscape to actually uncover where alternatives are being used and how they are being employed. This would add to the current literature that takes a political philosophy view point in attempting to identify the space in which the logic of the police (in Ranciere's terms) meets with the logic of equality to reveal a genuine space of democratic politics (see for example Ranciere 1999, Swyngedouw 2010, Dikeç 2006). It would also add to the literature that seeks out elements of resistance politics through resistance movements and protest groups that form a dissensus against the political order and reclaim democratic public space (see Springer 2011, Swyngedouw 2011, May 2010). Lees (2014) has argued for researchers not to 'succumb to dystopian narratives' but rather highlight resistance to them. She does this through an exploration of regeneration in Aylesbury of a housing estate in which conflict and dissent was 'alive and well' (2014: 922). There has also been some focus on urban planning within a post-political context and the potential for a more progressive and collaborative form of planning (see Davidson 2009 and Allmendinger and Houghton 2012).

However, little attention has been paid to the actual occurrence of when alternative planning and political decision making at the policy level has been or is being made. It seems pertinent to focus explicitly on how and in what ways local councils can choose an alternative in such a constrained financial landscape. It is necessary for future research to plot out such options and to attempt to ascertain what happens to those cities that opt out of this growth agenda. It would be beneficial at this juncture to be able to expose the urgency of a 'no alternative' politics with a progressive set of alternatives.

The second question that this thesis raises for future research is the changing way that local councils are being funded and the increasing levels of debt that councils are now carrying. This is a potentially problematic occurrence that has yet to receive detailed attention. Authors Bailey, Hood and Asenova are the main contributors to the literature on the Prudential Borrowing Framework. Strickland (2013) has provided a case study of Tax Incremental Financing in Newcastle and Muldoon-Smith and Greenhalgh (2015) have written about the Business Rate Retention Scheme. But otherwise this topic is

under researched. Such a significant change to the funding of local authorities requires much more of a theoretical focus to identify the potential ramifications of such a significant change.

The increasing financialisation and rising debt levels of local councils needs to be analysed, accounting for these other financial changes in order to assess the potential risks that this may be generating. It would appear that local councils are facilitating both the reduction of a national debt but also the continuing flow of financial capital via increasing Local Authority debt. The large increase in local council debt since the recession is testimony to this. Whilst it may be apposite to imply the result of this process, given the economic crisis that it is a result of, it would be too simplistic to posit a fatal economic end point. Instead what is required is a thorough analysis of this financial process, taking account of all the changes that are yet to be felt fully. There needs to be a full consideration of these new financial models and the way in which they are implicated in the private market economy.

This leads on to the third important question that this thesis raises. That is how these financial changes will take form across the terrain of Salford and cities like it. Importantly we need to consider how the change to local councils and the funding for policies like regeneration will reduce the ability to target sites of deprivation and social and economic need. In the absence of any regeneration funding aimed at local spatial scales, what will be the future for the sites identified in this thesis as sites of interrupted gentrification (Wallace 2014) and 'new ruins' of the 21st century (Kitchen et al 2014)? If *regeneration* as the alleviation of social inequalities has given way to the *generation* of economic growth through targeting sites of premium value, then what will happen to the sites that are not of premium value? How will unevenness grow under these conditions and in what ways, if any, will funding be directed to sites of non-economic growth? This will require a close focus on regeneration initiatives that are occurring using these funding mechanisms to see in what ways they develop and what shape they take.

## 8.9 Conclusion

This thesis has explored urban regeneration in Central Salford since the early 1980's. My central argument has been one of foreclosure. I have argued that the city, as it regenerates and commits to a future of 'progress' and growth has narrowed in both spatial, temporal and political terms. It has become harder for local residents who do not conform to the new vision of Salford to benefit from the changes and engage within the new spaces created for a middle class audience. In the commitment of Salford Council to deliver this vision it has necessarily sought the financial options available. But through this process the Council is constrained on to a course of action which locks the Council in to private contracts, financial borrowing and underwriting developments that constrain the ability of the Council to make changes or select alternative future trajectories. Thus the potential for politics and democratic engagement in the future is foreclosed.

This thesis has raised questions around the way local councils are able to deliver regeneration in the future and the changing financial landscape in which to do it. This has thrown up new lines of enquiry for future research around the role of local authorities and their increasing commitment to economic growth through market debt and speculative risk taking. It appears that we are seeing the end of an urban *re*generation intended to ameliorate social inequalities alongside economic renewal. In its place we can trace the emergence of a new urban *gen*eration. Our task now is to understand what this means for our cities, both the places themselves and those who live in them.

# Appendices

## Appendix A – Informed Consent Form

Consent form

This informed consent form is for Professionals involved in the development, regeneration and crime prevention in Salford City selected as part of a University of York PhD research project looking at the significant development and transformation of Salford over recent years.

Name of Principle Investigator: Alex Black

Name of Organization: The University of York

This Informed Consent Form has two parts:

• Information Sheet (to share information about the study with you)

• Certificate of Consent (for signatures if you choose to participate)

You will be given a copy of the full Informed Consent Form

Part I: Information Sheet

Introduction

I am a doctoral researcher on this project and I hope to conduct interviews with people that have views and experiences relevant to this research. You may talk to anyone you feel comfortable talking with about the research and you can take time to reflect on whether you want to participate or not. If you do not understand some of the words or concepts, I will take time to explain them as we go along and you can ask questions at any time.

Purpose of the research

Salford is an area which has seen substantial regeneration and investment over the last few decades and which appears to have much more to come. Salford's heritage and its geographical location make it prime for urban development and an expanding population. However, there are also existing social problems in some areas, which must demand considerable attention from those responsible for building a strong local economy. The aim of this research is to generate information allowing me to understand what the problems are that Salford is facing, in what way urban development is tackling those problems, the impact of crime, how the balance of existing and incoming community members is achieved and what the future of Salford is to look like. I am keen to get professionals who have the knowledge/are involved in regeneration and crime prevention in this area to allow me to find out more about these issues.

Type of Research

This research will involve your participation in a short interview that will take about thirty minutes to one hour.

Participant Selection

I would like to invite you to take part in this research because I feel that your experience in the regeneration/development or crime prevention in this area will contribute to my understanding and knowledge of the changes which have and will take place.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary.

Procedures

The interview involves questions relating to: your experience of regeneration in Salford, what the purpose of these developments are and how their success is measured, what the barriers to development are, what the problems that development aims to address

are, how existing communities are consulted, how effective partnership working is, how social mixing is achieved and how the issues of safety and crime are tackled.

We will not ask you to share personal beliefs and you do not have to share any knowledge that you are not comfortable sharing.

No one else but myself will be present during the interview. The entire discussion will be tape-recorded, but no-one will be identified by name on the tape. The recording will be kept securely and your name will never be used in the analysis of the data or any output from the research.

The information recorded is confidential, and no one else except myself will have access to the recordings.

Duration

The research is taking place over two years (until the end of 2014).

Benefits

There may be no direct benefit to you, but your participation will help me find out more about regeneration from the point of view of the professionals involved.

Confidentiality

The research being done may draw attention but your participation will remain confidential. I will not be sharing information about you to anyone. The information collected from this research project will be kept private. Any information about you will be given a pseudonym instead of your name. Only I will know your real name and all of our data will be kept in password protected folders.

The research will identify Salford by name and therefore there is a risk that, whilst you personally will not be named, you may be referred to as, for example, an employee of Salford Council or an employee of a private developer in the area. This would allow a

narrowing down of possible respondents. However, I would like to reiterate that no names will be used or any other details of your profession which would allow for specific identification.

Sharing the Results

Nothing that you tell me today will be shared with anybody else, and nothing will be attributed to you by name. A summary of the results will be available to all participants. Following the research I hope to publish the results so that other interested people may learn from the research.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

You do not have to take part in this research if you do not wish to do so. You may stop participating in the interview at any time that you wish.

Who to Contact

If you have any questions, you can ask them now or later. If you wish to ask questions later, you may contact me at the following: **Alex Black, 07845644408 or acb528@york.ac.uk**

The ethical aspects of this research have been reviewed and approved by the University of York ethics committee whose task it is to make sure that research participants are protected from harm. If you wish to find about more about this please contact: elmps-ethics-group@york.ac.uk

You can ask me any more questions about any part of the research study, if you wish to. Do you have any questions?

Certificate of Consent

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study

Print Name of Participant_____

Signature of Participant _____

Date _____

        Day/month/year

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

Signature of Researcher /person taking the consent_____

Date _____

        Day/month/year

# Appendix B – Interview schedule

**Interview Schedule – Public/Third sector**

What is your position?

How are you involved/in what ways are you involved with regeneration (or a specific project)?

What are the reasons for regeneration in the area?

What are the perceived benefits of regeneration (including),

- Contribution to local economy
- Jobs
- Growth
- Competition

Who are the perceived beneficiaries of regeneration (including),

- Target groups
- Outcomes for the groups

How is success measured?

Are there any potential negative outcomes?

What is the impact on or involvement with the indigenous community (including),

- Changing community structure
- Community consultation/involvement
- Community response
- Community use of regenerated spaces (MediaCity)
- Community cohesion
- Community mixing

How is the economic environment changing (including),

- Benefitting local people
- Skills and employment
- Organisational sector

What types of projects are intended for development?

- Housing
- Commercial

What are the flagship projects in the area and what is their proposed function?

How is investment secured (including),

- Types of investment
- Growth
- Promoting Salford

How is the image of Salford changing?

- To external viewers
- To internal viewers

Partnership working

- Main partners
- Development of partnerships
- Issues
- Working in practice
- Ownership of regeneration developments
- Labour contracts – apprenticeships
- Planning gains
- Planning and design

What are the perceived barriers (if any) to realising regeneration benefits?

What has been the impact of the success of MediaCity/SQ?

What is the vision and future plans for Salford?

**Interview Schedule – Private developer**

What is your position?

How is your company involved/in what ways are you involved with development in this area (or a specific project)?

What types of projects is your company involved in?

- Housing
- Commercial

Why Salford?

What are the reasons for your company's involvement in regeneration in the area?

What was the perceived need?

Are you or have you been involved in other regeneration schemes?

Who are the intended users of your development?

What are the perceived benefits of regeneration (including),

- Contribution to local economy
- Jobs
- Growth
- Competition

What are the challenges that you face?

Who are your main partners in the area?

What is your working relationship with the Council?

How are decisions made?

How are priorities decided upon?

How is the vision/direction for the development decided upon? (in conjunction with partners)

What is the process of development?

- Land acquisition
- Development Framework
- Planning approval
- Democratic processes
- Planning Gains

How are you involved with community members?

- Community consultation/involvement
- Community response
- Community use of regenerated spaces (MediaCity)
- Community cohesion

Who are your perceived beneficiaries/target groups?

- Social impact

What are the perceived barriers (if any) to realising development benefits?

What are your future plans for the area if any?

**Interview Schedule – Community representative**

How long have you been a resident in the area?

How are you involved/in what ways are you involved with regeneration (or a specific project)?

What are your reasons for involvement?

What are your experiences of this involvement?

What do you perceive the benefits to be?

How has regeneration (specific scheme) changed the area you live in?

- Changing community
- Changing culture
- Changing image
- Changing spaces

How is information about regeneration (specific scheme) communicated?

- Effectiveness of communication
- Responses to communication
- Who is communicating

In what ways are you engaged with the decision making processes?

- Developers
- Other residents
- Forums
- Council engagement
- Initial project approval

How is the community consulted on regeneration (specific scheme)?

Is there any perceived resistance to regeneration (specific scheme)?

How is the image of Salford changing?

- To external viewers
- To internal viewers

What are the perceived barriers (if any) to realising regeneration benefits?

What has been the impact of MediaCity/SQ?

What is the vision and future plans for Salford?

# Abbreviations

AGMA	Association of Greater Manchester Authorities

ALMO	Arms-Length Management Organisations

ASB	`	Anti-Social Behaviour

CIPFA	Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountability

EZ	Enterprise Zones

GMCA	Greater Manchester Combined Authority

GMLEP	Greater Manchester LEP

GVA	Gross Value Added

HMR	Housing Market Renewal

LEP	Local Enterprise Partnerships

NDC	New Deal for Communities

NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework

NSNR	National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal

NW	North West

NWDA	North West Regional Developments agency

PBF	Prudential Borrowing Framework

PFI	Private Finance Initiative

RGF	Regional Growth Fund

SEU          Social Exclusion Unit

SRB          Single Regeneration Budget

SQ           Salford Quays

TIF           Tax Increment Financing

UDC          Urban Development Corporations

URC          Urban Regeneration Company

UTF          Urban Task Force

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