

**WATERFRONT REGENERATION, GENTRIFICATION
AND THE ENTREPRENEURIAL STATE:
THE REDEVELOPMENT OF GUNWHARF QUAYS,
PORTSMOUTH**

By

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the property-led regeneration of a former naval base in Portsmouth, UK. Listening to the private developers, Portsmouth City Council, local quangos and the local newspaper on its opening, it seemed that Gunwharf Quays would help Portsmouth 'turn the corner' with its delivery of new jobs, multi-million pound inward-investment as well as increased trade and tourism to the lucky residents and businesses of Portsmouth. However, this paper critically goes beyond the 'glitz and glamour' of the redevelopment and the accompanying "politics of fantastic expectations" (Eisinger 2000, p326) to offer an 'alternative reading' of the redevelopment. To do this, the paper will critically interrogate and evaluate the redevelopment and the (changing) public policies at different scales which influenced the redevelopment to reveal their socio-spatial limitations, biases and repercussions. Central to this paper is questioning whether Gunwharf Quays has delivered, or can deliver, a 'renaissance of Portsmouth harbour' and, in turn, its implications for the residents of Portsmouth. Following interviews with numerous public and private élites involved in and around the redevelopment, I trace the redevelopment through the uneven and fragmented transition to neo-liberal (governance-based) urban entrepreneurialism in the UK. It is concluded that Gunwharf Quays, and its forthcoming centrepiece Millennium Tower, will do little to resolve the deep-rooted urban problems of high levels of unemployment and inner city poverty, dilapidated housing, low educational levels and long social housing waiting lists.

Key words: Urban regeneration, gentrification, entrepreneurialism, governance, Portsmouth

WATERFRONT REGENERATION, GENTRIFICATION AND THE ENTREPRENEURIAL STATE: THE REDEVELOPMENT OF GUNWHARF QUAYS, PORTSMOUTH

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“[T]he urban civic arena is preoccupied by a politics of bread and circuses.”
Eisinger (2000, p316)

“We can identify an albeit subterranean but nonetheless vital connection between the rise of urban entrepreneurialism and the postmodern penchant for the design of urban fragments rather than comprehensive planning, for ephemerality and eclecticism of fashion and style rather than the search for enduring values... and *for image over substance.*”
Harvey (1989a, p13, emphasis added)

“Each city’s recent redevelopment appears to be a success story. Shop fronts have been renovated, new street furniture has been reintroduced into the public squares and spaces, canals have been cleaned up, restored and made into ‘urban features’, and redundant buildings have been reclaimed for private-sector developers through the process of gentrification. For sure, the centre of each city contains within it spaces that have over the last decade and a half been aesthetically improved... However, despite this list of successfully manufactured and high-profile accomplishments, each one of the three cities has been unable to arrest the economic and social hardship faced by their populations. Reflecting wider national and international social and economic trends... urban inequalities have deepened. Mental and physical ill health, high unemployment and low educational attainment remains concentrated in the political wards around each city’s centre. Put crudely, some groups are being disadvantaged by the particular type of redevelopment performed in Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester... And as those experiencing multiple deprivation increase, *so it becomes of increasing importance to examine issues about whom the contemporary city is for.*”
Ward (2003, p201, emphasis added)

1. WELCOME TO THE URBAN RENAISSANCE! TOWARDS AN ALTERNATIVE READING

“The only consistent thing about cities is that they are always changing.”
Hall (1998, p1)

It seems almost every article I read opens with an introductory sentence or paragraph focusing on the notion of ‘change’ and, indeed, how their place(s) and/or area(s) of study are in *processes* of change. Suffice to say, this paragraph is no different; the

city of Portsmouth *has* changed and *is* changing. On this note, I welcome you to the renaissance of Portsmouth harbour and, in particular, Gunwharf Quays (a multi-million pound 'festival marketplace' on Portsmouth harbour). It's (half-finished) centrepiece, the Millennium Tower can be seen for miles from the top of Portsdown Hill to the beaches of Hayling Island; from my friends' house in central Southsea to the incoming P&O ferries from France. It's not simply the Portsmouth skyline that's changing but its economy and politics too as this paper will demonstrate. The ever-increasing promotional boosterist literature for the two developments boldly suggests that Portsmouth is (eventually) 'turning a corner'. Indeed, there seemed little doubt when listening to the various individuals and (public and private) institutions behind the development (and its supporters) that the Gunwharf redevelopment and the Millennium Tower – with its job creation, multi-million pound inward investment and increased trade and tourism – *will* deliver a successful 'renaissance of Portsmouth harbour'. Added to this, it was widely stated that the redevelopment of Gunwharf Quays would be the catalyst to economic revival and prosperity *throughout* Portsmouth and the surrounding region. Unquestionably, these individuals and institutions paint a somewhat 'rosy picture' of the developments and its effects. However, following Griffiths' (1998a, p58, emphasis added) call to arms, shouldn't we be "*critically look[ing] beyond the gloss, and consider[ing] the wider [socio-spatial] implications of these strategies*"? Indeed, it seems unreasonable to ask: does the rhetoric match the reality? Can the developments *really* provide a sustainable and equitable 'renaissance of Portsmouth Harbour'?



Figure 1: The Millennium Tower (centre), Gunwharf Quays' waterfront restaurants (right of centre) and its waterfront apartments (far right)

Photo: Neil Cook (taken from Gosport harbour, April 2004)

Looking through the recent Urban Task Force (UTF) Report (DETR 1999) and/or the New Labour government's subsequent Urban White Paper (UWP) (DETR 2000) it is quite apparent that (property-led) urban regeneration (including gentrification) remains a pivotal aim of the UK national government's urban policy to tackle the ills of the numerous 'urban problems' (Lees 2003b). In this context, there is an apparent need to critically investigate a recent, and under-researched, example of property-led urban

regeneration and *how this development 'on the ground' is influenced and structured by public policy at (and between) a variety of spatial scales* (Ward 2003). Be warned! This will not take the form of 'shallow' policy analysis, in other words, a simple 'impact evaluation' of urban regeneration (Peck 1999). Instead, it aims to critically interrogate and evaluate the redevelopment and the (changing) public policies behind the redevelopment to reveal its socio-spatial limitations, biases and repercussions (Martin 2001)¹. The central aims of the paper can be summarised as following:

1. To conceptualise the qualitative restructuring of the state at and across various scales and its influence on the regeneration of Gunwharf Quays;
2. To understand the effect of the wider shift from managerialism towards entrepreneurialism and from government towards governance on/in urban policy and how this influences the Gunwharf Quays development;
3. To understand the processes of gentrification and explore the various 'housing issues' associated with the Gunwharf Quays redevelopment;
4. To understand the role, and effect, of policy transfer in urban (regeneration) policy and the planning and development of Gunwharf Quays;
5. To critically explore how Gunwharf Quays redevelopment affects different social and spatial groups (e.g. residents and retail areas) in Portsmouth;
6. To conclude by questioning whether Gunwharf Quays represents a 'renaissance of Portsmouth harbour' by truly addressing the economic and social problems in Portsmouth.

2. THEORISING TRANSITIONS: URBAN ENTREPRENEURIALISM, GOVERNANCE, REGENERATION AND GENTRIFICATION

2.1 Government to Governance, Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism

"UDPs² are 'grains of sand' that embody and express social, political, economic and cultural processes operating at a variety of geographical scales."

Swyngedouw *et al* (2003, p5)

Perhaps it would be foolhardy to disagree with Peck and Tickell (1995, p61) when they state "the phenomena of urban business politics [for example, urban regeneration]... must be understood in the context of the restructuring of the British state and the (contested) ascendancy of neo-liberalism in Britain." To avoid ascribing excessive localism and voluntarism to local élites, the processes of urban regeneration, and urban politics in general, within a certain locality cannot be fully understood without understanding (its links to) the *wider/'extra-local' political-economic processes at different (and overlapping) spatial scales* (Jessop *et al* 1999). Therefore, in order to conceptualise these wider processes, many academics (e.g. Harvey 1989, Peck 1995, Peck and Tickell 1995, Ward 2000, 2001) have highlighted two vital (inter-linking) shifts in urban policy in the UK: from *government to governance*³ and from *managerialism to entrepreneurialism*, which is

¹ The project's methodological approach involved a synergy between: a) numerous interviews (in summer 2002) with key public and private 'local élites' who were (and still are) heavily involved in the planning and management of the Gunwharf Quays and Millennium Tower development; and b) critical discourse analysis of policy documentation and other valuable written sources.

² The phrase 'UDPs' is short for Urban Development Projects.

³ Broadly defined, 'government' can be described as the democratically elected and accountable forms of decision making and institutions (Stoker 1998). Governance, on the other hand, is the "flexible and facilitative forms of [decision-making] partnership between government representatives, businesses and non-government agencies" (Hubbard *et al* 2002, p175).

fundamentally associated with the rise of neo-liberalism in the UK over the last two decades or so⁴.

The Regulation Approach: the tools for understanding urban policy change?

A key theoretical and methodological perspective utilised and modified by many radical commentators on urban policy change and processes of neo-liberalisation is the Regulation Approach (RA)⁵. The RA sought to explain the 'Marxist enigma' – that is, why capitalism, in spite of its inherent crisis tendencies and contradictions, is capable of reproducing itself and surviving (Broomhill 2001). In trying to explain this, Regulationists have rejected Marxism's (economistic and deterministic) base-superstructure 'causal arrow' (Jones 1999) to fully understand the (changing) role of the state. As Peck (2000) states, capitalism, with its periods of reproduction and crisis, must be theorised through the close *and contingent* interaction between the *accumulation system* (a macro-economic production-distribution-consumption capitalist system) and the *Mode of Social Regulation (MSR)*, which includes state institutions and 'softer' forms of regulation such as consumption, societal expectations, economic habits and cultural practices.

In short, during periods of growth and reproduction, capitalism requires a 'structural coupling' between the accumulation system and the MSR, which together form a '*regime of accumulation*' in which the MSR accommodates, mediates and normalises the crisis tendencies inherent in the process of capitalist accumulation (Tickell and Peck 1992). The regime of accumulation can withstand *microcrises* (affecting individual capital units) and *conjunctural crises* (cyclical downturns in the economy – e.g. recessions). However, the regime of accumulation will inevitably breakdown under a *structural crisis*, which cannot be resolved by the MSR, but can only be resolved through a new structural coupling and a search for a new MSR 'institutional fix' (Tickell and Peck 1992, Jones 1999, Jones and Ward 2002a and 2002b).

Fundamentally, Lipietz (1987, see also Peck 2000, Broomhill 2001) claim that structural couplings are not predetermined or predictable but 'chance discoveries' emanating from social and political struggles, negotiations and compromises (hence avoiding criticisms of functionalism). Reflecting on the Thatcherite era, Tickell and Peck (1992, p196) state that "given the uncertainty which accompanies the transition from one regime of accumulation to another, it is inevitable that opportunism and experimentation will be rife within both the economic and political spheres... [Indeed,] many contemporary developments may be short-term, crisis-coping strategies, rather than bases for durable economic structures." In summary, Tickell and Peck (1992, see also Peck and Tickell 1992) envisage periods and places in capitalist development where there is a '*regulatory hole*' and capitalism remains in crisis, with the inadequacies of the newly formed MSR *further fuelling the crisis, rather than displacing it*.

From KWNS to SWPR

Using these basis tools of the RA, the sociologist Bob Jessop and geographer Jamie Peck (see Jessop 1993, 1997, 2002; Jessop and Peck 2000; Peck 1996) highlight the changing qualitative nature of the national MSR after 1945 to the present date. For both academics, there has been a structural transition within the accumulation system, from

⁴ Although recently in two outspoken articles, Imrie and Raco (1999, 2001) argue to the contrary that there are strong *similarities*, both quantitatively and qualitatively, in terms of policy styles and objectives between these two apparently 'distinct' eras. For example, even under the so-called 'managerial' government era (1945-1970s), 'entrepreneurial' strategies such as (property-led) urban regeneration and place marketing were common-place, so too was the heavy involvement of unelected private actors and institutions in urban policy decision-making (cf. Ward 2000, 2001).

⁵ For further overviews of the contours of the RA see MacLeod (1997), Jessop (1997a) and Peck (2000).

Fordism to after-Fordism, and an associated shift in the UK MSR, from the *Keynesian Welfare National State (KWNS)* to the *Schumpeterian Workfare Post-National Regime (SWPR)*.

The period 1945 to the early 1970s witnessed the stable structural coupling between the KWNS and the Fordist accumulation system (based on standardised mass production and a vertical and repetitive labour force). As Peck (1996) states, the KWNS had three key features: First, it sought to secure full employment in a relatively closed national economy through demand management; Secondly, through infrastructure and housing policies, the KWNS underwrote the monopolisation of production and promoted the norms of mass production and mass consumption; Thirdly, it helped bring together the interests of capital and labour with full male employment, egalitarianism, universal welfare entitlements and tripartite corporatism in economic and social policy. With important reference to the role of scale and a 'spatial and scalar institutional fix', Jessop and Peck (2000) also highlight that the KWNS was predominately a national institution with the national state responsible for developing and guiding Keynesian welfare policies at different scales.

However, Jessop and Peck (2000, see also Swyngedouw 1997) highlight that the KWNS experienced a structural crisis in the 1970s throughout the developed world due to a variety of economic and political reasons (Jessop and Peck 2000). Economically, the simultaneous up-scaling and down-scaling of production (and transnational actors) away from the national scale undermined the 'taken-for-grantedness' of *national* regulation, and reduced the effectiveness of Keynesian policies (e.g. high taxation and redistribution). The shift in production represented by the shift from Fordism to after-Fordism – in other words, from mass standardised goods to more 'flexible' individualised goods – meant that the promotion of mass production by the KWNS was further fuelling the instability. Other economic factors include the rise of heightened competition from the low-waged but technologically advanced East-Asian countries and the increasing feminisation of the workforce, which hindered full *male* employment. Added to this, the KWNS was also undermined by political resistance to taxation and stagflation.

An important part of Jessop and Peck's argument is that at different speeds in different countries, the KWNS was (and still is) increasingly, but not completely, in the *process* of being replaced with the SWPR. The SWPR is 'Schumpeterian' as it promotes innovation, flexibility and entrepreneurialism by intervening on the supply-side. It is 'workfare', as opposed to welfare, as it subordinates social and welfare policy to the demands of supply-side labour market flexibility and international competitiveness. Fundamentally, Jessop and Peck (2000) argue that the SWPR has involved a '*relativisation of scale*' whereby the state has increasingly 'hollowed out' to the international and local level⁶ as the national scale is perceived as being increasingly incapable of accommodating the increasing '*glocalization*'⁷ of production. Related to this, another crucial aspect of the SWPR is its increasing reliance on governance and non-state actors and institutions to deliver economic and social policies at a variety of territorial scales.

Both authors have suggested that the UK government, post 1979, has adopted the *neo-liberal* typology of the SWPR. Indeed, recent geographical work has advanced this typology by arguing that the UK is undergoing a contingent and contradictory *process of neo-liberalization* (see Brenner and Theodore 2002, Peck and Tickell 2002, Tickell and Peck 2003). For neo-liberals, market failure (and the Fordist crisis) was not a failure of the market *per se* (as Keynes thought) but instead a failure of the interfering and bureaucratic 'nanny' state. Through "an assault on 'bureaucratic' inertia and inefficiency and the

⁶ Although, as I will explain later, Peck (1995), Oatley (1998a 1998b, 1998c) and Ward (2000, 2001) amongst others, argue that the localist rhetoric of the neo-liberal SWPR is flawed in reality.

⁷ The dialectical movement of production and trade to scales above (e.g. global, supra-regional) and below (e.g. local, regional) the level of the nation state.

celebration of the market as dynamic, innovative and flexible” (Clarke 2004, p32), neo-liberal discourse had us believe that ‘big government’ had to be removed if growth and prosperity was/is to be achieved. But rather than laissez-faire *de-regulation* (as neo-liberal discourse would have us believe) the UK neo-liberal state is actually being *re-regulated* through the (on-going) changing *qualitative* nature of state forms, functions and practices. Echoing this, Tickell and Peck (2003, p166) characterise the process of neo-liberalization as “the mobilization of state power in the contradictory extension and reproduction of market(-like) rule”. Furthermore, the ‘out-there’ unfettered and asymmetrical power of globalisation (Peck and Tickell 2002) is frequently used (and seldom defined) to highlight that ‘there is no alternative’ but to ‘go along with the grain’ through a *supply-side* ‘*growth first*’ political strategy (in part, to ground ‘footloose’ inward investment). As Peck and Tickell (2002) highlight, from the 1979 onwards witnessed the active destruction and discreditation of Keynesian welfarist institutions and policies (as well as consolidation and deepening of neo-liberal policies through the Major and Blair governments). Emphasis was thus placed on the marketization of public services; trade liberalization; financial market liberalization; the privatization of production; eliminating barriers to foreign direct investment; securing property rights; unified and competitive exchange rates; fiscal discipline (through monetarism and ‘prudence’) and large public spending cuts; public expenditure switching to *supply-side* investments; regressive tax reform; wholesale welfare (to workfare) reform; and the flexibilisation of labour markets (Standing 2002, Tickell and Peck 2003).

As we will see, these basic tools of the RA – together with Jessop’s work to the shift to the SWPR and the more recent work on neo-liberalization – have been highly influential to academic analyses of *urban* political economic change.

Bringing in the ‘maverick’ business élites

In three influential articles during the 1990s, Peck (1995), Peck and Tickell (1995) and Jessop *et al* (1999) reflect upon the introduction of the business élites in local policy circles in Manchester (the self-titled ‘Manchester Mafia’). They argue that the rise of business élites in urban policy can *only* be understood through the Conservative government’s (post-1979) neo-liberal interventionist programme. In which it *created space* for the private actors and institutions on local government boards and the introduction of privately-owned quangos. As part of the Conservative ideological belief in ‘business knows best’, business élites in local governance were discursively portrayed as “free wheeling mavericks” (Peck 1995, p16), who were “seen to be different because not only did it bring to the table a set of local interests; it would also speak up for efficiency and the logic of the market” (Hart *et al* 1996, p430). Indeed, the introduction of business élites was borne out of a critique and an ‘anti-thesis’ of the seemingly ‘passive’, ‘bureaucratic’ and ‘slow-moving’ local politicians under the KWNS (Peck and Tickell 1995, Hubbard *et al* 2002). As Cochrane *et al* (2002, p101) state:

“The image is one of nimble-footed, goal-orientated business leaders coaxing and cajoling their new-found partners – the tradition-bound Establishment élites, the dogma-bound local politicians, and the rule-bound bureaucrat. The movers and shakers of the business community are represented as the energisers of a tired and complacent local polity.”

However, for Peck and Tickell (1995) and Peck (1995) this shift to governance has brought with it inherent contradictions. They state that the business élites of Manchester fundamentally *lack* a vision which either coherent or collective or long-term.

As Raco (2003) also highlights, this grim reality is far removed from the neo-liberal belief that there is a commonly agreed 'business agenda' out-there. Furthermore, this lack of strategic vision is fuelled by the business leaders' lack of long-term support and interest. Indeed, apart from the initial fever of being on a local board or quango, business leaders soon become disillusioned as they begin to see it as an "unrewarding and time-consuming 'pain-in-the-neck'; a job best left to others" (Peck and Tickell 1995, p77).

For Hart *et al* (1996), the rise of governance and quangos – such as the Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) and the Urban Development Corporations (UDCs) – should be seen as the rise of the non-elected, undemocratic local state⁸. They highlight that these organisations provide neither the means of holding to account or the giving of account. The means of *holding of account* usually entail regular public elections, so that the public can decide who spends the public money, and, in turn, has a greater say on what public funds are spent on. Unlike the old local government, who are chosen by the public through local elections, the new local governance is unelected and, therefore, unrepresentative of the needs of the community. In terms of *giving account*, most quangos are constituted, by central government, as *private* companies (who spend public money). Therefore the links to local accountability become increasingly tenuous. In 1996, only 7% of quangos were obliged to hold one or more public annual meeting and none are obliged to release policy papers to the public. This is in stark contrast to the local authorities who make minutes, background papers and briefing available to the public, and where the public can attend (and speak at) most council meetings.

Peck and Tickell (1995) and Baeten (2001) highlight that the new 'partnerships' are chosen through (white, middle-class, male) business networks, which effectively excludes minority groups such as women, ethnic minorities, the unemployed, labour and other already marginalised groups. Yet, in spite of this, the rhetoric of these so-called 'partnerships' often make grandiose claims to 'speak for the city' and for (all) 'local people'. Contrary to this, Baeten (2001) argues that the governance-based 'partnership programmes' are condescending as they dictate the solution to the assumed needs of the public, especially in the case of the most disadvantaged groups, without any real, in-depth consultation.

Urban entrepreneurialism and competitive urban policy

Furthermore, it is argued that over the last quarter of a century urban politics has witnessed a (continuing) *qualitative* shift away from 'managerialism' to 'entrepreneurialism' (Harvey 1989a, Quilley 2002, Ward 2000, 2001). Griffiths (1998a, p42) characterises managerialism as have three key characteristics: an emphasis on the allocation of state surplus (as opposed to the attraction of private investment); the delivery of public services; and the dominance of a social welfare ideology. Urban 'entrepreneurialism', on the other hand, is characterised as "the proactive promotion of local economic development in alliance with other private sector agencies" (Hall and Hubbard 1998, p4). In short, the local state has become more risk-taking and competitive with other localities (Painter 1998). On the ground, this has led to the increasingly proliferation of 'growth-first' entrepreneurial policies including: aggressively encouraging inward investment; the property-led regeneration of the inner city; gentrification and proliferation of 'flagship projects' (as I will highlight later) together with extensive and expensive place-marketing campaigns aimed towards wealthy tourists and potential investors (Quilley 1999, Ward

⁸ Although, as stated before, Imrie and Raco (1999, 2001) argue that 'governance' phenomenon is not as seemingly new as many commentators believe as business élites have always had a large and influential role in urban policy, and therefore, the 'new' governance era is no less accountable and undemocratic than previous eras.

2000, Peck and Tickell 2002, Cook forthcoming)⁹. Reasons behind this shift are varied but many agree that the decline of the 'one nation' redistributive strategy – as part of the neo-liberal attack on the 'dependency culture' (Peck and Tickell 1992, Oatley 1998a) – together with the other factors such as declining taxation/funding, rate-capping and ever increasing urban problems effectively *forced* cities to take swallow the 'entrepreneurial pill' (Savage *et al* 2003, Ward 2003).

There appears to be a consensus amongst many academics (e.g. Cochrane 1993, Peck 1995, Peck and Tickell 1995 and Ward 2000) that under Thatcherism (and beyond), local government powers have become increasingly *centralised* by national government, in spite of its 'localist' rhetoric¹⁰. Indeed, Ward (2000, p172) argues “under Thatcherism local government was subjected to large-scale budget cuts and reductions in its remit... at the same time as being the very institution *through which* large rafts of policy reform were delivered.”

To highlight this, Oatley (1995, 1998a, 1998b, 1998c) demonstrates that the early 1990s witnessed a further centralisation of 'urban policy' through the installation of competitive bidding for resources and state funding for urban redevelopment. Known as the 'Challenge Fund' model, it is based on a controversial (quasi-market) competition-based format. In this, winners and losers are decided on the *quality and presentation* of their bids rather than the scale of the localities' *deprivation and need*. The Conservatives believed that this encouraged greater value for money and encouraged bids to be more 'innovative' and 'entrepreneurial' in delivering proposals. Oatley (1998a, p11) quotes Michael Heseltine (1991) stating that the Challenge Fund model promotes “enterprise and vision; opportunity and incentive” and is designed to “break the chains that makes us slaves to the distribution formula... which is the oxygen that feeds the dependency culture.” City Challenge (1991) was the first urban scheme to operate under these rules, followed by many other competitive schemes such as the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) (1994) and National Lottery Funding (1994, which will be focused upon later in this paper).

Oatley (1998b, 1998c), ultimately, believes that this competitive bidding further centralises urban policy through an authoritarian quasi-market, whereby bidders *must* concur with central government's bidding requirements and ideology (which also further reduces the scope for inter-urban co-operation and solidarity). Added to this, Peck and Tickell (1995) and Foley (1999) highlight that central government/governance bidding requirements often *forces* local authorities to work in 'partnership' with private enterprise otherwise they will be ineligible for consideration for Challenge Funding in many cases.

In a similar, yet international, scenario, Cochrane *et al* (2002) reflect on the competitive bidding for hosting the Olympic Games (in particular Manchester's bids in the early 1990s), whereby the bids conceals the city's weaknesses and disadvantaged social groups as it's negative image is counter to the Olympic's 'feel good politics'. Furthermore, they also highlight other weaknesses of competitive funding such as: funding under competitive bidding often goes to the same (wealthier, image friendly, well marketed) areas; and competitive bidding is a very expensive process, consisting largely of valuable local government public money which is ultimately wasted if the bid is rejected.

⁹ Echoing this transition away from managerialism to entrepreneurialism, Peck and Ward (2002) highlight the politically loaded change to Manchester's (a traditionally socialist authority) official slogan: from '*Defending Jobs, Improving Services*' to '*Making It Happen*'.

¹⁰ Once again, Imrie and Raco (1999, 2001) question this 'fashionable' notion that local government has recently become little more than a *strategic enabler* for central government. Instead, they argue that through Acts such as the Local Government Act 1989, local government have, in fact, been given more powers from central government.

2.2 Property-Led Urban Regeneration: Solving, Ignoring or Furthering the Urban Problem(s)?

“Attitudes towards property development are sharply polarised between those who regard it as a crucial engine of urban revival and those who dismiss it as cosmetic and a distraction.”

Turok (1992, p361)

Large-scale property-led urban regeneration¹¹, according to Roberts (2000, p17, emphasis added), “provides a comprehensive and integrated vision and action which leads to a *resolution of urban problems* and which seeks to bring about lasting improvement in the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of an area that has been subject to change”. Yet as we will see, many commentators have been highly sceptical of such ‘rosy’ views of contemporary urban regeneration (projects) and have *critically* “look[ed] beyond the gloss, and consider the wider [socio-spatial] implications of these strategies” (Griffiths 1998a, p58).

Panacea...

“[UDPs] are all striving to recreate the image of the city. The negative perceptions of declining, dirty and inhospitable urban environments are being replaced by the city’s advertiser’s marketing icons: gleaming office blocks, cultural centers and civic retail venues. Conviviality, quality and entertainment are the postindustrial city Utopia. Cities are no longer portrayed primarily as centres of production but of consumption.”

Bianchini *et al* (1992, p249)

Loftman and Nevin (1995, 2003), Hall (1998) and Swyngedouw *et al* (2002) all highlight that, above all, UDPs are used to create the *impression* of economic revival, entrepreneurialism and competitiveness in the increasing globalising economy. Turok (1992) highlights that urban regeneration schemes are often based on the theory that many run-down areas (often suffering from deindustrialisation, depopulation and high-unemployment) have a poor image and reputation, which makes them unattractive to work in, live in, visit and/or invest in. Better perceptions of the neighbourhood (after the completion of the UDP) would persuade people to move back into, or remain in, the area and also encourage further inward investment.

Attracting increasingly ‘foot-loose’ global capital is a much-stated reason behind the UDPs (Beazley, Loftman and Nevin 1997, Eisinger 2000, Swyngedouw *et al* 2002). If these increasingly mobile global and national firms can be grounded, propensity and wealth will ‘trickle down’ to the lucky residents of the successful locality (through new jobs and increased tax revenue etc.). For instance, Turok (1992) highlights that construction jobs will be often be created for the initial building and planning phases of the (re)development, as well as many other longer-term jobs once built (either in the financial and service sector or, more often than not, in the leisure, retail and tourism sectors). Discourses of the *multiplier effect* are often utilised in defence of UDPs, as (the story goes) initial investment in one area of the city will act as a ‘catalyst’ to encourage further private investment (and jobs) into the area *and* the surrounding area, especially if the scheme is considered a success (Turok 1992). Other commonly perceived advantages include

¹¹ Also known as ‘flagship projects (Bianchini *et al* 1992) and ‘Urban Development Projects’ (UDPs) (Swyngedouw *et al* 2002, 2003)

raising the property values of properties in and around the area; new and improved transportation infrastructure for everybody; and these visually impressive flagship buildings can be widely used as striking images for place-marketing campaigns by local public and private organisations in order to encourage further investment (Loftman and Nevin 1995, Griffiths 1998a). Finally as highlighted by Loftman (1998) the UDPs also provide an improved physical environment and new places to visit, admire and enjoy.

... or placebo?

A key shared belief behind critics of UDPs is that these projects do not address the underlying, deep-rooted problems of the inner cities as the much-used 'trickle-down' thesis is fundamentally flawed. In fact, UDPs could even extend the inequality, polarisation and deprivation within an urban area. Harvey (1989b, p21) views UDPs as:

“[T]he vein of a carnival mask that diverts and entertains, leaving the social problems that lie behind the mask unseen and uncared for. The formula smacks of a constructed fetishism, in which every aesthetic power of illusion and image is mobilised to mask the intensifying class, racial and ethnic polarisations going on underneath.”

Harvey (1989b, p21)

First, Loftman and Nevin (1995) and Swyngedouw *et al* (2002) both comment that private-property-led UDPs are an inherently unstable, speculative and unreliable source of income. This is because national and international property markets are inherently unstable and prone to price fluctuations and depressions. Indeed, Turok (1992) and Hall (1998) state that many developers crudely *assume* that by solely building venues, retail outlets, offices and housing, businesses, residents and tourists will automatically accompany it. Brownill (1992) highlights the example of the Canary Wharf development in London's Docklands, where vast amounts of office space remained largely empty with little interest from investors for many years after opening. Relating to this, Harvey (1989a, p15) infamously muses: “how many successful convention centres, sports stadia, Disney-worlds, harbour places and spectacular shopping malls can there be?”

Second, the *quality* of jobs created by the UDPs has been highlighted (albeit all too briefly). Turok (1992) and Hall (1998) highlight that the construction work, for example, created by the UDPs is highly insecure and extremely short-termist as once construction is finished their employment contract runs out. Added to this, construction workers are overwhelmingly young, white and male, which excludes large sections of the population including many women, elderly and ethnic minorities (Turok 1992). Echoing Ritzer's (1997) notion of 'McJobs', Mellor (2002) highlights that throughout the UK and beyond, the retail and leisure industry – an increasingly predominate feature of many UDPs – is characterised by conditions of the bottom end of the after-Fordist *secondary labour market*: that is, notoriously poor pay, low skill, poor training, insecurity and comprising of large numbers of short term contracts, part-time hours and job sharing. Added to this, many of these jobs, in spite of their inadequacies, are often taken by people outside the immediate geographical area (often this immediate area is very poor and has large-scale unemployment). For Mellor (2002) this is largely a result of 'postcode discrimination' and/or racial and sexual discrimination – as many of the residents of these inner cities are often ethnic minorities and women.

Third, Turok (1992) argues that the 'multiplier effect', whereby firms and visitors *will* invest in and visit the surrounding areas of the UDP is inaccurate. More often than

not, most UDPs encourage short-distance *displacement* of investment, trade, tourists and customers from the surrounding areas. In essence, UDPs further encourage inter- and intra-urban competition often resulting in the new area benefiting in the short-term *at the expense of* near-by areas, which often results in job losses and profit slumps in the surrounding, competing areas. In short, it is a zero-sum game and the urban problems (e.g. unemployment) are not being solved, but displaced (Harvey 1989a).

Fourth, as Harvey (1989a, 1989b) and Mellor (2002) state, only a small number of people can use the facilities at the UDPs. These usually consist of the professionals from the business and managerial classes, who are invariably white males, who enjoy managerial salaries and company profits. It is only these who are able to *afford* to go to the expensive designer shopping outlets (from Benetton to Harvey Nichols), or the expensive restaurants and leisure facilities. Meanwhile, those with the 'lowest consumer potential' (Mellor 2002), the already disadvantaged working-classes (including women and ethnic minorities), are effectively excluded due to the high costs.

Fifth, Loftman and Nevin (1995), Beazley, Loftman and Nevin (1997) and Campbell (2001) argue that these privately run, but state-financed projects – due to their unstable and unaccountable nature – can, and often do, lead to an unnecessary waste of public money (see also Eisinger 2000). These authors use the example of Birmingham's redevelopment of its Broad Street CBD, in the late 1980s, involving a £180 million International Conference Centre (ICC), a £60 million National Indoor Arena (for sport and music), a £31 million hotel and a £250 million festival market place. Importantly, these prestige projects led to the diversion of scarce public resources by Birmingham City Council, away from the already under-funded social housing and education funds. Indeed, as Beazley, Loftman and Nevin (1997) highlight that Birmingham's education budget dropped by 60% during the ICC and NIA construction.

Off-the-shelf solutions? Transferring the 'McGeneration model'

For Quilley (1999), the regeneration of inner cities in the UK appears to be following an all-too-similar off-the-shelf model (which he terms 'McGeneration'). He argues:

“There has been a pervasive homogeneity in the models of urban regeneration pursued by western cities since the 1980s. Common strands include flagship property developments and an emphasis on physical regeneration; environmental and infrastructural developments aimed at increasing the quality of life (“liveability”) and attracting the expanding service class; waterfront and harbour developments typically featuring the development of marinas and the recycling of nineteenth-century warehouses for residential and office developments and as “heritage”; the expansion of the central business district; and a commitment to the twenty-four hour city and café society.”

Quilley (1999, p189)

The (seemingly successful and much hyped) waterfront redevelopments of Baltimore and Boston (Loftman and Nevin 1995, Griffiths 1998a) and even Barcelona's apparent transformation (McNeill 2003) have been highly influential on UK urban regeneration policy. Quilley (1999) even goes as far as to say that Baltimore and Boston festival marketplaces, in particular, have been somewhat 'modelled' and replicated throughout the UK. Yet Loftman and Nevin (1995, p305) are somewhat disturbed by this trend as they argue: “a general criticism of the transfer of the prestige model of

regeneration from the USA to Britain is that it was enthusiastically accepted by policy-makers without critical, and dispassionate analysis of the claimed 'successes' and, more importantly, of who benefits and who losses."

For Peck and Theodore (2001), politicians, when faced with intractable problems, have frequently studied other localities' policy strategies and political-management techniques to uncover 'shared problems' and 'common solutions'. This is increasingly commonplace with states in the multi-scalar SWPR (Jessop and Peck 2000) and, in particular between countries with share cultural, linguistic and, most importantly, political affinities. Indeed, Peck and Theodore (2001) highlight that the neo-liberal Reagan and Thatcher affinities during the 1980s¹² and the 'Third Way' neo-liberal Clinton and Blair affinities during the 1990s are vivid examples of such alignments.

Whilst focusing on the proliferation of the Riverside GAIN 'work-first' welfare-to-work model, Peck and Theodore (2001) and Peck (2001) highlight that the 'models of best practice' are often based on uncritical, increasingly technocratic and essentialist "disembedded readings of local success stories" (Peck 2001, p361). In the case of Riverside, Peck (1998) argues that the (exaggerated) fall in unemployment has little to do with the aggressive welfare-to-work policy. Instead it was largely due to a structural upturn in the economy and a relatively buoyant suburban local labour market. In turn, a crucial aspect of fast-policy transfer is that "so many of the achievements have been ephemeral and localised rather than durable and generalised" (Peck and Theodore 2001, p441). This has crucial ramifications as whilst it is relatively easy to duplicate administrative 'inputs', it is nearly impossible to reproduce their economic and social 'outputs'. From locality to locality, the outcome of the 'model' will greatly depend upon the local political economy and its (interplay with its) national and international contexts. Ultimately, for Peck and Theodore (2001), fast policy transfer is inherently contradictory and certainly does not represent an 'off-the-shelf *solution*'.

2.4 The Role of Gentrification

From the initial coining by Ruth Glass in 1963 (with her original account of housing tenure change in Islington in the early 1960s), 'gentrification' has become a heavily covered and contested topic in urban geography and urban sociology. Its academic proliferation correlates with its geographical expansion and proliferation over time. Smith (2002) highlights that although gentrification originated in a select few 'world' cities (notably London, New York, Paris, Sydney), it has rapidly descended down the 'urban hierarchy' as well as diffusing geographically across many cities in the developed (and developing) worlds and cities that are not traditionally considered 'world cities'.

At a basic level, most commentators would agree that gentrification is a process whereby inner city housing and neighbourhoods are being refurbished, following periods of disinvestment, often resulting in new social groups entering the area¹³. Often this is where the agreements end as Hamnett (1991, p174) illustrates, gentrification has been a controversial, yet "key theoretical and ideological battleground within urban geography" as many geographers have disputed two key ideas behind the study of gentrification. Namely, identifying which social groups are the 'gentrifiers'; and, most importantly, the explanations behind gentrification.

¹² For example, the modelling of the TECs skills training programme on the US privatised, market-led and deregulated Private Industry Councils (PICs) skills training programme (Peck 1996).

¹³ Although see Levine (2004, p90-91) for a discussion on the *precise* definition of gentrification.

Economy or culture, production or consumption?

The existing literature on the *explanations of* gentrification, as many academics have pointed out (e.g. Hamnett 1991, Smith 1996, Lees 2000), can be separated into two distinct 'camps'. Hamnett (1991, p174) states the ideological and theoretical 'battle' is between the "liberal humanists who stress the key role of choice, culture, consumption and consumer demand, and the structural Marxists who stress the role of capital, class, production and supply." This section will explain how authors within each 'camp' have attempted to explain gentrification and how their view is different from the other.

Ley (1980, 1996) and Hamnett (1991, 1992, 2000, 2003, Butler and Hamnett 1993) are arguably the two most influential academics stressing the role of choice, culture and the 'individual' in explanation of gentrification. Ley (1980, 1996) uses Bell's (1973) notion of a shift from the industrial to the 'postindustrial' society as the basis of his explanation. He argues that the late twentieth century witnessed a collapse of manufacturing in the Western world, and an associated rise of the service sector. Fundamentally, this industrial change involves the creation of new professional, managerial and administration jobs for the 'new middle-class', and a decline in the numbers of the manual working-class¹⁴. This, ultimately, has created a wealthier society with more income to spend on housing, renovation and gentrification. Added to this, and possibly more importantly, the new middle-class have distinct 'cultural practices' from any other social group in history stemming from their high levels of education and high levels of 'cultural capital'. Importantly, Hamnett (1992, 2003) and Butler and Hamnett (1993) highlight that it generally a *fraction* (rather than the whole) of the middle-class that choose to gentrify. Gender issues aside, they identify those who have high educational attainment (often recently graduated) and a large representation also have a liberal/'bohemian' interest in the arts. Furthermore, they place increasingly 'high aesthetic and historical value' on the types of period property available in the inner city, with their distinctive features.

The Marxist geographer, Neil Smith (1986, 1996), however, disputes this and continually argues that Ley and Hamnett focuses too narrowly on choice, preference, 'culture' (whatever that may be) and the individual and, in turn, ignore the vital *structural* and *economic* changes in capitalist urbanisation. However, Hamnett (1991, 2003) and Lees (2000) respond by arguing that whilst the post-industrial/cultural theory of gentrification focuses on (cultural) preferences by the individual, it is set in the context of the *structural economic* shift (to the postindustrial society) resulting in the emergence of the gentrifying 'new middle-class'.

Furthermore, academics, including Hamnett and Ley, also focus on the apparent lifestyle change by the 'new middle-class', with a trend towards fewer children and postponed marriages which allows more money available to buy renovated properties in the inner city and/or actively renovate the properties themselves. The role of distance and increased proximity, to the city centre is prevalent within these arguments and will be touched upon (associated with gender) in the next section.

In stark contrast, Smith (1979, 1992, 1996, 2002, Hackworth and Smith 2001) argues that capital together with the land and property market (and their institutions) are the key to the understanding the process of gentrification. Importantly, Smith (1992) adds that we must focus on the role of the *producers* of gentrified properties, such as builders, property owners, estate agents, local governments, banks and building societies (and how capital constrains and empowers their actions). Quite simply, this is because

¹⁴ Although, as Hamnett (1991) acknowledges, Marxists would strongly disagree with the notion of a 'new middle-class' as Marxists believe that over time, capitalism involves a proletarianization and gradual deskilling, with an expanding of the working-class and the shrinking of the petit bourgeoisie.

the gentry “do very little gentrifying; at best they move into a housing stock already transformed for gentrified consumption” (Smith 1992, p113). Ultimately, in this economically driven, late capitalist society, culture and the preferences of individuals are *secondary* aspects to the process. As Smith (1979, p540-1) states:

“The so-called urban renaissance has been stimulated more by economic than cultural forces. In the decision to rehabilitate inner-city structure, one consumer preference tends to stand out above the others – the preference for profit, or, more accurately a sound financial investment. Whether or not gentrifiers articulate this preference, it is fundamental, for few would even consider rehabilitation if a financial loss were to be expected. A theory of gentrification must therefore explain why some neighbourhoods are profitable to redevelop while others are not? Consumer sovereignty took for granted the availability of areas ripe for gentrification when this was previously what had to be explained.”

Smith (1979, p540-1)

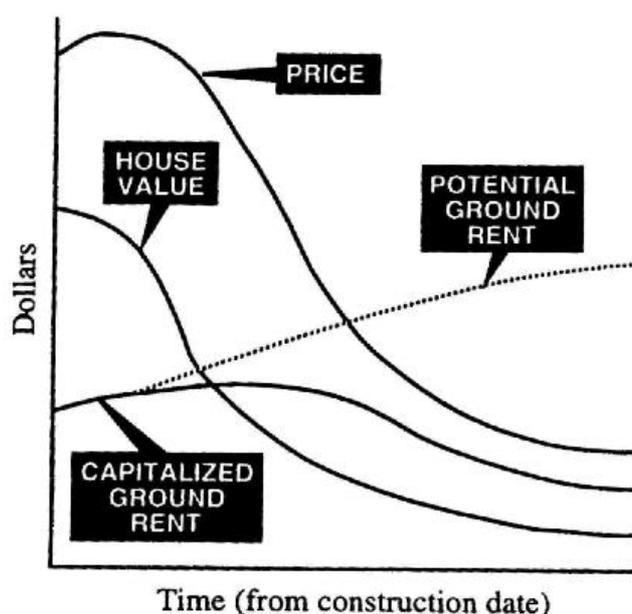


Figure 2: The devalorization cycle and the evolution of the rent gap
Source: Smith 1996, p65

For Smith an explanation of gentrification must focus upon “the precise way in which [capital] devalorization produces the possibility of profitable reinvestment” in certain spaces (Smith 1996, p61). The centrepiece of Smith’s theory of gentrification is his conception of the ‘rent gap’ which he believes has emerged, and is emerging, in certain spaces of the inner cities in the Western world (see Figure 2). Smith (1979, 1996) believes that the rent gap is the disparity between the property values under present land use and underlying land values in the inner city. In sum, the rent gap is ultimately produced by *capital devalorization* of spaces of the inner city. For Smith (1996), capital will only flow where the rate of return is highest (i.e. most profitable). Therefore, with the flux of capital investment to the suburbs and the ongoing devalorization of the inner city capital, this will eventually produce the rent gap in the inner city. In turn, this has led to the

existence of devalued inner city property on potentially valuable land, which opens up the potential for profitable (re)investment (Hamnett 2000).¹⁵

Class and gender in gentrification

Following on from Smith's argument, academic literature has questioned *which* social groups are the gentrifiers? For Smith (1996), gentrification is inherently a *class* struggle with the middle and upper-middle-classes displacing the working-class from the inner city. Smith's (1996) '*revanchist city*' thesis sees the gentrification of the inner city as a capitalist 'revenge' against the working-class and minority groups who have 'stolen' the inner city from the upper and middle-class (who are constantly favoured by the capitalist system). Lees (2000, p399) effectively summarises Smith's notion of the 'revanchist city', by stating "the inner city for Smith is not an emancipatory space but a combat zone in which capital, embodied by the middle-class gentrifiers battles it out, block by block, house by house to retake the city."

During the 1980s and early 1990s, however, some academics began to question the prominent position and influence of class in gentrification (and human geography more generally), and instead highlighted the role of gender in the process. For instance, Warde (1991, p231) argues that "gentrification is a process of displacement of one class by another; but it is better understood as originating in changes in the labour market position of women." The increasing feminisation of the workforce during the late twentieth century is vitally important as women are able to command more capital. Furthermore, the necessity for women and notably (single) mothers to live near the city centre (Hamnett 2003) – places of work and leisure – as their accessibility is more limited, especially in comparison to males/fathers.

However, as Lees (2000) states, the mid-1990s witnessed researchers stepping away from the prioritization of gender in gentrification. Butler and Hamnett (1993) confront Warde's (1991) 'unconvincing' thesis, arguing that in stressing the role of gender, he has virtually ignored the important role of class¹⁶. Instead, for Butler and Hamnett (1993), *both* class and gender are important. In demonstrating this they highlight the importance of dual-income 'new middle-class' families. These families, often with few or no children, not only can afford to gentrify housing, but also are drawn to the practical central city location (e.g. near to day-care centres, schools, work, leisure, etc) and also because of their shared cultural affinities and backgrounds and an appreciation of the 'cultural infrastructure' in the inner city.

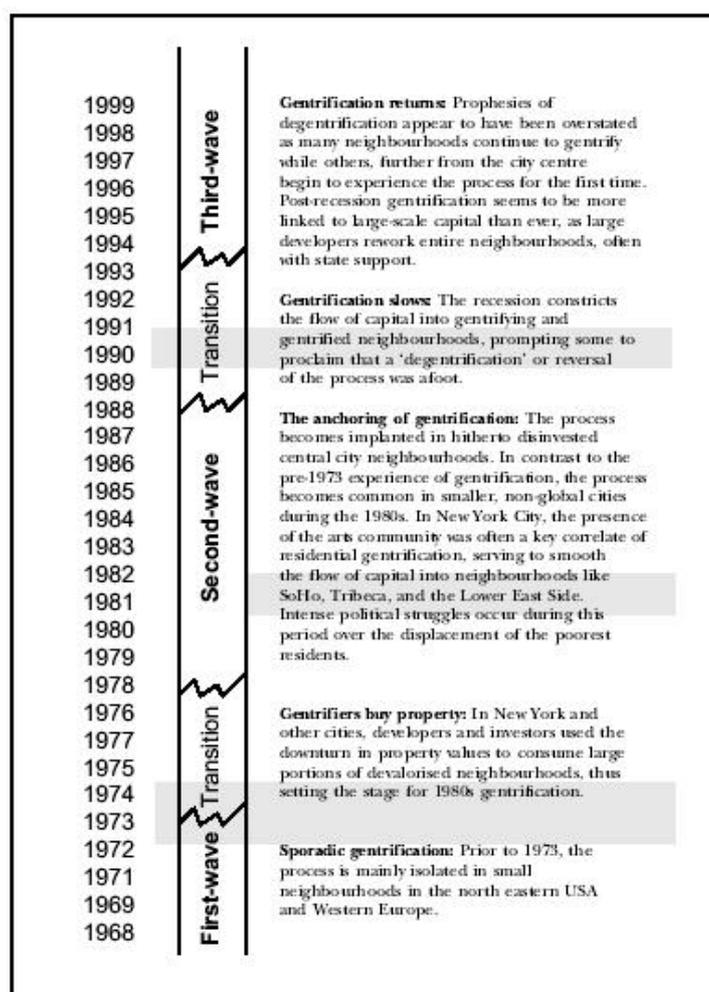
The (changing) role of the state in gentrification

As Lees (2000) notes, the role of the state in gentrification has all but been ignored in the gentrification literature until the late 1990s. Through identifying three successive *waves of gentrification* (see Figure 5), Smith (2002) and Hackworth and Smith (2001) offer an important understanding of the *changing* role of the state in the process of gentrification.

¹⁵ Smith's rent gap thesis continues to be unpopular with many who stress the role of the individual and culture. Hamnett (1991, p179) argues: "In Smith's thesis, individual gentrifiers are merely the passive handmaidens of capital's requirements." Furthermore, Hamnett argues that 'profitability' is simply not the only reason for individuals to gentrify and this ignores the role of taste and culture.

¹⁶ Smith (1996, p100) furthermore argues that "it would be wrong to conclude that in women we find the premier agency behind gentrification" (as for Smith class is ultimately the deciding factor). Importantly, Lees (2000) raises a further paradox that although gender has been widely considered in gentrification literature, the role of race in gentrification has seldom been looked upon.

The *first wave* of gentrification was sporadic if widespread, concentrating in the older cities in the US, Western Europe and Australia. According to Hackworth and Smith (2001), gentrification was significantly funded by the public sector, as local and national governments sought to counter the decline of the (depopulated, poverty-stricken) inner city. The depression of the early 1970s allowed developers and investors to invest in revalorized property, ready for the 1980s boom. For Hackworth and Smith (2001), the 1980s witnessed a *second wave*, or 'anchoring', of gentrification' (see figure 3). The second wave is characterised by its spread to areas of the cities previously 'untouched' by gentrification, and, indeed, to non-global (inner) cities. Importantly, during the second phases, instead of directly orchestrating gentrification, the state actively encouraged the private market to do so.



(recessions in grey)

Figure 3: A schematic history of gentrification
Source: Hackworth and Smith 2001, p468

Smith and Hackworth (2001) and Smith (2002) state that the *third-wave* of gentrification is distinct from earlier phases in four ways: Firstly, gentrification is expanding within the inner-city neighbourhoods that were affected during earlier waves as well as moving to more remote neighbourhoods. Secondly, the globalisation and restructuring of the real-estate industry has set a context for larger, transnational developers to become involved in gentrification. Thirdly, overt resistance to gentrification has declined as the working-class are continually displaced from the inner

city. Fourthly, and most importantly, the state is now more directly involved in, and indeed central to, the process than in the second phases. As Smith (2002) highlights:

“Whereas... the 1960s [gentrification] was a marginal oddity in the Islington housing market – a quaint urban sport of the hipper professional classes unafraid to rub shoulders with the unwashed masses – by the end of the twentieth century it had become a central goal of British urban policy... Whereas the key actors in Glass’s story were assumed to be middle- and upper-middle-class immigrants into the neighbourhood, the agents of urban regeneration thirty-five years later are governmental or corporate-governmental partnerships. A seemingly serendipitous unplanned process that popped up in the post-war housing market is now at one extreme, ambitiously and scrupulously planned. That which was utterly haphazard is increasingly systematized.”

Smith (2002, p439)

Hackworth and Smith (2001) continue, by arguing that neo-liberal state intervention in gentrification has returned for three reasons. Firstly, with the removal of welfare funding together with continued devolution of federal state powers, this has placed even more pressure on local states to actively pursue entrepreneurial ‘global-local’ redevelopment and gentrification as ways of generating jobs, investment and tax revenue. Secondly, the diffusion of gentrification into more remote portions of the urban landscape which are financially ‘risky’ and poses profit risks that are beyond the capacity of individual capitalists to manage. States orchestrate land assembly, tax incentives and property condemnation to actively encourage the investors. Thirdly, the shift towards ‘post-Keynesian’ governance has unhinged the state from the project of social reproduction and as such measures to protect the working-class are more easily contested.

Central to any discussion of gentrification is surely its relationship to the (non-housing aspects of the) evolving urban development programmes (as discussed in section 2.2). Identifying gentrification as a key feature of middle-class urban regeneration projects, Smith (2002, p442) states:

“Retaking the city for the middle-classes involves a lot more than simply providing gentrified housing. Third-wave gentrification has evolved into a vehicle for transforming whole areas into new landscapes complexes that pioneer a comprehensive class-inflected urban remake. These new landscape complexes now integrate housing with shopping, restaurants, cultural facilities, open spaces, employment opportunities – whole new complexes of recreation, consumption, production and pleasure, as well as residence.”

Smith (2002, p442)

Yet, whilst Smith touches upon the relationship between urban regeneration and gentrification, he never expands beyond these tentative ideas. Indeed, I have yet to see an in-depth study of an UDP focusing on *both* property-led construction of conspicuous consumption spaces (e.g. redeveloped theatres, shopping centres, sports stadia) *and* the expensive housing that usually (but not always) accompanies it. It is this lacuna that this paper will address through a case study of the mixed-use (leisure and accommodation) Gunwharf Quays (re)development in Portsmouth.

3. WATERFRONT REGENERATION AND GENTRIFICATION AT GUNWHARF QUAYS, PORTSMOUTH

3.1 From Militarism to Consumerism¹⁷

The closure of HMS Vernon

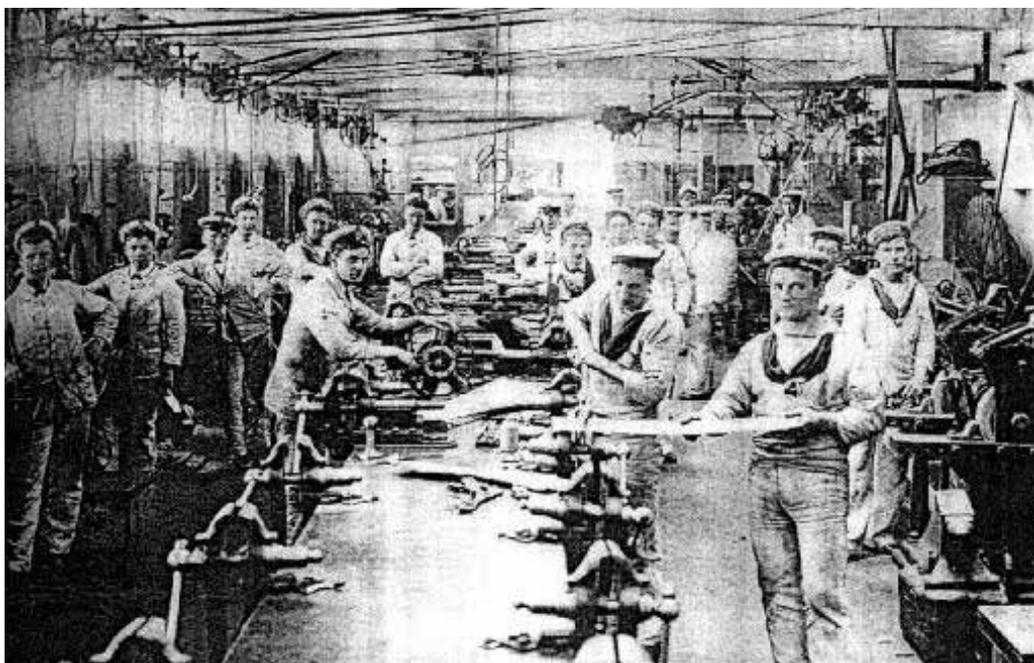


Figure 4: Interior of armourers' workshop, HMS Vernon Torpedo School, undated
Source: Sadden 1997, p35

For over 500 years, Portsmouth's economy and labour market has been dominated by – and heavily depended upon – the English/British navy and, in turn, was influenced by the strategic restructuring and (favourable) 'spatial selectivity' (Jones 1997a) of the national state and its MoD. 1496 marked a key point in Portsmouth's history when Henry VIII and his government selected Portsmouth as the flagship dockyard of the English Navy, primarily due to its proximity to the continent and its natural harbour (Riley 1987).

The Gunwharf site (see figure 5) was established in the late seveneenth century by the military as the Naval Ordnance Department. However, during the early twentieth century the Royal Navy renamed the site HMS Vernon when the site became home of the Naval Torpedo School (see Figure 4). Indeed, HMS Vernon developed other functions including mine design, diving training, specialist boat services and home to the Captain's Weapons Trial Unit.

During its peak, the forces employed 21.4 per cent of total working population of Portsmouth in 1931 (Riley 1987). However, employment in the forces had rapidly declined after the Second World War with only 9.3 per cent of the total working population of Portsmouth employed in the armed forces by 1981 (Riley 1987). Whilst HMS Vernon played an integral part in the two World Wars (and bombed heavily in the Second World War), the relatively stable peacetime after 1945 onwards has ironically had a damaging effect on HMS Vernon (as well as other military and naval sites throughout

¹⁷ Taken from Burtenshaw (2002, p26).

Portsmouth and the UK). As Pinder and Smith (1999) highlight, successive national (and international) governmental fiscal and strategic decision-making to cut costs and dramatically reduce UK naval expenditure had a huge socio-spatial impact. Related to this, there has been a marked transition to increasingly after-Fordist (i.e. flexible) and ever-more-powerful weapons and technology. These new defence weapons and ships meant that the size of navies (and potentially the long-term costs) could be dramatically reduced without reductions in their 'destructive capabilities'.

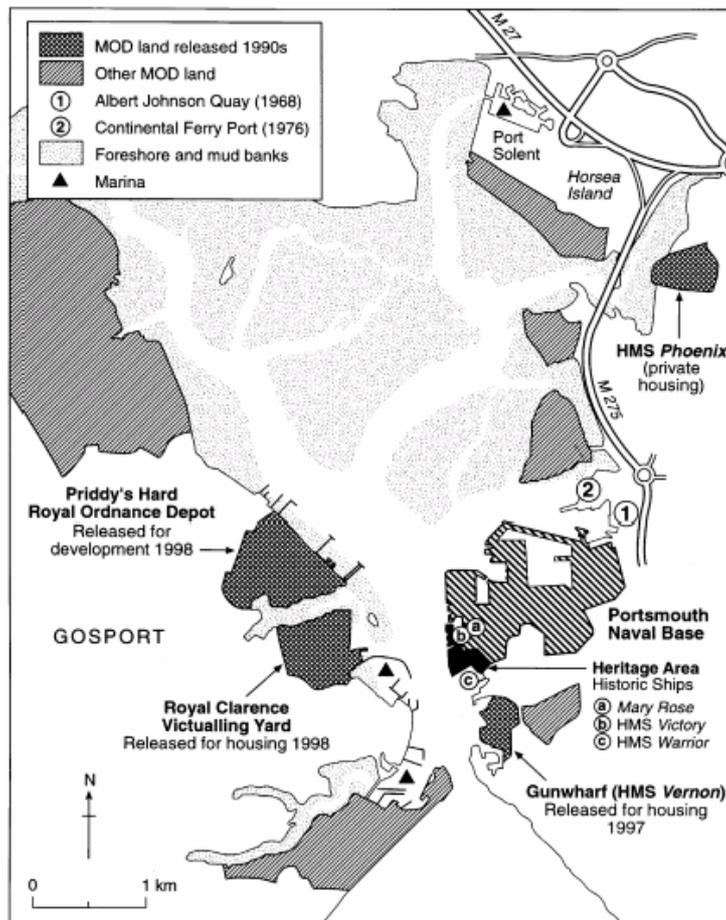


Figure 5: The Portsmouth naval waterfront
Source: Hoyle and Wright 1999, p965

Perhaps the most defining moment for Portsmouth's naval ports over recent years was the publication and implementation of the Conservative government's White Paper *'The UK Defence Programme – the Way Forward'* in June 1981. The White Paper announced that Portsmouth would be relegated to a second-grade repair and refit base and this would involve a sharp reduction in the volume of dockyard work at Portsmouth (Riley and Shurmer-Smith 1988). The Paper also announced the closure of the decaying and largely abandoned HMS Vernon site. Five years later in 1986, HMS Vernon closed for the final time (Clark 2001, Burtenshaw 2002). Other sites in Portsmouth and Gosport were similarly affected by the White Paper including the barracks at HMS Phoenix in Hilsea, which was subsequently released for private housing development in the late 1980s (see figure 5 above).

Economic diversification

“In years gone by, the city was dependent on the economy of the naval base. When there was war, the city prospered and during long periods of peace, the city hasn’t prospered so well and in recent years the city has had to look at other areas for jobs, investment and everything else. It has been important that we have tried to spread ourselves out in terms of the economy, and that is what we have tried to do.”

Senior Civil Servant, PCC (July 2002)

Ever since the 1950s, Portsmouth City Council (known as PCC herein) and Hampshire County Council have realised that the local economy and labour market must be economically diversified. Its dependence on the navy left the local economy and local labour market vulnerable to the navy’s lows (and highs) and devastated by the rounds of large-scale redundancies associated with post-war restructuring of the navy, leaving unemployment high in the city.

Despite initial long resentment by the navy of commercial waterfront development and economic diversification on Portsmouth Harbour, PCC embarked on a pronounced economic diversification plan during the 1970s. Perhaps the most noticeable aspect of this was its support of, and leading role in, the 1973 Harbour Revision plan to create a continental ferry port in Portsmouth Harbour (see figure 4), with P&O transferring its ferry services and employment from Southampton’s docks to Portsmouth harbour (Riley and Shurmer-Smith 1988). The ferry port development proved a relative localised success, employing several thousand people from Portsmouth and becoming the second largest passenger ferry port in the UK behind Dover.

Despite being overwhelmingly working-class, Portsmouth was never a bastion of municipal socialism to the extent of, say, Manchester (see Quilley 2002), Sheffield, Glasgow and the GLC and can even be portrayed as a site of working-class (centre)conservatism. The ‘entrepreneurial pill’ (Ward 2003), therefore, wasn’t resisted to the extent of the tradition Urban Left in other UK cities. Nonetheless, declining taxation and centralised funding *and* the dismantling of the one-nation project and its welfare redistribution to poorer areas had a particularly regressive impact on PCC’s coffers. It was quite apparent that more funding (and ‘restructuring’) was necessary to curtail, let alone solve, Portsmouth’s (increasingly) pronounced urban problems (notably poverty, depopulation, low levels of investment and low levels of educational attainment).

A neo-liberal ‘growth-first’ (Loftman and Nevin 1996) strategy dominated the agenda from the 1980s onwards. Central to this was setting up and empowerment of a (combined) economic development and tourism department in the early 1990s¹⁸ and the (centrally imposed) introduction of unelected ‘maverick’ private actors and institutions – most notably the Portsmouth and South East Hampshire Partnership (PSEHP, set up in 1993) – into policy circles to ‘break the chains of local government bureaucracy’ and to ‘cut corners and make things happen... fast’. Echoing many other cities such as Manchester, PCC was somewhat forced to take on an all-too-narrow range of ‘pro-active’ supply-side entrepreneurial policies, including aggressively encouraging inward investment; place-marketing; property-led regeneration of the harbour and the inner city and the introduction of ‘flagship projects’ (Griffiths 1998a, Quilley 1999, Ward 2000).

Central to this ‘diversification’ strategy is the desire to further Portsmouth (and particularly ‘Sunny Southsea’) as tourist destination and a conspicuous consumption centre, capitalising on Portsmouth’s naval history and its recently opened ferry port. As

¹⁸ After the 1987 Local Government Act granted local authorities the power to form their own economic development departments (Savage *et al* 2002).

part of the private-public funded and backed Naval Heritage Area scheme, a large redundant part of the naval dockyard was opened up as a tourist venue, for visitors to see HMS Victory, the newly risen Mary Rose, the newly imported HMS Warrior and the various historic listed buildings (Bradbeer and Moon 1987, Riley and Shurmer-Smith 1988). Whilst the tourism industry was only modestly successful in terms of visitor numbers and extremely seasonal (Pinder 1993), PCC still continue its policy of widespread, intensive and costly national place marketing of Portsmouth for regional and national tourists.

As stated earlier, PCC, PSEHP and other empowered public-private 'partners' placed increasing emphasis upon attracting both inward investment and tourists (and their money). In order to attract these, it was felt that the *image* of Portsmouth must change. For tourists and investors were seemingly discouraged by the negative image associated with Portsmouth of being a run-down, inhospitable and 'grubby' city (e.g. the 'shit-hole of the south'). As one local Conservative councillor states (July 2002):

"Portsmouth has a reputation as a grubby city... An industrial and naval city on the south coast. Life has moved on... But people expect more from us now. When people come to the city and think it's grubby that's the impression they go away with... Gunwharf helps us to [stop] that... Fundamentally, we are trying to change the image of Portsmouth."

Bidding for the Gunwharf site

After the MoD and PCC announced in 1995 that the Gunwharf site would be available for *private* development, PCC in conjunction with the PSEHP, Hampshire County Council and the MoD published a development guide (Weyes 1995a) outlining their planning requirements for the redevelopment of Gunwharf. In sum, PCC envisaged the Gunwharf site to be a mixed-use 'festival waterfront' development with space allocated for retail, leisure and housing development.

Three private consortiums prepared plans and competed for the right to own and redevelop the Gunwharf site, culminating in (respective group presentations at) a meeting at the Council chambers in June 1997. In spite of their inexperience in retail development and management, the property developers Berkeley were awarded the contract in January 1998 (Holman 1999). Importantly, Berkeley was only the second highest bidder for the Gunwharf site. One Labour councillor interviewed highlighted that PCC 'placed a lot of pressure' on the MoD to support the Berkeley bid as they felt it was 'the most appropriate development'. However, one Liberal Democrat councillor (interview) argued that the main reason that the Labour council supported Berkeley's bid was because it was the *only* bidder to support the building and part-financing of the proposed Millennium Tower¹⁹ inside the Gunwharf site, whereas the other two bidders saw the Millennium Tower as economically unfeasible.

The Cape Town 'model'

"Ten years ago the only people brave enough to venture into Cape Town's derelict dockland at night were prostitutes and foreign sailors of dubious repute. Now the Victoria and Alfred Docks is South Africa's top tourist destination, employ more than 12,000 people and is the largest payer of rates in the vast Cape Town Metropolitan Area."

¹⁹ Section 2.3 will focus in-depth upon the planning of the Millennium Tower project.

Importantly, during the bidding stage, Berkeley become increasingly aware that they needed the assistance of a property developer who had (profitable) experience in redeveloping and running a (brownfield) retail development (as Berkeley had no past experience with either). Berkeley brought in Lordland, a South African company who had vast experience in both fields, and infamously redeveloped the Victoria and Alfred Docks in Cape Town.

It seems that a key reason behind the support of the joint Berkeley and Lordland bid was their promotion of the past 'success' of the Cape Town redevelopment of which Lordland was seen as (and promoted itself as) *the* 'key player'. In turn and echoing Peck and Theodore's (2001) notion of seemingly 'shared problems' and 'common solutions', PCC believed that the success of Cape Town could be *unproblematically* replicated in Portsmouth providing Gunwharf closely followed the Cape Town 'model'. In this respect, the fast policy transfer here was not so much 'deep' policy transfer, that is, a complete/part of programme has been transferred, but 'shallow' policy transfer, in the sense that tone and emphasis has been transferred without the accompanying 'programme' (Ward forthcoming).

Following interviews with various public and private officials, it became clear that that PCC had done very little research into the apparent success of the Cape Town development. Whilst it is not the aim of this paper to critically analyse the Cape Town redevelopment *per se*, it is vital to state that PCC should have *critically* analysed the 'not-so-glossy' socio-spatial repercussions of the Victoria and Alfred redevelopment. Members of PCC were aware of *some* basic quantitative facts about the 'successes' of the redevelopment, *largely selected by Berkeley and Lordland* (such as the number of visitors per year). Yet without understanding the 'flip-side' of the development, this 'model of best practice' represents an (even more than usual) uncritical, technocratic and essentialist '*disembedded reading*' of a local success story' (Peck 2001, p361).

In one interview, a Labour councillor stated "I kept on saying that we should go, but nonetheless, we saw the video and it looked quite good and it regenerated a very run down area." It seems (quite shocking) that PCC relied almost entirely upon the unsurprisingly biased and carefully selected 'vision' of the Cape Town 'rosy' as seen in their glossy brochures and promotional videos, without any of their own *critical* independent research.

Partly on the basis of the supposed success of the Cape Town 'model' development, the Gunwharf development was to follow the much-copied 'festival waterfront' model which all-too-often include the following contents: glossy 'post-modern' architecture, *middle-class* specialist retail outlets, modern bars and restaurants and luxury upper-middle-class waterside accommodation. If this model rejuvenated the Cape Town, then it was sure to rejuvenate the Portsmouth economy. Wouldn't it?

Yet, echoing Peck and Theodore's critical analysis of trans-Atlantic welfare-to-work fast-policy transfer (2001), whilst this 'off-the-shelf solution' can duplicate the Cape Town's administrative and architectural 'inputs', it is almost impossible to reproduce Cape Town's social and economic 'outputs' (Peck and Theodore 2001). This is due the *inherently localised and contingent nature* of the local economies, political systems and local labour markets its unique interaction with other spatial scales.

3.2 Governance, Accountability and Resistance to the Gunwharf Quays Development

This research highlights a problematic area of the 'urban governance' literature as it remains weak in understanding the *fragmented* and *uneven* nature of the shift to governance. Too often the literature suggests that governance, and indeed entrepreneurialism, somehow 'landed' overnight on local authorities such as Portsmouth sometime in the late 1970s or early 1980s. It did not. There is undoubtedly a continuing *shift* to governance (and away from traditional notions of government) but it highly uneven (intra- and inter-departmentally and geographically). Quite simply, the private sector and its representatives have different qualitative 'powers' in the governance of Portsmouth in different regulatory roles, departments and institutions. Indeed, the private sector and its representatives have a very limited involvement in the on-the-ground *awarding* of planning permission (as well as highways, licensing and environmental health approval) for the various stages of Gunwharf Quays as this is done by *public-sector* civil servants and/or Councillors. However, as will be explained in section 3.4, governance – in the form of the Portsmouth and South-East Hampshire Partnership quango 'bidders' and the Millennium Commission 'awarders' in particular – played an integral and leading role in the planning of, construction of, bidding for (and awarding of) funding for the Millennium Tower.

In particular reference to the decisions revolving around the bidding, planning and construction of the Tower (as will be highlighted in depth later in section 3.4) an unfortunate and, even, integral part of the (uneven) shift to urban governance and the introduction and empowerment of 'maverick business élites' into urban policy circles (Peck 1995) has been an associated decline in accountability, both in terms of *giving account* and *holding to account* (Hart *et al* 1996). Indeed, the quote below from a Labour councillor highlights the widespread (and cross-party) neo-liberal ideological belief that the private sector can break the 'chains of bureaucracy' with fresh, imaginative, innovative and, ultimately, market-led goals (Peck and Tickell 1995, Cochrane *et al* 2002):

"We have involved people in the decision-making process outside elected members. The perception that some people have of public good – private bad is something that I have never believed in. I've met good and bad people on both sides of the fence. If you didn't have the private sector here, I don't think that you would have the visionary plans for Portsmouth such as Gunwharf. Sometimes you need the private sector to give the public sector a good kick up the arse. Portsmouth needs to get people to get things done basically."

Labour councillor, PCC (July 2002)

However, Clark (2001) believes that it is not simply the quangos that are deemed to be unaccountable for *both* developments; it is also the MoD, PCC and the developers, Berkeley. Throughout the formulation and planning stages of the first stage of Gunwharf development, Clark believes that all three groups were highly unaccountable and did not adequately consult the public during these vital stages. In contrast, in a report for *The News*, Owen (1996b, p7) reports that the planning of Gunwharf was the "largest public consultation exercise since the Pompey plan"²⁰. A key part of the consultation involved a four-page booklet highlighting the key plans for the site, which was delivered to every

²⁰ The 'Pompey Plan' was the (failed) planning application in the early 1990s to relocate Portsmouth Football Club's stadium from inner-city Fratton Park to the suburban marsh-lands in Farlington. This, however, was subsequently refused permission due to the disturbance of rare birds.

home and business in Portsmouth. It also invited residents to respond to the proposed plans (to PCC) with their view on the proposed plans. Added to this, one interviewee highlighted what he saw as the 'high-level' of consultation with the public through the planning brief (Weyes 1995a, 1995b), through the local newspaper and neighbourhood forums:

“It reminds me of the arrival of the construction fleet in the *Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy*, and the captain of the fleet calling out to you earthlings “we’ve been making a highway for the last fifty years, it’s on the notice board and if you can’t be bothered to see it, well?” There is always an element of that. Portsmouth City Council has published this [lifts up the Gunwharf Quays development brief, Weyes 1995a], it has been part of the democratic process, us members have been through it and read it. It’s been advertised in public meetings, been in neighbourhood forums, in the press. What else can you do? Apart from physical knocking on everyone’s door and ask them what they want to do. So I think in terms of consultancy I think we did a good job.”

Conservative councillor, PCC (July 2002)

The Councillor’s quote, however, seems to suggest that PCC and the developers weren’t so much *consulting* the public but *telling* the public what will happen. For example, Clark (2001) highlights three meetings chaired by the City Planning Officer, which considered, in turn, the repercussions of the Gunwharf development on design and conservation; employment prospects and existing retail areas; and transport and environmental concerns. However, these meetings were dominated by a ‘tight-knit’ group of representatives from PCC, MoD and the PSEHP. Indeed, this led to somewhat one-sided ‘debates’ with little real public input. Furthermore, Clark (2001) highlights that the developers Berkeley, and their consultants Lordland, staged two public exhibitions of the proposed development in the Guildhall. She views these as ‘token public relations exercises’ as opposed to real public consultation and debate. Added to this, when the public asked probing questions, (using Thatcher-like rhetoric) Berkeley frequently replied that ‘there is no alternative’ and arrogantly handed out a pre-printed letter of support for visitors to sign (which would then be given to the planning department to place on the official planning application file).

As will be highlighted in the following sections, the Gunwharf development alone did receive damning criticism from numerous individuals, businesses and groups. For example, as I will explain, the Royal Fine Arts Commission (RFAC) and the Portsmouth Society in particular publicly criticised the scheme’s poor architecture and planning, while other traders in Portsmouth, notably the Southsea Retailers Forum raised concerns about the increased competition the Gunwharf site would produce. However, as Clark (2001, p124) highlights, the complex power relations together with introduction of private actors and organisations left the public confused as to who they should voice their opinion with, leaving vocal public resistance to the scheme less evident and poorly represented:

“The interconnectedness of the decision-making networks for the millennium project and the harbour regeneration bodies made it hard even for participants to identify who was responsible for particular decisions or accountability when things go wrong, as they did over the Tower. The structure of the Partnership and its offshoots meant that the democratic accountability was distanced; normal rules of declaration of councillor’s

interests do not of course apply to members of quangos... Groups and individuals who wanted to influence the disposal processes found this labyrinthine structure with its overlapping membership and responsibilities nearly impossible to clarify.”

Clark (2001, p124)

All too often the Gunwharf developers (especially) and PCC hid behind the excuse of trying to the first stage of the development by the new millennium; therefore long ‘drawn-out’ public consultation would simply delay the finished product. This is puzzling as it was the Tower and the Millennium promenades *around* Gunwharf, rather than Gunwharf Quays *per se*, that received Millennium Commission funding²¹.

“Architectural morons”

“If you look at the housing development, *I think you would have to be a complete architectural moron to suggest that it is great*. It isn’t, I think it is pretty substandard and second rate. I certainly can’t believe that there are some of the people down there that would pay that sort of money for those properties. I think the flats in particular are a complete eye-sore – the flats that are built there now, *let alone* the flats they got passed a week or so ago. I am horrified at the quality of the design.”

Liberal Democrat councillor (August 2002, emphasis added)

The planning brief (Weyes 1995a, p17) stated that the “new buildings should be carefully integrated to compliment the existing historic buildings... and the surrounding areas” in an almost ‘post-modern’ and eclectic architectural and planning design. However, prior to development, the planning and architecture of the development drew severe criticism from several organisations, notably the Portsmouth Society and the Royal Fine Arts Commission (RFAC). In March 1998, PCC received a letter from the RFAC explaining that the Gunwharf “proposal was beyond redemption by tinkering or alteration” (quoted in Holman 1999, p107). The RFAC claimed that the architecture “totally lacked a sense of place” when it was proposed to reflect and complement the architecture in nearby (middle-class) Old Portsmouth. In particular, the RFAC claimed that from the entrance to the site, the development “looked like any other out-of-town [warehouse retail] development, without even the clarity found in such places.” (quoted in Holman 1999, p107).

A local independent voluntary architectural ‘watchdog’ organisation, the Portsmouth Society²², voiced concern to PCC about the disappointing architectural design and also confronted the developers over their disregard for the ‘historic’ nature of the site with “800 listed properties disposed of” (Clark 2001, p139). However, the unsuccessful legal advice that the Portsmouth Society sought was considered to be unreasonable and could negatively damage jobs and investment coming into Portsmouth through Gunwharf. As Hedley Greentree, member of the PSEHP and chief-architect of the Gunwharf development stated:

²¹ Remember the Tower is not part of the Gunwharf development *per se* and required a separate planning application but is situated within the Gunwharf site.

²² Indeed, members of the Portsmouth Society regularly object to the on-going medium and large-scale planning applications on the Gunwharf site. I recall one Labour councillor at the Development Control Committee in 2003 dismissing their deputation (and general outlook) by stating “the Portsmouth Society, if they had their way, would do more damage to Gunwharf than the Luftwaffe.”

“So that a secret society [the Portsmouth Society] was able to cause such damage to the design process is totally and utterly unreasonable and could have meant that the city lost £120 million investment in Gunwharf. More importantly than that an overall investment of £600 million of investment in the area with a consequent loss of 3,500 jobs minimum and the subsequent loss of 32 billion coming into the economy as a result of this project.”

Hedley Greentree (interview, undated, quoted in Holman 1999, p232)

The role of the local media

As in the case of Birmingham’s city centre redevelopment (Beazley, Loftman and Nevin 1997, Campbell 2001), the local media has pivotal role to play in providing information on the development to the public, and potentially could give the public a platform to air their views. However, an actively and overly supportive, and more importantly, *uncritical* local newspaper surely cannot aid, but suppresses, free discussion and opinions on the planned redevelopment, particularly critical opinions (Clark 2001).

In this context, Portsmouth’s (sole) local newspaper, *The News*, is undoubtedly a highly influential, and potentially powerful, resource and organization. *The News* has always been unquestionably in favour of the planned regeneration of Gunwharf Quays, with frequent editorials and articles suggesting that Gunwharf will almost unquestionably act as *the* ‘catalyst’ for the ‘renaissance’ of Portsmouth harbour and, indeed, the whole of Portsmouth.

However, the uncritical nature of *The News* is questioned by Clark (2001) and a minority of interviewees. They highlight that the chief executive of the Portsmouth Publishing Press (PPP) – the company who publishes *The News* – is headed by Ben Stoneham. Fundamentally, Ben Stoneham is also the chairman of the Portsmouth and South East Hampshire Partnership (PSEHP) and the director of the Portsmouth Harbour Renaissance Limited. As stated earlier, the PSEHP are the private-public company governing the ‘Renaissance of Portsmouth Harbour’; who also created an off-shoot quango, Portsmouth Harbour Renaissance Limited who won the bid for Millennium funds and have overall control of how the Millennium funds are spent (Portsmouth Harbour Renaissance Limited 1998). Therefore, Stoneham’s position on these highly influential quangos sets the context for the somewhat biased, favourable and uncritical coverage of the Millennium Tower in particular and Gunwharf Quays too (as *The News* appears to believe that both are necessary developments as they will support the other). Especially in the case of the Tower, it is highly unlikely that *The News* would critically look at, or even demonstrate against, the ideas behind the redevelopment schemes (i.e. an ‘external’ critique). In other words, and as will be highlighted later, whilst *The News* have criticized the Council (interestingly not the PSEHP) for issues of ‘best practice’ (i.e. ‘internal’ critiques) such as the very lengthy delays in the construction of the Tower and the Council’s inability to paten the image of the Tower (so as to gain money from merchandising with the Tower’s image on) (for example see *The News* 2002a, 2002b, Maddox 2003). However, it has never ‘externally’ challenged or critiqued the political-economic rhetoric or the ideology behind the Tower or Gunwharf Quays. To continue, Clark (2001) highlights a meeting between the Portsmouth Society (of which she is chairperson) and Ben Stoneham, in which he stated that he “had no control over editorial policy”. Whether this is true or not, it is doubtful that the editors and journalists of *The News* would dare cast doubt over the Tower which is largely governed by their director and its ‘sister’ development.

Interestingly, in response to the criticism to the development by the Portsmouth Society (whose criticisms were highlighted earlier), an editorial in *The News* (1998, p8) stated:

“Members of the Portsmouth Society must be feeling very pleased with themselves today... they vowed to press for a public enquiry – knowing full well that a resulting costly delay could scupper the £100m millennium scheme. It doesn’t matter to those people that redevelopment of the harbour is of crucial importance to Portsmouth’s future or that they are in the minority. The public had ample opportunity to express their opinions on the Gunwharf scheme before it was given planning permission by Portsmouth City Council. There was no evidence of widespread dissatisfaction... The time-critical Gunwharf scheme and its millennium tower is not something that is being foisted upon the people of Portsmouth... In a democracy it is entitled to have its say. But in turn it should now accept the majority view and abandon its delaying tactics.”

The News (1998, p8)

Ironically this quote strongly reflects *The News*’ somewhat undemocratic support of the development, as they are accusing the Portsmouth Society of ‘delaying tactics’, when the Portsmouth Society are justifiably questioning the controversial development²³. Furthermore, *The News* seemingly did not adequately allow the Portsmouth Society to air their views of the project. With such an important scheme, isn’t it vital that *The News* critically looked the redevelopment whilst also allowing an *open and democratic platform* for local people and organisations, such as the Portsmouth Society to freely express and exchange their opinions on the redevelopment – where supportive *or critical*? With the highly favourable coverage of the Gunwharf redevelopment, it is highly likely that this heavily influenced the general public’s perception of Gunwharf Quays: Of course the Gunwharf development is a ‘good thing’, *The News* said so!²⁴

3.3 Jobs, Jobs, Jobs²⁵

Quality of jobs at Gunwharf Quays

As explained earlier, the Gunwharf Quays development is part of an entrepreneurial strategy to ‘diversify’ the Portsmouth economy away from a dependence on the declining naval and dockyard jobs and to create jobs within the Portsmouth area as well as to combat relative high unemployment rates in the city (at 2.3% in March 2002, compared to a South East average of 1.7%) (PCC 2002a).

In the design brief (Weyes 1995a), PCC stated the Gunwharf development must not include any form of industry-related or manufacturing jobs, partly because PCC saw manufacturing as another volatile and declining industry (with a bad ‘image’) and didn’t want to replace one declining industry with another. As part of a broader plan (which

²³ Furthermore, *The News*’ (1998, p8) claim that the public had “ample opportunity” to express their thoughts on the Gunwharf development and that the development is “not something being foisted upon the people of Portsmouth” seems highly questionable.

²⁴ This example echoes growth coalition theory and its use of Gramsci’s ideas of coercion. As Hubbard *et al* (2002) highlight newspapers are seen as key organisations/instruments in gain wider public support and legitimisation for growth strategies (see also Wilson and Mueller 2004).

²⁵ This is based on a quote from Paul Spooner, ex-Head of Marketing at Portsmouth City Council, when speaking at the Portsea Neighbourhood Forum in the nearby working-class area of Portsea, who stated that Gunwharf would invariably bring “jobs, jobs, jobs” (Clark 2001).

was extensively modelled on Cape Town) to 'transform' Portsmouth into a 'conspicuous consumption economy', PCC encouraged the developers to include jobs within the growing (and often seen as 'booming') retail, service and tourism industry. Apart from the initial short-term construction work, which employed approximately 1,000 workers on temporary contracts (Bettsworth 1998), the vast majority of the jobs after construction are within the many retail outlets, bars and restaurants that have opened up on the site.

However, these 'McJobs' (Ritzer 1997) available at Gunwharf are largely unskilled jobs and are fundamentally within the *after-Fordist secondary labour market*. The jobs are poorly paid (as is most work nationwide in the retail, leisure and tourism industry). The vast majority of the jobs are close to or at the minimum wage level (£4.10 for adults and £3.50 for 18s-21s), with a very small number of jobs paid more than one pound above the national minimum wage. Poor working conditions and low levels of unionisation are also evident within these jobs at Gunwharf.

According to a senior official at Gunwharf Quays (interview) 40% of jobs within the bars, restaurants and retail outlets are part-time, which are often taken by students from the University of Portsmouth. The vast majority of the staff at these outlets are under 25 (with the majority of these being under 21). The senior official interviewed claimed that this is because the younger population are more likely to 'enjoy' working in the 'trendier and youth-orientated' shops than the older generation. This may be true, but a better explanation for the large numbers of young part-time staff is that the companies at Gunwharf employ them because they are more easily exploited (often due to lack of options or naivety), with the incentive of paying the younger staff less (e.g. paying £3.80 minimum wage rather than the £4.50 'adult' minimum wage) as well as paying part-timers less²⁶.

Furthermore, these low-skilled jobs are likely to suffer from overt or subtle discrimination especially in terms of hiring practices (Twaites 2000, Mellor 2002). The numbers of employees who are disabled and/or black and/or ethnic minorities is very low on the Gunwharf site. Whilst there are large numbers of women employed on the Gunwharf site, they are invariably in lower positions than their male counterparts, in spite of their generally better qualifications. Added to this, in section 4.1 I will highlight that how the local people from poorer Portsea area of Portsmouth have suffered from what Mellor (2002) calls 'postcode discrimination'.

Similar to other marinas in the UK and other tourist-based localities, the jobs at Gunwharf suffer heavily from strong seasonality, with 40% of staff being seasonal and invariably summer vacation jobs. The majority of trade takes place in the summer months when national and foreign tourists are visiting Portsmouth. As Gunwharf is largely an outdoor and unsheltered location, the rain and cold of the winter mean that visiting Gunwharf is an unattractive option in the winter, especially with indoor shopping mall nearby in the city centre. Added to this, the summer 'boom' corresponds with the summer vacation months for university students. Therefore, a large number of students are employed on temporary contracts, who are invariably trying to generate money for their hefty tuition fees and living expenses for the next academic year²⁷.

PCC defend the unskilled nature of the jobs by stating that the jobs "fit in well with Portsmouth's profile because we have a large number of people who aren't as well qualified or skilled" (senior civil servant, interview). To an extent this is true as

²⁶ For instance, whereas firms tend to pay full-time staff 'double pay' on Sundays, several firms at Gunwharf do not pay part-time staff 'double time' or 'time-and-a-half' on a Sunday. This often resulting in branches preferring to employ large numbers of cheap part-time staff on Sundays to increase profits.

²⁷ Their dire financial situation is largely a result of the New Labour government's introduction of tuition fees, top-up-fees and removal of grants. In turn, this invariably leads to students being highly exploited by businesses into accepting poorly paid jobs with poor working conditions.

Portsmouth has a low level of educational attainment with 45% of pupils with 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE in 2003, as opposed to a national average of 53% (see table 1) and a disproportionately high number of people with learning difficulties. However, this still does not address the fact that these jobs have brought an associated *deskilling* to the local population. Indeed, retail and leisure industry jobs involve very little training as well. For example, how much training do shop assistants really need or get? HMS Vernon with its Torpedo School, ship repair and other technical and mechanical jobs in the navy, were highly skilled and highly trained technical jobs. In sum, the jobs available at Gunwharf Quays are highly inappropriate for these members of the community. If anything, the deskilling brings with it a loss of pride and morale for the old and new workers at Gunwharf. As Clark states (2001, p8):

“Opponents of the transformation of its sites to entertainment or shopping can be accused of sentimentality. However, in communities around Portsmouth Harbour there was some unease that the new role for the military site was so far from the original national use: instead of defence related ship repair, research and training, it is leisure/tourism, luxury, housing and museums. The image of ‘dockies’ [skilled dockyard artisans] selling ice-creams seems to some to represent an extreme de-skilling after Portsmouth’s proud naval past. Another aspect is that Portsmouth’s strong focus on heritage tourism may mean that it is in danger of becoming principally a backwards-facing museum city.”

Clark (2001, p8)

Moving around jobs, trade and investment in Portsmouth

A controversial, yet central, issue is whether the development has created, or indeed will create, new *long-term* jobs and investment or whether it has simply acted to move investment and jobs around Portsmouth?

In an early attempt to prevent Gunwharf Quays from being in ‘direct’ competition with other retail areas, the initial Gunwharf Quays development brief (Weyes 1995a) stated that the Gunwharf development must not include, amongst others, a large supermarket or ‘major shopping centre’ as this will take trade away from the various large supermarkets and the Cascades shopping centre (built in the 1980s) in the city centre. Indeed, as suggested by the interviewees Gunwharf Quays was designed *not* to compete with other retail outlets in Portsmouth. Instead, Gunwharf Quays retailing was conceived as ‘designer’ and ‘cosmopolitan’ outlet which was seen as different from the other major, yet more traditional, retail centres in Portsmouth (e.g. Fred Perry and Ralph Lauren instead of Matalan and Bhs). In short, a ‘different market’ (for a ‘different class’?) Therefore, PCC believed that it will not be in *competition*, but instead would be *complimentary*²⁸.

During the planning stages, Berkeley hired Professor Richard Harris of the University of Portsmouth’s business school to estimate the number of jobs that would result from the redevelopment. Harris claimed that up to 2,300 jobs would be created by the Gunwharf development, including 1,000 jobs in related areas outside of the Gunwharf Quays (Clark 2001). For Harris, not only would Gunwharf Quays create jobs

²⁸ Yet as highlighted by a letter to City Council from the Manager of the Commercial Road branch of Allders prior to planning permission, the vast majority of products sold at Gunwharf Quays *are* very similar to those sold in the other shopping areas in Portsmouth (e.g. clothes, shoes, CDs, etc.). Indeed, the opening of a branch of HMV (a typical high-street ‘music, games and video’ store) in Gunwharf in 2003 further emphasises the (increasing) limited difference between Gunwharf’s retailing and other retail areas in Portsmouth.

on site, it would create jobs throughout the Portsmouth region (i.e. the 'multiplier effect'). Indeed, these figures unsurprisingly were used frequently by the developers and PCC during the planning and construction of Gunwharf Quays.

Not only did PCC foresee the Gunwharf development creating jobs solely in the Gunwharf site, they frequently envisaged (and still do) Gunwharf acting as a 'catalyst' for investment, trade and jobs in *other* areas in Portsmouth. Not only would the suppliers within the Portsmouth region be rewarded with extra work, the Council believed that the *civic peacockery-like* (Hall and Hubbard 1998) place-marketing of the Gunwharf/Millennium Tower image would act as a *sign* of economic revival and an entrepreneurial can-do spirit. This, in turn, would encourage firms to invest in Portsmouth as a whole. In turn, the 'glitz and glamour' of Gunwharf are hoped can counter what Bianchini *et al* (1992, p249) term, "the negative perceptions of [the] declining, dirty and inhospitable urban environment", with Portsmouth being seen as "on-the-up" and "more than just a declining dockyard town" with new firms wanting to "join in and take a piece of the success"²⁹.

In turn, PCC believe that the tourists who visit Gunwharf Quays and the forthcoming Millennium Tower will *also* visit the other retail areas and visitor attractions throughout Portsmouth – whether this is on the same day or weekend visit, or when they come back into Portsmouth in the future. Paradoxically, PCC believe that the visitor's fond memories and positive images of Gunwharf will encourage visitors to come into other areas of Portsmouth.

While, the developers and PCC paint a seemingly 'rosy' picture of Gunwharf Quays acting as a 'catalyst' for further investment, jobs and trade in Portsmouth, others are not convinced. In 1997, Harvey Cole, a local planning consultant, actively questioned Harris' figures and considered them to be a gross over-estimation. In sum, Cole believed that many of the jobs in retail and leisure at Gunwharf Quays would be transferred from elsewhere such as the city centre and other shopping areas in Southsea. In sum, Cole believed that Gunwharf would only create 300 *extra* jobs (Clark 2001). Although PCC and developers became aware of Cole's unofficial re-estimation, it was all but ignored in favour of the more positive and overly optimistic figures by Harris.

During the planning stages of Gunwharf, retailers in the Southsea area of Portsmouth questioned whether the Gunwharf development would take away trade from the traditional shopping areas within Southsea (notably Palmerston Road, Osborne Road and Albert Road). The Southsea Retailers Forum and individual retailers (and later the newly formed Albert Road Traders Association) made numerous written and verbal complaints to PCC, often through the help of Portsmouth South MP, Mike Hancock. Yet, PCC maintained (and was frequently reflected in the interviews) that the modern Gunwharf Quays development is simply a 'different market' from the more traditional and 'niche' retail outlets, restaurants and 'old-men' pubs in Southsea (most noticeably Albert Road)³⁰.

Interestingly, when questioned whether the Gunwharf development would displace investment around Portsmouth or create new investment, public and private officials constantly used (and ultimately hid behind) the 'contrasting' example of Southampton's West Quay development. Opening in 2000, West Quay is a new multi-million vast indoor shopping mall, situated on the High Street in Southampton city centre. Whilst several new retail outlets *expanded* by added a new outlet in West Quay, the

²⁹ Quotes taken from various interviews undertaken.

³⁰ Relating to this, there appears to be a widespread belief amongst other retailers in Portsmouth that the City Council has ignored them, focusing instead on the more glamorous Gunwharf Quays. For example, the marketing of Portsmouth, in terms of focusing heavily on Gunwharf Quays and the adjoining Historic Dockyard with, increasingly, little or no mention of the smaller retail and nightlife areas in Portsmouth such as Albert Road and Palmerston Road.

majority of retail outlets within West Quay have simply *relocated* from the 'outside' in the High Street (in the city centre) and from other areas in Southampton. Ultimately, this has created little or no extra investment and jobs in Southampton. Just a brand new home, with the outdoor city centre left with abandoned shops and little *new* investment³¹. As highlighted by the officials interviewed, unlike the West Quay development, no firm has simply relocated in Gunwharf Quays. However, whether or not firms have relocated to the development, Gunwharf Quays has adversely affected trade, long-term jobs and *potential* investment in other retail areas in other parts of Portsmouth.

Recently, *The News* published two articles (Thomas 2002a, 2002c) highlighting that Commercial Road (in the city centre) – the main shopping area in Portsmouth (in terms of trade and visitors) – has lost a huge 23 per cent of its number of visitors between 1999 and 2001. Yet, Thomas (2002a, p9) also highlights that whilst the visitor numbers has fallen, “traders were not reporting fallen profits.” However, another way of looking at this is that this means that the traders were also not reporting any *increases* in trade and/or profitability, as this would have been highlighted in the article. Importantly, the fall in visitor numbers in the Commercial Road, between 1999 and 2001, corresponds with the opening of the West Quay development in Southampton (late 2000) and Gunwharf (early 2001). Indeed, Thomas (2002c, p7) hints that there may be a causal link (rather than simply a correlation) between the opening of Gunwharf Quays and the decline of trade in the City Centre when he states “people are turning their backs on the centre in favour of glossy new developments like Gunwharf Quays and Southampton’s West Quay.” Interestingly during the interviews conducted, many public and private officials stated that it is ‘more likely’ to be West Quay, rather than Gunwharf, that is attracting the custom away from the city centre. However, it does seem to me that pronouncing their ‘innocence’ seems to be more a case of placing the blame on somebody else’s door-step. Whilst it cannot be denied that West Quay has attracted *some* potential visitors away from Commercial Road, Gunwharf Quays *is* by far Commercial Road’s main competitor and the biggest reason for the loss of visitor numbers. Indeed, local (and more middle-class) residents from Portsmouth form the majority of people who now visit Gunwharf, especially out-of-season. In turn, the residents of Portsmouth are highly unlikely to visit and shop at Gunwharf whilst maintaining their number of visits and spending at near-by City Centre (people only have so much money remember!) In sum, they will choose one or the other. Added to this, only a small proportion of residents of Portsmouth are likely to travel over 20 miles to use Southampton’s West Quay on a *regular* basis.

Perhaps, the area that is most likely to be affected by Gunwharf Quays in both the long-term and short-term is Port Solent. Based at the top of Portsmouth Harbour on reclaimed land, Port Solent was developed as a ‘mixed-use’ marina development, during the late 1980s (Cook 2001). Port Solent comprises of waterside gated housing and apartments as well as ‘specialist’ middle-class retail outlets, expensive bars and restaurants and a 6 screen multiplex cinema. In essence, the composition of outlets at Port Solent is extremely similar to Gunwharf Quays³² with both middle-class-orientated marinas compromising niche shopping and exclusive housing and both situated on Portsmouth Harbour. Although developers and PCC frequently state that Gunwharf Quays’ retail outlet are different because they are designer ‘discount’ stores, they have overlooked that both marinas have, what are essentially, middle-class shops.

³¹ Although, two years on from the opening of West Quay, the High Street has many new shops in the High Street, although these are often charity, seasonal and temporary outlets.

³² Ironically, this runs contra to Gunwharf Centre Management’s and the City Council’s claim that Gunwharf is a unique development in Portsmouth and is not in ‘direct’ competition.

During a study of why firms have chosen to locate at Port Solent, Cook (2001) highlights the role that the intense competition from Gunwharf will have on firms looking at Port Solent as a possible site to locate. Officials at Port Solent, whilst trying to remain optimistic, remain worried that regular and potential visitors, especially the middle-class 'yachties', would instead go to the heavily-marketed and modern waterside facilities – whether it be shopping, restaurants, bars or the cinema – at Gunwharf Quays. Added to this, the management team highlighted that the Gunwharf development, with its proximity to the city centre and good transportation access (via train, road and ferry), would expose the poor access to Port Solent, as it is only viable via car with no nearby train station and hosting a very poor bus services³³. In turn, the (potential) lack of trade and profitability has led to firms being less interested in locating in Port Solent.

“We’re told by the Port Solent management team and by the City Council that we should be worried by the Gunwharf development, but I have to admit, I’m quite worried. If you think about it, Gunwharf is a shopping, restaurant, cinema and retail development – more or less the same as us [Port Solent]... I’d be amazed if Gunwharf doesn’t steal a lot of our trade, especially from the Portsmouth and Southsea area. Every outlet here, whether shop or restaurant is going to be effected, not just me. How are we supposed to compete as we are out of the way and Gunwharf is going to be promoted till the cows come home.”

Anonymous Outlet Manager, Port Solent (2001, quoted in Cook 2001, p67)

“Firms have always been fairly keen to move to Port Solent, especially towards the mid-1990s. Although the Gunwharf development seems to have attracted all the ‘big’ names who like to locate in designer outlets or marinas... Yes, I think we have missed out on the investment; it seems that firms have jumped on the Gunwharf bandwagon and invested there – not giving us much of a chance. In fact, I heard a few months ago that [a retail owner in Port Solent] was thinking of putting a branch down in Gunwharf.”

Anonymous Senior Official, Port Solent Management (2001, quoted in Cook 2001, p64)

Whilst, no firm has relocated from Port Solent to the Gunwharf site, it is highly likely Port Solent has or will suffer from a lack of trade due to the intense competition from Gunwharf, resulting in closures of retail, restaurant and bars outlets, with associated job losses.

In summary, rather than complimenting the other shops, bars and restaurants, Gunwharf Quays is creating extra intra-urban and *zero-sum* competition for the existing retail areas such as the city centre, Port Solent and Southsea. Whilst Gunwharf hides behind a claim that ‘it is different because it is a designer outlet’, the reality is that it is poorly integrated with other retail areas in Portsmouth and has taken trade, potential investment and will ultimately cause long-term job losses in the other areas as businesses react to profit slumps.

3.4 The Millennium Tower

“Is it not time for a bit less excitement and innovation and a lot more common sense?”

³³ Port Solent has only two buses to Portsmouth City Centre every hour.

The Tower's millennium money

The Major government launched the National Lottery in 1994 with a specific aim (and marketing tool) of generating income for 'good causes' in the UK. 'Good causes' would receive 28% of the lottery ticket sales generated, with five generic areas receiving one-fifth of the 28% revenue, namely the arts, sports, national heritage, charities and commemorating the millennium (Griffiths 1998b). The government brought in a private operator, Camelot, to run the National Lottery, who controversy took 5% of sales for 'operating costs' and profits. However, the Department of National Heritage (later renamed the Department of Culture, Media and Sport) has overall responsibility for the national lottery and determines the general policy framework governing the distribution of lottery funds.

The Millennium Commission was set up in 1994 as an offshoot of the National Lottery. It is a commercially confidential, public-private quango with approximately 1.79 billion pounds to give to successful projects, which 'celebrate' the end of the old millennium and the coming of the new (Griffiths 1998b). Echoing other urban regeneration schemes in the 1990s – such as the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), City Pride and City Challenge – Millennium Commission funding was underpinned by the 'challenge fund' model of funding (Oatley 1998a, 1998b). This is whereby public and private coalitions throughout the UK were invited to *competitively*³⁴ submit bids for funding to the Commission. The Commission will then decide who does and does not receive the funding *on the basis of the quality and image of their bid rather than the scale of deprivation and need within the locality* (Griffiths 1998b, Loftman 1998, Oatley 1998c).

"I think that if someone had said "here is 100 million pounds – come and get it", there would have been a free-for-all, but what they wanted was something innovative and imaginative."

Labour councillor, PCC (July 2002)

In order for coalition bids to even be considered, the bids needed to concur with the Millennium Commission's requirements, namely:

- Have public support and local organisation *partnership* bidding;
- Add value of life to the local community;
- Look back over this millennium or forward into the new one and marks significant movement in national/local history (PHR 1998).

In November 1994, a public-private (unelected) quango in Portsmouth, the Portsmouth and South East Hampshire Partnership (PSEHP), unveiled plans for the 'Renaissance of Portsmouth Harbour'³⁵. Hedley Greentree, a prominent local architect/entrepreneur and member of the PSEHP, highlights the beginning of 'the dream', when Greentree and property expert John Vail visited PCC's head of marketing Paul Spooner (quoted in Owen 1996a, p8):

"We wanted to persuade the council to buy the Gunwharf site when it became available... But on Paul's desk was a letter asking for bids to be

³⁴ Competitive funding was thought to encourage bids to be more 'innovative' and 'entrepreneurial' as well as "to [stop] the oxygen that feeds the dependency culture" (Heseltine, quoted in Oatley 1998a, p11). Importantly, competitive bidding can be seen as part of the SWPR's move away from lexicons of equality, welfare and redistribution towards those of entrepreneurialism, competition and pro-activity.

³⁵ This did not include the Gunwharf redevelopment *per se* but did include the Tower situated *within* the Gunwharf site.

submitted to the Millennium Commission. By the end of the meeting we put two and two together and came up with the idea of the Renaissance of Portsmouth Harbour.”

The PSEHP set up an offshoot organisation/quango ‘The Renaissance of Portsmouth Harbour Limited’ (PHR) to oversee the bidding for Millennium Commission funding. The Millennium Commission’s funds were ultimately seen as ‘extra’ funding that they would not otherwise receive either from local, national or even European funding so it was certainly beneficial for the locality and the PSEHP to apply for.

In order to meet the Commission’s requirements on locality ‘partnerships’, Portsmouth and the neighbouring town of Gosport³⁶ (situated on the other side of the harbour) – who too was undergoing land release and redundancies from the MoD (see figure 8) – were brought together as one bid under the name of ‘Portsmouth Harbour’. In the document *‘The Renaissance of Portsmouth Harbour’* (PHR 1998), the quango highlights five inter-connected elements of the millennium bid:

- Two large waterfront promenades that physically link existing and new attractions and amenities in both Portsmouth and Gosport;
- Development of Priddys’ Hard Heritage Area in Gosport;
- A waterbus network across the harbour;
- Expansion and improvement of Portsmouth’s Historic Dockyard;
- A harbour tower and water/light feature built to celebrate the new millennium (PHR 1998).

For the PSEHP, PHR Limited and PCC, the centrepiece (and most expensive element) of the bid was the 165 metre Millennium Tower which will (supposedly) ‘celebrate’ the coming of the new millennium³⁷. The ‘striking’ image of the Tower ultimately secured a £30 million grant from the Millennium Commission for the PHR Limited to spend. Portsmouth Harbour was one of 18 property-led landmark projects that won funding from the Millennium Commission including the Lowry Centre in Salford (£15.6m), Millennium Stadium in Cardiff (£46m) and the controversial Millennium Dome in Greenwich, London (£400m) (Griffiths 1998b).

Why a tower?

It is vitally important to understand the product (e.g. the Tower) through the increasingly centralised nature of the Millennium Commission’s *competitive* bidding and its bidding restrictions (Oatley 1998a)³⁸. PSEHP couldn’t simply secure a grant because of the high level of poverty and need prevalent in the Portsea area. Instead, in order to secure the grant, it required a somewhat *superficial* ‘feel-good’ (Cochrane *et al* 2002) image-based development. The (expensive) promotional 3-D revolving images of the Tower are ultimately more ‘eye-catching’ and ‘striking’ than less aesthetically pleasing, yet practical, community based developments.

However, as highlighted by the interviews conducted and the official planning brief (Weyes 1995a), the Millennium Tower is (hoped) to provide a variety of potential substantial uses and functions, and therefore isn’t simply an ‘image-based’ tower. First

³⁶ Gosport was also undergoing land release and redundancies from the MoD (see figure 8).

³⁷ Although it has never been made clear exactly *how* the (somewhat functionless) tower actually ‘celebrates’ the end of the last century and the beginning of the new.

³⁸ Echoing Jessop *et al* (1999), this ‘extra-local’ understanding of the ‘product’ is, I believe, more conceptually advanced than focusing on the ‘creativity’ of the architect and the PSEHP alone. The latter would incorrectly suggest that the architect, Hedley Greentree, and the PSEHP exist in a localised political-economic vacuum.

and foremost, the Tower would include two viewing platforms (at 105m and 110m, see figure 6) near the top of the Tower for people to look out at the 'spectacular views' over Portsmouth, Gosport, the Isle of Wight coast and the Solent. Second, as part of the promotional campaign – both before and after funding was attained – frequent references and comparisons to other 'world-famous' towers, notably the Eiffel Tower and Leaning Tower of Pisa (e.g. see figure 6) were/are used. This is, no doubt, to suggest that the Tower would act in a similar or improved fashion: that is, an internationally recognised landmark and a seemingly catalyst for a successful tourist industry to its locality – an industry that PCC are determined to foster. Third, it is hoped that the Tower will act as a 'catalyst' for further business investment in Portsmouth. The *Best Value Performance Plan 2003* (PCC 2003, p23) states: "When completed [the Tower] will have a significant impact on the city, with increased direct and indirect jobs created as a result." This echoes Paul Spooner, (ex-)head of marketing of PCC and a key member of the PSEHP stated "this building alone will attract investment" (Owen 1998, p1), as the increased tourism, the new 'vibrancy' and the new revitalised 'can do' image of the Tower (and in turn Portsmouth) would bring in new investment and conspicuous consumer spending into Gunwharf and Portsmouth as a whole³⁹.

"The Tower will attract hundreds of thousands of visitors every year. You see, they won't just go up the Tower then go home – Certainly not... The visitors are going to go up have a look around Portsmouth and the Solent for an hour or so, then they will *also* go and get something to eat or see something in a shop that they like and buy it... It'll be a catalyst if you like."

Labour councillor, PCC (July 2002)

There can be no doubt that in spite of the rhetoric proclaiming the 'inevitable' benefits of the Tower, it continues to be a highly controversial development. This can be briefly highlighted by graffiti on the official promotional poster situated outside the Tower's construction area boldly stating '*waste of money*' and '*spend on housing*' (the poster has subsequently been removed).

The Tower has consistently received strong support from the Labour and Conservative parties who have been in-and-out of power of PCC over the past decade. The Liberal Democrats⁴⁰, spearheaded by their charismatic MP Mike Hancock, on the other hand have continued to oppose plans for the Tower:

"Some people seem to think that the Tower will act as a 'catalyst'. Twaddle. People don't invest because there is a bloody tower there that can hold 50 people. You don't make business decisions because of a tower. You might location here because you have got three million people a year coming into Gunwharf and people might invest in the harbour because of that. But you won't get people investing because of a bloody tower. Not a second class one at that, one with a plastic cone on the top of it."

Liberal Democrat councillor, PCC (August 2002)

The Liberal Democrats and other critics have consistently argued that it is highly debateable that the Tower will attract the vast number of people that PCC and the

³⁹ However, it has never been made clear by any organisation involve exactly *how* this tower will attract new businesses into the area, as will be explained later.

⁴⁰ The Liberal Democrats, who although have a MP: Mike Hancock (elected in Portsmouth South since 1997), have been effectively a backbench party within Portsmouth City Council until mid-2003 when they won the local elections on a very narrow majority.

PSEHP predicted. Indeed, in 1998, Berkeley (who had invested £3 million into tower) in 1998, the Tower would only attract 300,000 visitors as opposed to (the very optimistic) 700,000 visitors that PCC had expected (Thomas 2002d). Indeed, as one Liberal Democrat councillor stated “the view of Portsmouth is great – but only if you live here”. The councillor was sceptical that people would go up the Tower as the view of Portsmouth is “hardly spectacular or the buildings and architecture of the city well known”. Added to this, it is highly unlikely that firms will locate in Portsmouth simply because of a large tower on its waterfront as firms are surely not that superficial. Are they? Indeed, wouldn't existing and potential firms rather the money was spent on infrastructure or training rather than a picturesque tower?

When built, it is highly likely to be a ‘big white elephant’ that certainly will not benefit the whole community of Portsmouth. Few direct jobs are to be created by the Tower (less than 50, with all being unskilled and poorly paid with most being part-time and/or temporary) and the Tower is unlikely to create the levels of investment that the hype suggests. At 30 million pounds and rising (with £27m coming from the Millennium Commission and £3m from Berkeley), surely the money for the Tower should have been better spent on something else? As Hancock (quoted in Woolford and Litterick 1998, p13) summarises “a far better way of celebrating the millennium would have been to improve the quality of life for people in Portsmouth, which this tower certainly doesn't do.”

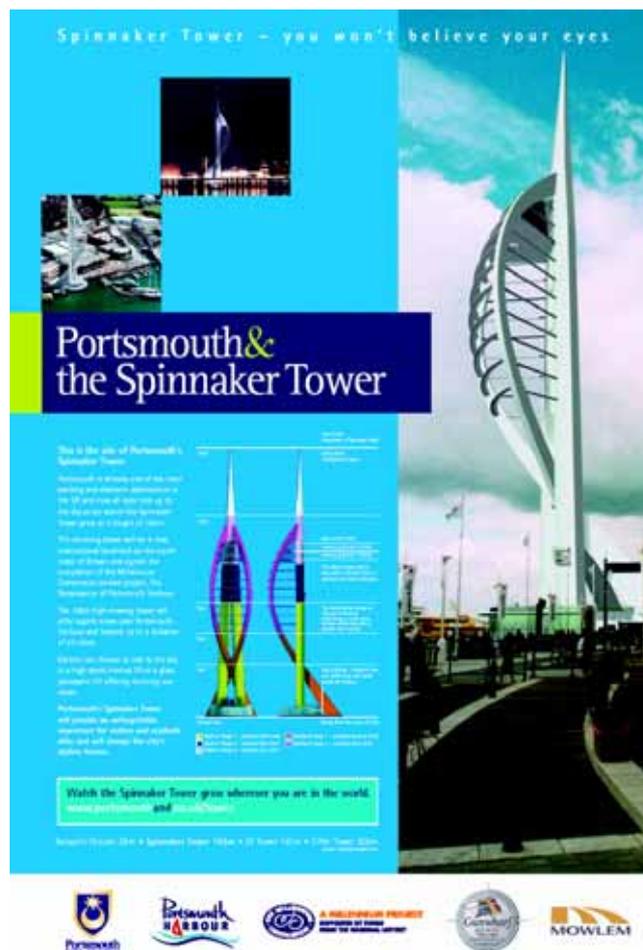


Figure 6: I can't believe my eyes: the Spinnaker Tower when finished
 Source: www.portsmouthand.co.uk/tower

The public's Tower?



Figure 7: Local democracy in action? Residents 'decide' the Tower design (Source: Owen 1998, p1)

With the help of Ben Stoneham's *The News*⁴¹ (who, themselves, are keen advocates of the Tower), PCC and the PSEHP gave the public of Portsmouth and Gosport the chance to choose from three different designs – all designed by local architect, Hedley Greentree – to choose from (see figure 7). In a relatively low turnout, the 'spinnaker design' – which was shaped like a billowing ship's sail – was chosen out of the three designs with 59 per cent of the votes (4,237 votes) (Owen and Southorn 1998, p7). However, in spite of rhetorical claims of “getting the community involved in the decision-making” (local councillor interview) and the Millennium Commission's requirement of 'public support for the project', the community were excluded from the *real* decision on the Tower – whether it should be the centrepiece of the bid or not? As Hancock (quoted in Brady 1998, p8, emphasis added) states: “The council offered the city a choice between three different designs for the Tower, *but not whether we wanted a*

⁴¹ As stated earlier, *The News* is very supportive and uncritical of the development because their director, Ben Stoneham, is on the board of both the PSEHP and Portsmouth Harbour Renaissance Limited (PHR) who are in control of the Millennium bid.

tower in the first place.” In essence, this decision was made behind closed doors between members of the PSEHP quango and PCC preventing democratic, open debate over the Tower. Even the pragmatic and/or critical comments from the Liberal Democrats were highly unwelcome and seldom acknowledged by the Council (and *The News*). For instance, Syd Rapson, Labour MP for Portsmouth North, argues that Hancock “just waffles on and [tries to] win brownie points for himself” (quoted in Brady 1998, p8).

“A lot of people were bullied. They were frightened. *The News*, for instance, were saying that how shameful it is that they do not support it. They used to write editorials saying ‘why won’t [a councillor] now get behind the Tower?’ Then I would write to *The News* and explain why but they would ignore me... If *The News* are such big supporters, why don’t they put some money into it? They are so sure that it is a business success, yet no businesses are queued up to invest in the Tower. We had one group of clowns that said they wanted to operate it, with one barrage of questions from PCC and me, they threw their hands up and walked away. Then, I got a bollocking from the Council saying that I scared them off. Well, if I scared them away by asking them simple questions about how they were going to operate it, then they obviously hadn’t thought through very carefully what they were going to do.”

Liberal Democrat councillor, PCC (August 2002)

As part of their resistance to the Tower, Liberal Democrat representatives frequently contacted the Millennium Commission to, amongst other things, question their motives and ask them to critically look again at the unfolding of the events and delays in building of the Millennium Tower in Portsmouth. However, as highlighted in an interview with a Liberal Democrat councillor, the Millennium Commission would frequently take upwards of 6 weeks to reply to their letter(s). Furthermore, their replies were deemed to be ‘vague’, ‘unsatisfactory’ and ‘ultimately unhelpful’. Echoing this, as part of my research the Millennium Commission did not reply to me after I sent two letters and two emails requesting information and/or an interview. Furthermore, its unelected⁴² quango status (including its ‘commercial confidentiality’ agreement); its lack of true public consultation; and its inability to justify itself suggest a real lack of any true public accountability by the Millennium Commission.

Pulling out of the Tower

Infamously and ironically, the Millennium Tower was never built in time for the millennium, and *it has still not been fully built at the time of writing* (see figure 1), with the prospective finishing date consistently going back every few months. The latest completion date is now late 2004 – although this date is likely to be different (later no doubt) when you read this. In spite of the delays PCC and the PSEHP decided to continue with the Tower, with Cllr Leo Madden (then head of PCC) stating in 1999 that he will resign if the Tower is not built.

The delays have largely resulted from two different consortiums pulling out of the (part-)funding and construction of the Tower. Initially Berkeley (the developers of Gunwharf Quays) had promised to invest £9 million into the Tower as well as to build and operate the Tower. However, as Thomas (2002b) highlights, just days before a major

⁴² The Millennium Commission’s board is appointed by the Queen, and includes unelected minor celebrities such as Floella Benjamin, who are arguably unsuitable and are unlikely to have an adequate understanding of urban regeneration schemes for such prominent role in charge of allocating £1.67 billion of funds.

public exhibition, hosted by PCC and Berkeley in February 1998, to announce that the public can choose the Tower's design, Berkeley had written a very serious letter to PCC. It stated that they had reviewed the visitor figures predicted by PCC which estimated that 700,000 people would visit a year. Instead, Berkeley foresaw 300,000 people visiting a year (Audit Commission 2004, PCC 2004). On the basis of this, Berkeley decided that they would pull out of investing in the Tower. After lengthy and heated negotiations with PCC and the PSEHP, Berkeley invested only £3 million into the Tower, with the Tower being revised to make cost saving of £6 million (PCC 2004).

A second consortium, Portsmouth Spinnaker Tower (PST) Limited were appointed by the Millennium sub-committee in December 1999. However, PST Limited failed to begin the construction of the Tower before the deadline date set by PCC, and in January 2000, PCC terminated the contract with PST Limited. However, PST Limited sued PCC for being 'unjustifiably sacked' and were given almost £1 million of public money by PCC as compensation out of court (Audit Commission 2004, PCC 2004).

When it surely couldn't get any worse, a new developer, Mowlem, was brought in to construct the Tower in November 2000. Importantly, PCC and Mowlem did not (and still have not) signed a contract to state that Mowlem will construct and complete the Tower for the agreed fees. Then in June 2002, Mowlem informed PCC that the projected costs were too low and that PCC will have to fund the projected extra £4 million costs, as Mowlem were not prepared to do this (Thomas and Owen 2002, Audit Commission 2004). Crucially, Mowlem had *already begun construction work* on the site early in 2002, and with no contract signed. Mowlem, therefore, could effectively walk out on the development leaving a quarter-built Tower on the Portsmouth landscape. PCC have subsequently agreed to pay Mowlem the extra projected costs.

Redirecting public funds for the Tower

"It's a bit of a rod to beat us with."

Conservative councillor, PCC (July 2002)

To date, the total *public* cost of the Tower is a huge £8.4 million (Audit Commission 2004, Maddox 2004, PCC 2004). After the damning Audit Commission report (2004) and a comprehensive cross-party PCC (2004) report into the Tower, the Labour Party has removed Cllr Madden (who was singled out in the reports for mismanagement) from the head of the party (although he is still a ward councillor)⁴³. Relating to this, in one interview a Liberal Democrat councillor was extremely critical of PCC's handling of the situation. He argues that they have "taken no responsibility" and crucially didn't listen to their repeated claims, from its inception, that the Tower would be likely to drain public resources. Indeed, Mike Hancock MP echoed this when arguing that the only reason that the Council continue to support it is because it wants to "protect the political credibility of the government, the council and the Millennium Commission" (quoted in Woolford and Litterick 1998, p13):

"The Council are in denial. No one in the Council takes responsibility for any of it. They claim credit for everything and responsibility for nothing... They are not up to it. They are obviously unable to do it, and unable to listen to anyone who has said anything other than they want to hear. They ended

⁴³ Whilst not questioning the need for the Tower, *The News* have begun a two year campaign for the heads of the Labour and Conservative parties to resign from PCC for the long delay in building the Tower and their 'incompetence and complacency', with particular reference to the inability to sign a legally-binding contract with Mowlem (see *The News* 2002).

up surrounded by people who were saying that it [the Tower] was a good thing but none of the people who were giving that advice were ever going to pay for it... Madden and Worley's incompetence is beyond belief. They can't have any self-respect left otherwise they would have gone ages ago."

Liberal Democrat councillor, PCC (August 2002)

Fundamentally, Portsmouth is riddled with deep-rooted social and economic problems that need substantial funding from public money. The severe lack of financial support from the previous Conservative and the current New Labour governments means that they *must not* waste any of the precious funds that they do have on superficial and speculative image-based projects such as the Tower. Poverty is extremely high in Portsmouth with an average household income of more than £3,000 less than the national average. The inner-city area of Portsea (which is adjacent to Gunwharf) has an average household income of only £11,000 (the national average is £23,200, see table 2). These lower income groups clearly depend on public services and if these services are going to be cut, these people will be the first and worst hit. Most importantly, PCC do not have a spare £8.4 million, therefore the money is being redirected from other public funds. Echoing Birmingham's controversial flagship redevelopment of its CBD in the mid-1980s (see Campbell 2001), PCC is likely to transfer money away from other important public services to support the £8.4 million public cost of the Tower.

In summary, the Millennium Tower is exemplary of the recent neo-liberal urban entrepreneurial flagship projects in the UK (and beyond). At the heart of the matter, it is fundamentally limited by the centralised nature of the Millennium Commission's centralised and competitive bidding format. The 'feel-good' format and the ambiguity of its links to *substantial* urban regeneration projects and policies left bidders having to rely on image-based, shallow bids which are more 'eye-catching' than helping to solve the underlying inner city problem at the turn of the millennium. It is not so much the problem that it was not built for the Millennium that is the most worrying aspect, it is the fact that it should never have been built or designed in the first place, especially without true consultation with the public.

3.5 'Exclusive' Housing at Gunwharf: Gentrification or Not?

Bringing in the middle-classes

For one Labour councillor (interview), the housing development at Gunwharf is "unique for Portsmouth... and marks a new phase in housing developments in Portsmouth". In stark contrast to existing housing stock in Portsmouth, the residential accommodation at Gunwharf is approximately 30% luxury housing and 70% luxury apartments, with the majority of apartments with only one or two bedrooms. In 2002 the average price for a two bedroom house at Gunwharf, when first sold, was £435,000. With the most expensive waterfront apartment being sold in 2002 for £885,000 and the lowest price for accommodation at Gunwharf was a *one* bedroom apartment for £93,000 in early 1999. Added to this, the houses prices in Gunwharf have increased by 45% in two years between 2000 and 2002. In sum, it is very expensive and 'exclusive' accommodation. Yet, to date, there is not one unit of social and/or affordable housing within the Gunwharf site. What are the reasons behind this then?

PCC hoped that Gunwharf would be a 'catalyst' to actively encourage a 'back-to-the-city' movement following a depopulation and suburbanisation of the city since the mid-20th Century onwards, with a loss of 10.3% of the population from 1971 to 1991 (1991 Census). As one Labour councillor (interview) highlights, Gunwharf was designed

to capture the *middle-class* skilled suburb population who have seemingly fled the city for the suburbs:

“It was all part of the plans to encourage people to come back into the city. Portsmouth, itself, is the poor relation of the rest of Hampshire. Whether we liked it or not, when people got a few more bob, they would go out over the hill. People with skills were leaving the city and, sometimes, coming back to work in the city. Which wasn’t good for empowering the community and getting people involved in community things. So with Gunwharf and some in Old Portsmouth, we are talking about 300 or 400 thousand – often as a second home. Hopefully, this could help counter-act this trend. We had the relation before with expensive housing, and that was Port Solent – so we knew it would work.”

Labour councillor, PCC (July 2002)

PCC (amongst others) felt that gentrification was a central *pro-active* way to a) increase the value of land to its potential land value (Smith 1996); b) raise tax revenue and the city’s revenue support grant from national government; and c) bring in ‘skilled’ residents. Defending this strategy, PCC rhetoric states that by bringing in middle-class residents, the tax-base will increase due to their higher-tax brackets and increased numbers. In turn, trickle-down via the taxation system will benefit *all* residents of Portsmouth through better public services. Added to this, the supply of middle-class housing is part of a speculative strategy to attract national and international inward investment (and jobs), as firms *may* be attracted to Portsmouth for its supply of luxurious housing for their management and highly-skilled (mobile) workers.

As well as a perceived lack of ‘upmarket’ housing and apartments within Portsmouth, another reason why PCC believe the middle-class skilled population has ‘abandoned’ Portsmouth is its poor *image* (e.g. that of a ‘declining’, ‘grubby’ and working class city). With its seemingly middle-class Utopian image – that is, grand architecture, its ‘quasi-nautical’ theme and its ‘entertainment on your doorstep’ design – the development was surely capable of attracting back the middle classes to Portsmouth. Well, Gunwharf Quays anyway.

Where’s the affordable and social housing?

This is a good question especially when reading policy H5 of the 1995 Local Plan for Portsmouth (PCC 1995, p61, emphasis added). It states that “for new housing [developments] and other appropriate residential development sites... [planning] permission will normally be granted *provided they include a proportion of affordable housing*”. That is, if affordable housing is not provided in the plans, planning permission *will not* be given⁴⁴. Yet it seems any commitment to standing by the Local Plan’s key housing policy seemed to go by the way-side when Gunwharf planning brief (Weyes 1995a, p15) informs us:

“Housing proposals should normally include an element of affordable housing and ‘barrier free’ housing with accordance with Policy H5 of the City Local Plan (as modified). The City Council will not, in this situation,

⁴⁴ PCC (1995, p61) define ‘affordable housing’ as “housing which is accessible to those whose income does not enable them to buy or rent accommodation appropriate to their needs in the free market.” In practice, this usually involves the developer allocating a select number of properties on the site and they are then given to a housing association to rent out under a section 106 agreement (see Morrison 2003).

impose a requirement for affordable housing but would welcome an element of social housing by a Housing Association.”

Weyes (1995a, p13)

Completely unsurprisingly, the developers Berkeley decided against incorporating any social housing and/or affordable housing in the development and opted for solely luxury (read expensive) apartments and housing. Indeed, one councillor interviewed highlighted the Council’s seeming fear of Berkeley (the apparent footloose and fancy-free investor) being discouraged by the redistributive *and costly* section 106 agreement:

“Would you like the ‘much-cited answer’ or the ‘correct answer’? Well, I’ll give you the ‘correct’ answer... we wanted to put a small amount of affordable housing on the Gunwharf site, but Berkeley weren’t happy with that. In fact, Berkeley threatened to walk away if we made them do that. In the end, there was nothing that we could do and Berkeley ended up building solely expensive/luxury housing, with no affordable housing.”

Labour councillor, PCC (July 2002)

Needless to say, Berkeley’s prime motive as a private property developer is to maximise its profits and to capture the maximum potential ground rent on the site (Smith 1996). Therefore, *voluntarily* including a selection of affordable housing is highly unlikely as this would potentially lower their profit margin (Levy 2003b). However, it was the planning brief’s wavering of policy H5 of the 1995 Local Plan (that was democratically decided and produced *before* Berkeley placed its bid), which was the *initial and foremost reason* that social and affordable housing was not included.

Interestingly, a small element of social housing is likely to be built on the Gunwharf Quays site in the not-too-distance-future. At the time of writing, Berkeley (after one failed planning application) are preparing a planning application for two vast multi-storey apartment blocs (‘Ariadne’ and ‘West Side Plaza’, with the later at 29 storeys high). These are likely to include the *minimum* social housing requirements (for the individual buildings rather than the whole Gunwharf site). In turn, the social housing element, if given permission, will be owned by Berkeley and run by a Housing Association. Yet following Planning Policy Guidance 3 (DETR 200b) and Circular 6/98 (DETR 1998) – which encourages local planning authorities to meet the housing needs of ‘key workers’ (Morrison 2003) – the proposed social housing will be designated as ‘key worker accommodation’. In the previous failed Ariadne planning application, the key worker accommodation was earmarked for key staff (earning under a certain wage) at a main Portsmouth hospital. There is little doubt that these essential hospital workers – due to chronic low pay and inflated local property prices – are increasingly unable to buy their own property in the city (or surrounding area) and could welcome this accommodation. Yet perhaps what is most important, and worrying, is who the development *excludes*: notably the other low-paid and unemployed residents of Portsmouth (who do not live with a ‘key worker’), such as cleaners, shop workers, factory staff etc. It seems that whilst Berkeley are clearly reluctant to supply affordable social housing, they are clearly happier to accommodate low-paid *professionals* (i.e. key workers) than low-paid non-professionals (e.g. ‘Average Joe’ from Portsea) who lack the right (middle-class) image for Gunwharf Quays.

Addressing the housing needs of Portsmouth?

The housing development at Gunwharf clearly does not address any of the major housing problems in Portsmouth. Bringing in new residents is *not* necessary, whereas improving the quality of life of the existing residents is essential. Portsmouth has an extremely high population density with overcrowded housing and high-rise flats prominent in the inner-city areas of Portsea, Somers Town and Buckland. Therefore, planning opportunities, especially for new housing, is very limited and the development that does take place *must be appropriate*.

Firstly, Portsmouth is a traditionally working-class city with an average household income of £20,100 compared to a national average of £23,200 in 2002 (PCC 2002b, see also Burtenshaw 2002). Households and individuals in Portsmouth simply cannot afford the ridiculously expensive housing at Gunwharf, and it is only the middle-classes, who are often from outside the city, that are able to afford the housing.

Secondly, a vast increase in the supply of affordable social housing in Portsmouth is essential. While there are 11,000 council homes in Portsmouth (PCC 2002), this figure was once 15,273 in the early 1980s, a huge drop of 34.5% (1981 Census). This is largely due to several inter-related neo-liberal national government strategies: Firstly, the Conservative government's centrally imposed 1980 Housing Act required local councils to allow tenants the right to buy their council homes at a discount price that reflected the length of their tenancy⁴⁵ (Goodwin 1997, Harloe *et al* 1992, Pacione 2001). This allowed thousands of council residents in Portsmouth to buy their council homes. Secondly, central government dramatically reduced funding for council housing (e.g. from £7.2 billion in 1978 to £1.6 billion in 1990, Goodwin 1997). Added to this, the building and maintenance of council housing has fallen down the 'priority list' (Harloe *et al* 1992), with market-led *private* developments being increasingly favoured. This is reflected in the huge council housing waiting list of over 7,000 in Portsmouth (PCC 2002).

Thirdly, a disproportionate amount of housing in Portsmouth is neglected and dilapidated. This includes many council homes and high-rise flats in Portsea, Buckland, Paulsgrove and (notably) Somers Town. Furthermore, there are approximately 5,800 private houses that are considered "unfit for habitation" by PCC, with "thousands in need of substantial repair" (PCC 2002b, p58).

Forth, also in need is the increasing homeless population of Portsmouth. There have been 1,933 applications for 'certified homelessness' to PCC in 2000/2001, which was up 23% from 1995/96 (PCC 2002). Although commonly misread as *solely* a result of alcohol and drug abuse, homelessness is also largely a result of the high long-term unemployment in Portsmouth, declining welfare assistance, increasing family break-up and the inflated private house prices and, indeed, *high council house waiting lists*.

For those residents of Portsmouth in the dilapidated private housing; in poorly funded council housing; on the huge council house waiting lists; those who are unable to get on the housing 'market' and the homeless, this development of expensive 'out-of-reach' housing at Gunwharf is extremely inappropriate.

Is it gentrification though?

"Gentrification? I can say immediately that gentrification is not what we are about. Portsmouth is grubby but we do not want to be gentrified... Gentrification is not a process that I ally myself with."

⁴⁵ The Conservatives believed that household ownership brought (speculative) long-term economic benefits as the house-prices were 'likely' to rise. Added to this, home ownership was seen to foster a sense of independence, responsibility and ownership.

Many, including the interviewee above, would argue that the luxury housing development in Gunwharf doesn't represent 'gentrification'. In their view, this is because the new middle-class housing has not *displaced any working-class housing* as it was built upon an old naval dockyard which had no housing on it previously. However, I would disagree as the *upper-middle-class* housing is built upon a traditionally *working-class* naval base and is situated within and next one of the poorest areas of Portsmouth (Portsea, see section 4.1). Therefore, working-class displacement *has* occurred and, therefore, this does represent gentrification.

With explicit reference to the ongoing debates on economy/culture as the causes of gentrification (e.g. see Hamnett 1992, 2003, Smith 1992), I believe that although consumer 'cultural' choice is important, it is *only* important for the elite who can *afford* to live at Gunwharf Quays. Therefore capital and class are the deciding factors. Undoubtedly, those who can afford to live at Gunwharf have some cultural affinities with the sanitised inner city (perhaps with the naval 'history' associated with the area) and/or an appreciation of the proximity to the leisure facilities at Gunwharf and the city centre. However, agreeing with Smith (1992, 1996) when studying gentrification we must primarily focus on the *producers of gentrified properties* – notably the state and property developers amongst others. This is because gentrifiers "do very little gentrifying; at best they move into housing stock already transformed for gentrified consumption" (Smith 1992, p113). Gentrification is largely the result of the structural actions of capital (e.g. devalorization in the inner-city) and, importantly, its interactions with the (neo-liberal) state. For example, Berkeley (or any of the other bidders) would not have placed a bid for the Gunwharf site unless there was a substantial 'rent gap' (between the actual and potential land value, see figure 2) in the inner city, as this would not have been profitable.

As highlighted earlier, the role of the local and national state is vitally important (Hackworth and Smith 2001, Smith 2002), as the gentrification of Gunwharf Quays is far from a 'marginal oddity' but a central goal of British neo-liberal urban policy and is "ambitiously and scrupulously planned" (Smith 2002, p439). Whilst not on the same scale as in inner city areas of London, Leeds or Manchester, Gunwharf Quays looks set to be far from a single incident of, and possibly the beginnings of, gentrification in Portsmouth's inner city. For PCC, it seems gentrification, along with its cousin property-led regeneration, is increasingly a key (speculative) strategy for an urban renaissance.

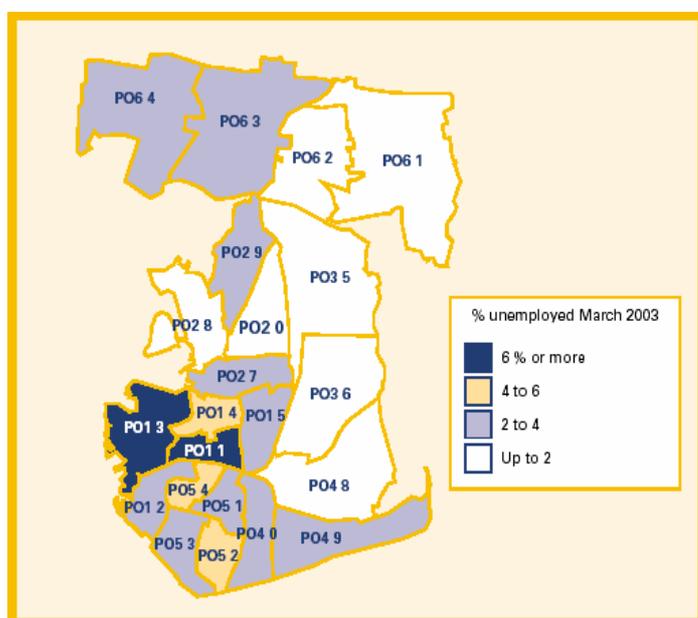
In further concurrence with Smith, gentrification in Portsmouth is, indeed, a class-based process with the middle-classes moving into traditional working-class areas. This is simply because it is only the middle-classes who are able to *afford* to buy or rent these expensive properties (Harloe *et al* 1992). However, as commentators have stated before, gentrification has gender and race connotations and repercussions. Middle-class, middle aged, white professionals couples form the overwhelming majority of the residents at Gunwharf. Often these professional couples (with their high dual incomes) are from outside of Portsmouth (e.g. the nearby commuter villages and towns such as Horndean, Hayling Island and Fareham). These couples invariably have no more than one child and often no children (living with them). The properties (particularly the apartments) often have only one or two bedrooms, and for larger family sizes these are somewhat inappropriate. With the prevailing discrimination in the labour market, ethnic minorities, women (especially single mothers), the disabled and other minority groups are often stuck in the secondary labour market and are therefore unable to access the extremely well paid jobs in order to afford the private housing at Gunwharf. Indeed, in an interview with a senior official from Berkeley I discovered that only one resident of Gunwharf was known to be physically disabled at the time.

In summary, the ongoing housing development(s) at Gunwharf must be seen as gentrification as it is a socio-spatial process, orchestrated by the neo-liberal entrepreneurial local and national state and private developers with the aims of a) capitalising upon the rent gap, b) increase the property prices of the area and surrounding area and c) raising the tax base and revenue support and d) using it as a speculative catalyst for an urban renaissance. However, the luxury housing at Gunwharf is highly inappropriate for the residents of Portsmouth. The high levels of poverty and dilapidated housing, huge council house waiting lists and increasing homelessness experienced by the working-class (especially ethnic minorities and women) are ignored in favour of the middle-classes (invariably white and male or couples) from outside of Portsmouth (and often second-homes at that) who are the only groups who are able to afford the housing costs at Gunwharf.

4. AN URBAN RENAISSANCE? SORRY WRONG NUMBER⁴⁶

4.1 Gunwharf and the ‘Portsea Problem’

As the first part of a conclusion to this paper, I will focus briefly on the socio-spatial influences and impacts of the Gunwharf development on the adjacent working-class area of Portsea. Portsea has been traditionally dependent upon the dockyard and the navy for employment. In fact, Riley (1987, p59) claims that the dockyard was the very *raison d'être* for Portsea. Therefore, the redundancies in the dockyard and the navy have had a devastating effect on the residents of Portsea in particular (Necrews 2000, Twaites 2000). Particularly from the onset of naval and dockyard decline, the area has traditionally suffered from relatively high levels of unemployment, with a slight revival in recent years largely due to a structural upturn in the economy (8.7% in 2002, see also figure 8).



The area of Portsea encompasses post-codes PO1 1, PO1 3 and PO1 4.

(Gunwharf Quays is situated on the harbour-side between PO1 3 and PO1 2).

Figure 8:
Unemployment in Portsmouth by post-code (March 2003)
Source: PCC 2003, p 28

⁴⁶ This title is adapted from Jones' (1997b) article.

It is highly questionable whether the jobs created in Gunwharf are actually taken by residents of Portsea⁴⁷. Twaites (2000) accurately highlights that although the Gunwharf development may be situated next to Portsea; it is highly questionable whether the jobs actually go to those residents. In fact, as highlighted earlier, a large number are summer and/or part-time jobs that go to students at the University of Portsmouth (who usually live during term-times in the southern central areas of the city), meaning that the Portsea residents often miss out.

Added to this, Portsea has a large number of people with low educational attainment. Whilst there was a dramatic increase between 2002 and 2003, only 26% of the pupils from the main nearby secondary school, St. Luke's, achieving 5 or more GCSE grades between A*-C, compared to a national average of 53% in 2003 (see table 1). Related to this, Portsea (and St. Luke's) also has a disproportionate level of residents with learning difficulties (43.9% of St Luke's pupils have special education needs). The stigma of low levels of educational attainment and learning difficulties will also prevent the residents of Portsea from gaining employment, even the poorly paid, unskilled jobs at Gunwharf.

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
St. Luke's School	n/a	6	6	10	26
Portsmouth LEA	31	32	34	36	45
England	46	47	59	50	53

Table 1: Percentage of pupils passing 5 or more GCSEs (grades A*-C), 1999-2003
Based on Department for Education and Skills statistics (www.dfes.gov.uk) and PCC 2003

Discrimination against the residents of Portsea in the job market would be unsurprising from the employers as Portsea has a high level of perceived 'undesirables', such as ethnic minorities, the disabled, the elderly, those with chronic ill-health, and single mothers (Twaites 2000). These factors are compounded by what Mellor (2002) refers to as '*postcode discrimination*', whereby the employers will discriminate against the residents of particular areas, notably working-class areas such as Portsea, which evokes (exaggerated) images of high levels of crime, vandalism, drug use and low levels of education, etc.

Even if some residents of Portsea get job placements in the Gunwharf development, the jobs are highly inappropriate. The poor residents of Portsea, especially the long-termed unemployed, simply do not need *part-time* jobs (60% of the jobs available) and/or *temporary* jobs (60% of the jobs available) as they need full-time long-term employment to guarantee a sufficient income. As mentioned earlier, the jobs at Gunwharf are also poorly paid, not to mention poorly trained, lowly skilled and often non-unionised job. Following on from this, table 2 suggests the Gunwharf development's quantitative inability to create a true economic 'renaissance' for the people who need it the most. Fundamentally, residents of Portsea are now officially worse off (in both absolute and relative terms) than before the opening of Gunwharf.

Added to this, the consumption of Gunwharf's retail outlets, bar and restaurants and leisure facilities are beyond the economic means of the residents of Portsea (and the majority of Gunwharf Quays workers). Quite simply, the cosmopolitan, or rather exclusive, retail outlets, bars and restaurants are designed for and used by the middle-

⁴⁷ Indeed, none of those interviewed were able to say that the Gunwharf development has created substantial employment in Portsea.

class commuter-belt residents and wealthy tourists. In this sense, although Gunwharf has opened its walls to the public, it has only opened its walls to *certain* middle-class sections of society, and certainly not its ‘undesirable’ neighbours in Portsea.

Area	Average Income 2001 (£)	Average Income 1999 (£)	Actual Change (£)	% Change
Portsea	11,000	11,400	-400	-3.4
Portsmouth	20,100	19,000	1,100	+5.4
UK	23,200	21,300	1,900	+8.6

Table 2: Average household incomes in Portsea, Portsmouth and UK
Source: PCC 2002, p5

4.2 Solving the Problems or Image over Substance?

“A development like Gunwharf wasn’t needed. Portsmouth needed to develop Gunwharf in the interest of the city rather in the interests of the property developers. Sadly, we are left with the worst possible situation; a property company developing the area to an idea that they want, an idea which I believe is second best. Providing a lot of shops which will undoubtedly damage the city centre; high priced housing which will certainly not help the housing situation in Portsmouth or South Hampshire... It will look very attractive I have no doubt and a lot of money can be made from them, and it may provide a few jobs, but it won't solve any of the city’s major problems, which we could have used the site for.”

Cllr Mike Hancock MP (undated, quoted in Necrews 2000, p20)

On the surface, the Gunwharf Quays development may look the post-industrial, entrepreneurial Utopia. Yet, through a *critical* ‘alternative reading’ of the redevelopment this paper has fundamentally questioned whether this development does provide a sustainable basis for economic (and social) regeneration of Portsmouth. The key contradictions of the redevelopment highlighted in this paper can be summarised as follows:

1. The planning of Gunwharf Quays and the Millennium Tower lacked extensive public consultation and public accountability during its *formative* stages. Furthermore, the inclusion of unaccountable and undemocratic quangos (namely the PSEHP, PHR Ltd. and the Millennium Commission) into the *real* decision-making and planning of the Millennium Tower meant that any type of *democratic* decision-making became near-impossible. Whilst the public were able to pick one of the three designs for the Millennium Tower, the public were never involved in the real decision, whether Portsmouth should *plan and build* the Tower. Instead, this decision was made behind closed doors and ‘commercial confidentiality’ agreements between PCC, the PSEHP quango (and its offshoot) and the notoriously unaccountable and unelected national quango, the Millennium Commission.
2. Although the ‘new’ jobs at Gunwharf may be in ‘growth markets’ such as leisure and tourism, these ‘McJobs’ are fundamentally within the *after-Fordist secondary labour market*. That is, undeniably poorly paid, low skilled, poorly trained, non-unionised with the majority being part-time and/or temporary. Therefore, it can be argued that these jobs in Gunwharf *redefine* or even *reinforce* poverty and low

pay within Portsmouth communities. Added to this, employment discrimination – notably in terms of race, gender and post-code – leads to the marginalized and poorest members of the community, who need the jobs most, often not being able to get them.

3. Furthermore, whilst the rhetoric behind the Gunwharf development suggests that the retail and nightlife components of the development is ‘different’ from the other more ‘traditional’ retail areas because it is a ‘designer outlet’, the reality couldn’t be more different. That is, it represents fierce intra-urban and, ultimately, zero-sum competition (Harvey 1989a) for other retail and nightlife areas, such as the city centre, Southsea and Port Solent, in Portsmouth. Gunwharf has begun to, and will continue to, take trade and potential investment away from these areas, leading to long-term job losses in the other areas as businesses in competing areas react to profit slumps. Therefore, in spite of the boosterist claims of the developers, PCC, local quangos, and the local newspaper, the Gunwharf development *in the long-term* has not tackled the underlying economic problems of a low-wage economy, high unemployment and under-investment.
4. The (unfinished) ‘centrepiece’ of the Gunwharf development, the Millennium Tower, is fundamentally limited by the highly *centralised* and *competitive* nature of the bidding process (Oatley 1995a). Whilst the Millennium Commission provided ‘extra’ funds that the locality would not have received otherwise, the ‘feel-good’ format and the ambiguity of its links to substantial urban regeneration projects and policies left bidders having to rely on shallow, image-based bids. It is no surprise, therefore, that the PSEHP bid was more ‘eye-catching’ and cosmetic rather than seeking to solve Portsmouth’s underlying inner city problems at, and beyond, the Millennium. Added to this, the Tower, which never had public support, seems likely to extract at least £8 million of public funds with other public services hit by funding cuts.
5. The expensive housing component Gunwharf must be viewed as a process of gentrification, which is orchestrated by the neo-liberal entrepreneurial state and the private developers. It has the explicit aim of capitalising upon the capital devalorization of the inner city and the subsequent rent gap (Smith 1996); raising the tax base; increase the property prices of the area and surrounding area and to act as a key speculative strategy for an ‘urban renaissance’. However, the luxury housing at Gunwharf is simply inappropriate for the residents of Portsmouth. The prevailing problems of high levels of poverty, dilapidated housing, huge council house waiting lists and increasing homelessness experienced by many individuals and communities in Portsmouth are completely ignored. Rather, the housing development is designed for the middle-classes (invariably white and male or dual income couples) from outside of Portsmouth (and often second-homes at that), who are the only groups who are able to afford the extremely housing costs at Gunwharf.

To finish, Gunwharf Quays represents a neo-liberal, entrepreneurial Urban Development Project (UDP). Quite simply, its inherent contradictions mean that it cannot be viewed as a stable basis for economic regeneration as it has not, and will not, lead to a “resolution of urban problems” (Roberts 2000, p17) in Portsmouth. Instead the *underlying, deep-rooted* problems of inner city poverty, economic and social polarization, high unemployment, under-investment, dilapidated housing and high council house waiting lists amongst others, show little sign of being solved, even if they have been moved about slightly. If anything, these underlying problems have been exaggerated by the short-sighted development, and the neo-liberal policies behind it. Crucially the socio-spatial groups that are worst hit by these problems, the seemingly ‘unwanted’ working-

class and minority groups in the inner city are increasingly economically, socially and spatially polarised by the redevelopment. Echoing Peck and Ward's (2002, p12) vision of contemporary entrepreneurial Manchester, Gunwharf Quays must be seen as a project designed for middle-class consumption, which acts "a means of accessing the discretionary spending of the middle-classes in the hope that some of it will trickle down to local residents in the form of burger-flipping and cocktail shaking jobs". Unfortunately, using the words of David Harvey (1989a, p13), Gunwharf Quays, the Millennium Tower and the (short-sighted) neo-liberal public policies behind them are little more than "image over substance".

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