The Bartlett Development Planning Unit

UCL

Social Impact Assessment in London Planning

MSc Urban Development Planning Practice Module Report

Edited by Barbara Lipietz, Tim Wickson, Ilinca Diaconescu and Richard Lee

JUST SPACE

dpu
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South London street scene, Diego Puente Garrido, 2016

Foreword

For those working towards socially, environmentally and spatially just cities, formal planning's scant recognition of locally-articulated needs and aspirations is of profound concern. Rendered voiceless by unwieldy, bureaucratic processes, many of which appear primarily concerned with protecting developer profits, individuals and organised community groups have become increasingly disenchanted with municipal planning.

In the context of London, this trend has reached crisis point. Financial viability has become the primary criterion upon which planning decisions are made, allowing 'development' to ride roughshod over community interests. Impact assessments, insofar as they are conducted, fail to adequately recognise London's crucial, indeed *irreplaceable*, community assets and social infrastructure. This misrecognition leaves them unprotected and vulnerable to the whims of market-led development.

Today, urban development in the capital is more likely to be experienced as a burden on its diverse communities. Throughout the city, unaffordable housing and commercial real-estate projects are being imposed on traditionally working-class areas, disrupting local solidarity networks and fuelling processes of real and *affective* displacement[1] – transforming local residents into strangers in their own streets.

Seeking to disrupt this logic, the Just Space network produced in 2016 an alternative plan for London's development: *Towards a Community Led Plan for London*[2]. This propositional document contains a series of suggestions and demands drawn from across the network's diverse membership base. One such demand is the call for a transparent, inclusive *Social Impact Assessment* (SIA) to be included as part of the planning approval process – on the basis that SIA can be an instrument to: (1) facilitate the consideration of alternative, community-centred, development proposals that are responsive to community needs and aspirations; and (2) encourage greater emphasis on social sustainability by respecting, enhancing and protecting London's rich network of community assets and social infrastructure.

This is the context for the 2017/18 action-research partnership between the Bartlett's Development Planning Unit (DPU), University College London (UCL) and the Just Space network. Located in the Practice module of the MSc Urban Development Planning, the output of this engagement is presented in the pages that follow. The DPU/Just Space partnership is part of a wider project of practice-based education in planning within the MSc Urban Development Planning (UDP), whose main objective is the promotion of socially just planning in the global south and north.

The MSc UDP pedagogy relies on equipping budding professionals with the capacity for critical diagnoses of urban environments, as a basis for developing propositional planning responses within the framework of socially and environmentally just urban governance. This implies working in coproduction with diverse urban communities, particularly those generally excluded from planning processes. The Just Space network of community groups engaged in influencing plan-making and planning policy across London has been an invaluable partner for the programme over the last four years, and on this project specifically for which it provided 2 course tutors.

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NOTES

1. Butcher & Dickens, 2016
2. Just Space, 2016.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the Research Project

In Just Space's (2016) *Towards a Community-led Plan for London*, the need to adequately evaluate and measure the potential impact of development proposals on existing residents and businesses, prior to approval being granted, is identified as a key requirement for socially just and sustainable planning in London.

The proposal is for a *Social Impact Assessment* (SIA) to be carried out (or transparently commissioned) by local authorities, with GLA support, as a means to catalogue existing uses; recognise the importance of community assets; and ascribe value to local needs and social sustainability[1]. For this process to be meaningful, a direct and transparent relationship between planning institutions and grassroots community mobilisations is critical. In all instances, Just Space contend that local community networks must be fully involved in the preparation of impact assessment criteria and in the selection of impact assessors. Where desirable, community groups should also be supported to develop community-led evaluation methodologies.

To develop this proposal further, Just Space, in partnership with staff from the Bartlett Development Planning Unit (DPU) initiated a participatory research project focusing on SIA.

The project ran between October 2017 and January 2018 and was designed to:

1. Better understand the role of SIA in promoting socially, spatially and environmentally just development in London;

2. Explore the types of indicators that SIA could include; and

3. Consider the inclusive processes that could work on the ground

Conducted by an international group of MSc Urban Development Planning (UDP) students, the project was designed and delivered in close collaboration with community-based organisations in the London Boroughs of Southwark and Haringey. This approach helped ensure that the research spoke directly to the lived realities, priorities and needs of everyday Londoners.

In December 2017, Just Space and the DPU organised an exchange event to discuss the project's findings with the community partners involved, as well as a broader selection of interested local groups from across London. During this event, participants reflected on how the SIA proposals could be further developed[2]. Building on from these discussions, in January 2018, Just Space presented the SIA proposals as a draft document during a Community Conference on the London Plan at the City Hall, Greater London Authority (GLA).

1.2 The London Planning Context

Increasingly representing a tale of two cities, London is both England's most affluent area and its most unequal. A city that consistently reports mean and median salaries significantly higher than national averages, and yet which leaves 28% of its residents living in poverty[3]. This growing gap between London's rich and poor is both informed by, and reflected in, the city's current approach to planning and development.

For the last two decades, the majority of development in London has taken place within a limited number of so called *opportunity areas*, introduced under Ken Livingstone's Mayoralty, and maintained by Boris Johnson's. *Opportunity* area designation typically triggers dramatic land value increases, fuels speculative investment practices and places intense delivery pressure on Local Authorities. As a result, development proposals in *opportunity* areas typically undergo limited consultation and, more often than not, prioritise dense and high rise developments dominated by expensive market housing over less profitable uses, such as social rented housing and affordable workspace for small and medium scale enterprises[4].

The impact of this development approach on communities across London has been overwhelmingly negative, leading to a significant loss of social housing, green space and community facilities. Throughout the planning system, little weight has been given to the impact of such development models on the existing social fabric of London. In fact, such negative effects on local communities have worsened despite on-going rhetorical commitment to address deprivation, exclusion, discrimination and social inequality, creating a paradox at the heart of London planning.

For some, the 2016 election of Mayor Sadiq Khan opened up a crack to do planning differently. Carried to power on a wave of discontent over the housing crisis, and in celebration of London's rich diversity, the new Mayoral team appeared committed to deepening participation in planning and delivering a *City for All Londoners*[5]. Two years down the line however, frustration is growing at the lack of visible change achieved by Mayor Sadiq Khan's administration. As we move towards the production of a New London Plan[6], the collaborative research project asked:

How can the practices of planning be transformed to give weight to the words a *City for All Londoners*?

What role could inclusive *Social Impact Assessment* play in this transformation?

1.3 The case for Social Impact Assessment in London Planning

The Mayor of London/GLA use an Integrated Impact Assessment (IAA) to assess the London Plan and other strategic documents being prepared. In turn, the IIA applies to local plans developed at the Borough level. The London model of the IIA analyses impacts from the perspective of environment, community safety, equality and health, mainly in response to national legislative requirements – although the health impact assessment is not a statutory obligation. Specifically, the Mayor's Integrated Impact Assessment currently comprises:

1. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), as required by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004;

2. A Community Safety Impact Assessment (CSIA) as required by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Policy and Justice Act 2006;

3. An Equality Impact Assessment as required by the Equality Act 2010; and

4. A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) included on the basis of non-statutory guidance / best practice.

For Just Space, London's existing IIA cannot be considered a thorough assessment of the London Plan as it lacks a meaningful analysis of the *social* impact of development. Furthermore, the methodology for IIA fails to position the community at the centre of the planning process. Importantly, the London Plan IIA, published in November 2017 by the Mayor alongside the draft new London Plan, has been identified by Just Space as "not fit for purpose". This is because:

- The critical IIA stage that developed alternatives and assessed impacts was not open for public consultation or stakeholder consultation.

- The IIA fails to take into account key alternatives available for London planning. For example, a number of alternatives were drawn together by Just Space in *Towards a Community-Led Plan for London* and Just Space also submitted a proposal for a community-generated spatial option to the GLA team, in the context of preparatory work for the drafting of the new London Plan. None of these proposals have been taken into account.

- Equality issues are under-represented in the 24 objectives set by the IIA and in the series of questions developed to assess whether each London Plan policy will have positive or negative impacts. One consequence of this omission is that the outcome of policies is presented as a combined result, with no distinction made regarding impact on different equality groups.

- The IIA rests on biased evaluation. For example, the evaluation of the policy on estate regeneration shows no negative aspects despite extensive research literature and community inputs/response on the impact of demolition and displacement on residents' lives[7].

For Just Space, the above, along with practices of London planning over the years, point to the need for a dedicated Social Impact Assessment as part of the planning process.

Internationally too, SIAs have been recognised as key components in the development of informed decision-making regarding policies, programmes, plans and projects. For example, the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) stipulates the role of impact assessments that integrate environmental, social and economic issues as a "practical tool for helping meet today's needs without compromising the opportunities of future generations"[8]. *Social Impact Assessments* (SIA) analyse in advance the likely positive and negative consequences of planning policies and development projects on the day-to-day life of individuals and communities. In that sense SIAs are also a key tool for monitoring and evaluation.

By highlighting aspects that London's existing Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) model fails to cover, Just Space believes that SIA can play an important part in nurturing an alternative planning approach that is supportive of local communities. In particular, the openness of the SIA process enables 'softer' social impacts of development – such as any detrimental impacts on the culture of communities – to be considered. Equally, it can facilitate the assessment of change brought about by development in a more holistic way, to include wider objectives such as social inclusion.

1.4 Report Structure

This report has three main components. After the above context, it brings together key findings from the three-month action-research project conducted by DPU students in collaboration with London community groups. Building on the Just Space (2016) proposal in *Towards a Community-led Plan for London*, these case studies demonstrate the value of adopting a grassroots approach when gathering planning evidence and conducting diverse needs assessments. The diagrams and illustrations accompanying each case provide an indication of how certain SIA components might be achieved.

Finally, the report sets out Just Space's emerging position on SIA for London Planning, building on the collaborative research project and additional workshops and discussions. Key principles for *Social Impact Assessment* (SIA) are presented, along with the stages of an SIA methodology, and reflections on data collection and process. This remains a working document and Just Space's position on SIA is likely to develop over time.

Figure 1.1. DPU students conducting research interviews in PemPeople's pop-up shop in Peckham (DPU Student Group, 2017)

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

1. Just Space, 2016
2. Recordings of the session, student presentation slides and other material from the session can be accessed through the following links: (1) https://ucljustspace.wordpress.com/2017/12/19/social-impact-assessment/; (2) https://www.ucl.ac.uk/bartlett/development/news/2017/dec/msc-urban-development-planning-students-present-london-project-findings-during.
3. Raco, Kesten and Colomb, 2014
4. Just Space, 2016
5. GLA, 2016a
6. The London plan brings together the spatial dimensions of the Mayor's responsibilities with regards to transport, economic development, housing, culture and a range of other so-

cial and environmental considerations. It sets out a long-term vision for London and provides a decision-making framework for local authorities to manage competing uses for space and resources. The Local Plans of London's 32 Boroughs, the City of London and the 2 Mayoral Development Corporations, as well as community-led Neighbourhood plans (under the Localism Act 2011) all have to conform with the adopted London Plan.
7. The full Just Space response to the London Plan Integrated Impact Assessment can be downloaded here: https://just-spacelondon.files.wordpress.com/2018/02/iia-just-space-response.docx
8. IAIA (2012). See also: Burdge & Vanclay (1996) and Heikkinen & Sairinen (2007)

2. Student Research: Exploring Social Impact Assessment Through Four London Examples

The case studies that follow present a summary of the four research projects undertaken by students in collaboration with community organisations based in the London Boroughs of Southwark and Haringey. Each project reflected a different set of local needs, exploring how these could be revealed through a participatory and inclusive *Social Impact Assessment*.

2.1 The Case of Southwark Travellers Action Group (STAG)

DPU Student Group: Yijun Chen, Bing Bing Chong, Federico Diaz, José I. Loza, Nada Sallam, Hannah Sender, Wanyue Shi and Karlene Stubbs

STAG is a local organisation supporting Gypsy and Traveller communities in the London Borough of Southwark. It has its roots in Traveller-led campaigns to secure permanent caravan sites in Southwark in the 1980s. One of the key aims of STAG is to address the persisting inequalities facing Gypsies and Travellers in all areas of life. They do this through providing frontline services, training, community development and campaigning for the inclusion of culturally suitable homes on caravan sites in the council's strategic planning documents. Similar to other London Boroughs, Southwark has not made any new provision for the Gypsy and Traveller community and has failed to assess their accommodation needs in the last decade. This has led the majority into conventional housing, often in very insecure conditions, isolated from their family and community networks. Those living on the four Council caravan sites in the Borough are facing significant overcrowding, fire risks and a lack of maintenance and investment in their accommodation.
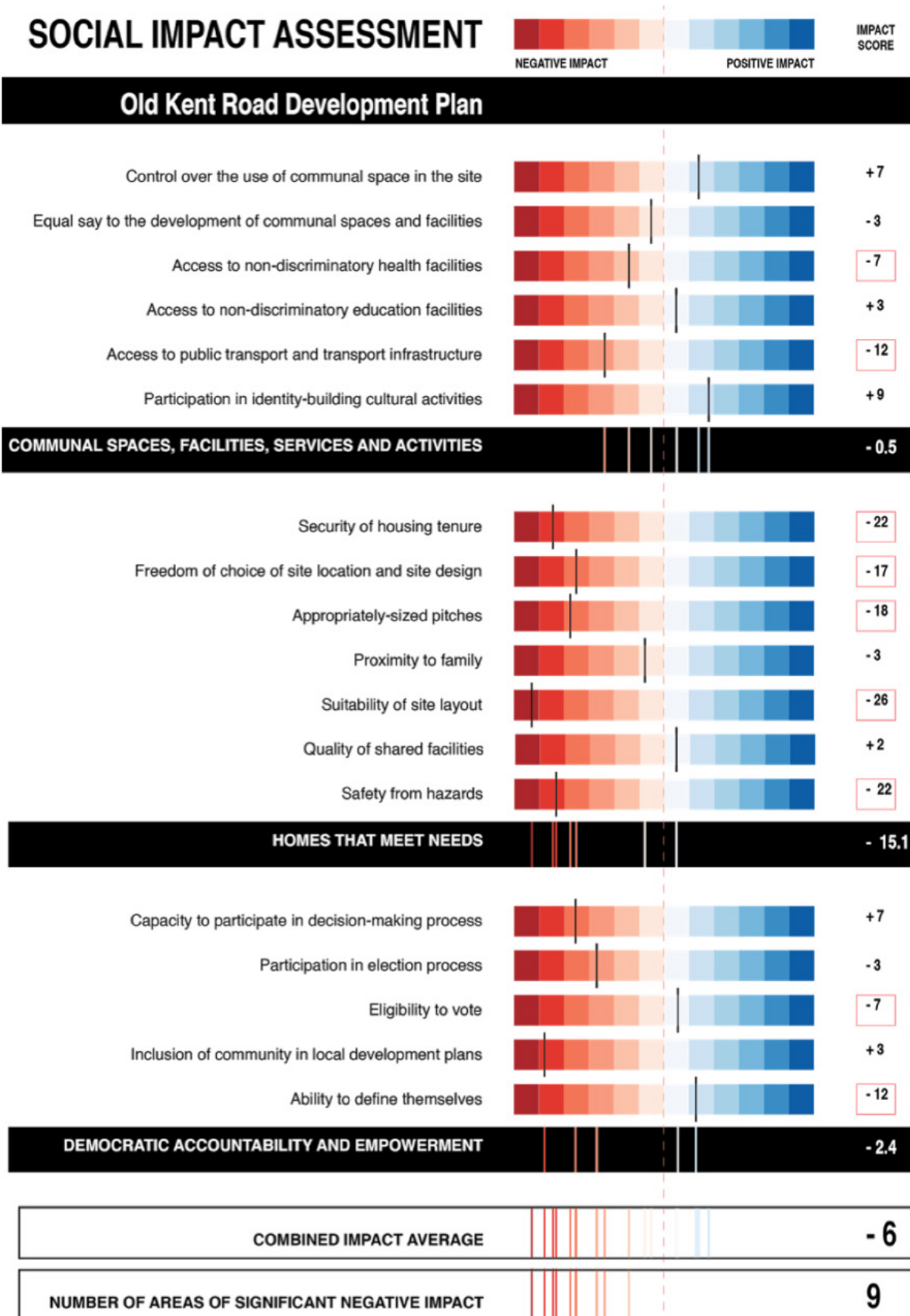
The starting point for the students' research collaboration with STAG was to develop a community-led Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment, identified by the community as a priority concern. Their research indicated that two out of four traveller sites in Southwark fall within the Old Kent Road Opportunity Area – an area designated for (re)development. This obviously increases the risk of regeneration-based displacement for the Gypsy and Traveller community on those sites, as they are located next to a site allocated for a large scale residential development and a proposed new Underground station. Despite the community's attempt to voice their legitimate concerns, they are continuously discriminated against by decision-makers, due to their alternative lifestyle.

Based on information derived from a series of site visits, as well as interviews conducted with Gypsies and Travellers and STAG trustees and staff, the students identified a broad range of inequalities and challenges facing this community, which directly threaten long-held traditions. The research revealed three priority issues:

1. **Infringement on their right to live in accordance with their tradition:** Gypsies and Travellers in Southwark currently lack suitable living arrangements to preserve their alternative lifestyle. The community faces severe problems such as overcrowding, lack of safety, and restricted access to basic resources (e.g. hot water). In addition, many families have been separated as some are forced into conventional housing (called "brick and mortar homes") due to insufficient pitch allocation.

2. **Limited access to community services:** Despite having strong internal support networks, Southwark's Gypsy and Traveller communities still face difficulties accessing basic amenities and services; including schools, hospitals, shops, transport facilities, and libraries.

3. **Exclusion from decision-making processes:** Gypsies and Travellers in Southwark are currently excluded from participation in the key decision-making processes guiding planning and development in the Borough. This exclusion serves to reinforce unequal access to services and fuels opposition to their traditional way of life.

Based on these findings, the student researchers proposed a number of indicators to assess the likely social impact of regeneration on Gypsies and Travellers in the borough. The indicators were designed to keep traditional cultural values at the forefront and included: (1) Homes that meet needs (security of housing tenure, safety from hazards, proximity to family members); (2) Access to non-discriminatory services and facilities (Access to non-discriminatory education facilities, Access to non-discriminatory health facilities, participation in cultural building activities); and (3) Equal say and inclusion in local development planning (eligibility to vote, participation in election processes, inclusion of community in local development plans). Bringing these indicators together, the students developed a scorecard system to help compare social impact across multiple scenarios (see figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1. Example of SIA scorecard developed by DPU students in collaboration with STAG and Gypsy and Traveller communities in Southwark (DPU Student Group, 2017)

SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

NEGATIVE IMPACT — POSITIVE IMPACT

IMPACT SCORE

Old Kent Road Development Plan

Control over the use of communal space in the site	+7
Equal say to the development of communal spaces and facilities	-3
Access to non-discriminatory health facilities	-7
Access to non-discriminatory education facilities	+3
Access to public transport and transport infrastructure	-12
Participation in identity-building cultural activities	+9
COMMUNAL SPACES, FACILITIES, SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES	**-0.5**
Security of housing tenure	-22
Freedom of choice of site location and site design	-17
Appropriately-sized pitches	-18
Proximity to family	-3
Suitability of site layout	-26
Quality of shared facilities	+2
Safety from hazards	-22
HOMES THAT MEET NEEDS	**-15.1**
Capacity to participate in decision-making process	+7
Participation in election process	-3
Eligibility to vote	-7
Inclusion of community in local development plans	+3
Ability to define themselves	-12
DEMOCRATIC ACCOUNTABILITY AND EMPOWERMENT	**-2.4**
COMBINED IMPACT AVERAGE	**-6**
NUMBER OF AREAS OF SIGNIFICANT NEGATIVE IMPACT	**9**

MEASURING IMPACT: AN ACCESSIBLE SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCORECARD

To assess impact, it is necessary to measure change. One way to achieve this assessment is to develop a scorecard system that tests co-created indicators against two different scenarios: (1) in the present – i.e. helping to develop a baseline; and (2) in an imagined future where the plan/policy has been implemented as proposed.

In this case, the Gypsy and Traveller community helped score each indicator from 1-10 for both the present and future scenario; with the difference between each set of scores being used to indicate a positive or negative impact. The resulting scorecards could be used as a decision-making tool to decide on whether a proposed policy/development proposal should be supported, or whether alternative proposals / mitigation measures are required.

To avoid a situation where an overall positive score is achieved yet a crucial area is negatively affected, a system of weighting should be agreed between local communities and local authorities prior to assessment. In this way, the SIA scorecard can be more than a simple evaluation tool, but also a means of negotiating consensus around proposed actions.

Figure 2.2. A Traveller site in Southwark located next to a railway line (Yijun Chen, 2017)

Figure 2.3. Garden space on one of the Traveller sites in Southwark (Yijun Chen, 2017)

SETTING PRIORITIES FOR THE SIA: THE DIRECT VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY

"Family and caring for members of our family are some of the most important things for us."

"Children's education was the main reason for us to settle down."

"I live in bricks and mortar and I feel confined. My family can't visit and the kids can't play safely. I spend more time with my family on the site than in my home."

"Traveller life is still threatened. We still suffer from discrimination such as in schools, church and when booking wedding venues."

"No-one listens to us or tries to understand our way of life."

"Nobody consulted us about what the temporary site would look like."

2.2 The Case of PemPeople and the Old Kent Road

DPU Student Group: Clementine Hugo-Hamman, Mateo Lu, Bálint Horváth, Tiara Sadikin, Marwa Barakat, Jabril Abdullahi, Qizhong Li, Tianyuan Weng and Shiori Sato

Focussing on the *Old Kent Road Opportunity Area*, this student group developed a *Social Impact Assessment* tool that aimed to include the diverse experiences of a number of community groups active in the area.

The lead community partner on the project was PemPeople, a Southwark-based organisation that works closely with a range of local groups, and which places a particular emphasis on supporting young people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities. PemPeople provide support to local communities by offering capacity building programmes that aim to impart confidence and unlock local entrepreneurial opportunities.

Working through site visits, interviews and community meetings, students sought to reveal the concerns and needs of a diverse range of local groups (including the Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations and the Peckham Park Road Baptist Church). They found that many local groups felt apprehensive about the on-going threat of regeneration-led displacement in the *Old Kent Road Opportunity Area*. More specifically, this research helped identify three key issues facing the *Old Kent Road* communities:

1. **Displacement of existing diverse ethnic minority businesses:** These businesses are an irreplaceable part of the community; their cultural and economic value is not currently recognised by regeneration plans.

2. **Potential loss of social rented housing:** Regeneration projects often lead to the loss of social housing and increased rent levels in the local area. Too often, regeneration projects lack any understanding of what *affordable* means for existing communities. Communities interviewed stressed the need to relate affordability to current rental prices, local income, and maintenance costs.

3. **Lack of affordable community spaces:** Development is often legitimised on the basis of increasing the value of neighbourhoods. However, this argument is based on a biased understanding of value; one which fails to take into account the irreplaceability of local community spaces and their cultural significance to local groups. This reading illustrates the importance of assessing the value of existing community spaces.

Building on the needs and priorities expressed by local groups and organisations, the students developed a range of community-led indicators looking at development impact in terms of: local business / social enterprise opportunities (capacity to remain, local employment, workspace needs); housing (affordability, maintenance, quality); and community spaces (functionality, capacity, cultural identity). Figure 2.5 illustrates an example of how the group's housing indicators could be translated into a series of survey questions.

Overall, the study highlighted the value of SIA as a tool to explore the interconnections between different uses and the potential cumulative impacts of development proposals. Additionally, the research raised the need for a network of community groups to co-produce the SIA and make Councils more accountable to the community.

REGENERATION: OPPORTUNITIES FOR WHOM?

PemPeople have recently taken over a disused garage space attached to the Ledbury Estate with a view to creating affordable work/meeting space for a range of community projects, organisations and businesses. One potential occupier of the garages is the Feminist Library, an organisation that has been documenting *herstories* since 1975, and which faces imminent eviction from current premises in the Elephant and Castle area due to rent rises. However, due to serious fire risks / structural issues unearthed during post-Grenfell surveys, the future of this garage-space initiative, and the Ledbury Estate, currently hangs in the balance. Refurbishment of the estate is clearly needed, but how this process is managed by the Council, and what this means for existing (and proposed) uses and users remains to be seen.

Figure 2.4. Nicholas Okwulu (PemPeople) outlining the vision for the Ledbury Estate Garages (DPU Student Group, 2017)

Figure 2.5. Housing survey questions developed by DPU students in collaboration with local groups active in and around the Old Kent Road (DPU Student Group, 2017)

Indicators		Questions	Target group
Existing Housing Provision	Affordability	Q1: How much rent do you pay per month? Q2: Is your rent affordable in terms of your income? Q3: When was your last time your rental increased, and by how much?	Current tenant
	Satisfaction	Q1: How long have you been living in this accommodation? Q2: Does you current accommodation suit your specific needs? Q3: Are you satisfied with your current accommodation? Please rate the level of satisfaction (0=unsatisfied, 10=very satisfied).	Current tenant
	Maintenance	Q1: Does the council take care/maintain your home and surrounding environment?	Current tenant
New Housing Provision	Access to information	Q1: How do you access information on new housing? Q2: Have you experienced any difficulty accessing information?	Young people
	Affordability	Q1: What is the highest rent you could afford for a house/flat?	Young people
	Quality	Q1: What are your expectations of the new houses/flats that will be built?	Young people

COLLECTING DATA: DESIGNING QUESTIONS AROUND SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT INDICATORS

Once SIA indicators have been agreed, the next step is to develop research methods that can support fine grain data collection. In this instance, the students developed a targeted survey tool to access information about existing and future housing needs and aspirations. By specifically focusing on Southwark's youth population, this approach reaches out to a traditionally hard-to-reach demographic, acknowledging their acute vulnerability to processes of market-led displacement.

Figure 2.6. A council estate in Southwark (DPU Student Group, 2017)

Figure 2.7. Parks and sports pitches form a key asset for London's diverse communities (DPU Student Group, 2017)

2.3 The Case of Wolves Lane Horticultural Centre

DPU Student Group: Masato Akashi, Gordon Jennings, Kaixin Lin, Daniela Muñoz, Qiuhua Qi, Yuqi Shi, S. Shaba Taskin, Fernando Toro and Vivian Yeboah

Located in the London Borough of Haringey, the Wolves Lane Horticultural Centre was originally a council-run site that brought together plant nursery and garden centre functions with a community, educational and volunteering offer. However, as a result of Government cuts to local authority spending, Haringey recently decided to transfer the site's lease to a consortium of food growing organisations.

Consisting of OrganicLea, Crop Drop, Dee Woods, Shared Assets, the Ubele Initiative and London Grown, the Wolves Lane consortium came together around a shared vision to transform Wolves Lane Horticultural Centre into a community food hub. Consortium members are committed to preserving the site's irreplaceable urban glasshouse infrastructure; and maintaining the site as an accessible community space offering food growing, skills development, training and social enterprise opportunities.

Whilst working on their proposal, the Wolves Lane site has been closed off to the public; a decision that has caused some tension between the consortium partners and those residents / groups who previously utilised spaces and services associated with the centre. This said, the consortium is committed to engaging local residents in shaping their vision and also expanding the centre's reach into Haringey's diverse community groups. Indeed, one of the consortium's main strengths is its ability to reach out to and engage groups and individuals from so-called *hard-to-reach* backgrounds; particularly Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups, through the networks of the Ubele Initiative, and consortium partners Living Under One Sun and the Selby Trust.

Figure 2.8. One of the Wolves Lane Horticultural Centre palm houses (Quihua Qi, 2017)

In this context, the *Social Impact Assessment* (SIA) tool was developed with a double objective in mind: (1) to strengthen the case for Wolves Lane Horticultural Centre remaining in community use and; (2) to support the inclusive aspirations of the Centre. Accordingly, the students had to broaden their scope to conduct an SIA that reflected the needs and aspirations of multiple stakeholders operating at different scales. On that basis, the students' research project revealed three priority issues:

1. **Promote inclusive participation in the decision-making process to develop Wolves Lane:** Creating a truly transformative community asset requires engaging with the diverse needs and aspirations expressed by local groups and potential users for the site.

2. **Encourage sustainable food practices and diversity at a local level:** Acknowledging the cultural background of the diverse groups that are invested in the Wolves Lane site will encourage small businesses to flourish and has the potential to empower BAME groups to share and celebrate traditional knowledge.

3. **Ensure equitable distribution of centre resources:** this will enable diverse communities to take advantage of the site's potential for education, enterprise and capacity building, as well as promoting community cohesion.

The students developed a series of indicators, under the overarching theme of *food sovereignty*. The indicators cut across the identified priority issues and were notable for a quantitative approach to ensure measurability and for reaching out to excluded groups. They included: (1) Participation in terms of empowerment (number of community-led programmes recognised / supported by local council, number of organisations which participate in community-wide events and activities, number of local planning policies which expressly value or protect cultural heritage); (2) Recognition of Diversity (number of local restaurants and shops stocking locally produced food items, number and proportion of women who gained jobs as a result of their involvement in community activities, diversity of participants taking part in community events and activities); (3) Equitable Distribution (number of volunteers who engaged with community food growing activities, number of people who can access locally produced, healthy food).

Figure 2.9. Example of impact indicators developed by DPU students in collaboration with Wolves Lane Consortium and associated local groups (DPU Student Group, 2017)

Recognition

Activities	Affected people	Social impact	Indicators	Scale 1 center	Scale 2 community	Scale 3 borough
Respect diverse cultures through food activities	Minority groups	Vitalise traditional food culture	• Number of respondents currently able to access means to maintain traditional food-based practices. • Frequency with which traditional food-based practices are carried out		√	
		Enrich local diversity and culture	• Diversity of participants in community events and activities		√	
			• Perception of respect and encouragement afforded to their culture in local area		√	

DECIDING WHAT TO ASSESS: DESIGNING CONTEXT SPECIFIC INDICATORS

Food sovereignty aims to preserve culturally appropriate food growing, cooking and eating practices. It also focuses on the legacy aspect of food by helping the younger generation preserve and recognise traditional food cultures. The Wolves Lane project therefore plans to deliver traditional food-related workshops for local young people. This impact can be quantifiably
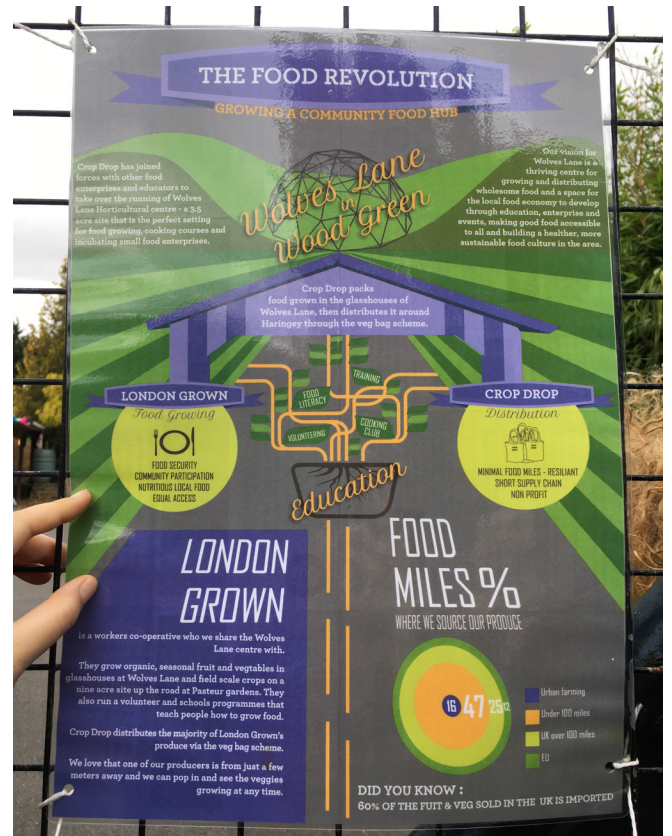
Figure 2.10. Pumpkins growing in Wolves Lane greenhouses (Quihua Qi, 2017)

Figure 2.11. Meeting between members of the Wolves Lane Consortium and DPU students (Quihua Qi, 2017)

Figure 2.12. Poster showing the Wolves Lane Consortium vision for the site (DPU Student Group, 2017)

2.4 The Case of St Ann's Redevelopment Trust (StART)

DPU Student Group: Yaa Agyare, Paul Boettcher, Tameem Emam, Reina Kosugi, Sipei Lai, Danyang Li, Hinddou Maiga and Christopher Robinson

St Ann's Redevelopment Trust (StART) is a growing Community Land Trust (CLT) that emerged out of a local campaign to maintain the St Ann's NHS Hospital site as an accessible, inclusive community asset for residents in Haringey. In 2015, the NHS decided to sell two-thirds of the site to finance hospital refurbishment works. It gained outline planning approval for a private housing development scheme that committed to deliver just fourteen-percent *affordable housing*.

The local authority's approval of a proposal that took no account of local needs motivated StART to initiate a transparent, community-led alternative planning process. Based on views gathered from a range of local groups and individuals, StART published an alternative vision for the site in 2017. In this context, *Social Impact Assessment* (SIA) could be used to highlight the social value of StART's alternative masterplan and, by extension, become a tool to help StART gather support for their vision within local and city-level planning authorities.

StART's masterplan commits to retaining the site for the benefit of local residents and providing secure, high-quality housing that will remain *genuinely affordable* for local residents, indefinitely. The StART vision also allows for the provision of other facilities and amenities. For example, StART intends to convert a number of the site's existing structures into affordable workspace and community spaces, while also developing on-site community food gardens. These gardens will be publicly accessible to local residents, whilst also offering potential therapeutic value for mental health patients of St Ann's Hospital.

Through this project, the students worked with StART to explore how SIA could be used as a tool to help model / test alternative development proposals and create space to think differently about the development of public land. Additionally, in collaboration with the Ubele Initiative (a social enterprise that supports the African Diaspora community), this project was able to explore the potential for SIA to initiate deeper community engagement with marginalised groups and, in particular, to expand Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) representation within StART's participatory processes.

Overall, the student's project revealed two key findings:

1. **SIA can help strengthen the case for community-led planning**: Building on work already completed by the StART group, the students' research co-produced a set of indicators reflecting the priorities of a diverse local community. These SIA indicators can be used to help highlight the social value of StART's alternative masterplan and, by extension, emphasise the weaknesses of market-led alternatives. In this way, SIA could become a tool to help StART garner support for their vision within local and city-level planning authorities.

2. **SIA can help expand representation to ensure community inclusion:** The student research highlighted the importance of creating an SIA process that is inclusive of communities in all their diversity. This means considering identities such as age, language, race/ethnicity, ability, sexuality, religion and class, and appreciating their intersectionality.

The SIA indicators developed through this project were built around StART's core themes: (1) Housing (genuine affordability, security of tenure, variety and quality of housing); (2) Health (physical, mental and social well-being, supportive health networks, health-orientated design, priority consideration for vulnerable groups/individuals); (3) Environment (environmental sustainability, balancing preservation and accessibility of natural spaces with integration into social fabric); and (4) Diversity (social sustainability, recognition and celebration of diversity, community–led decision making processes).

ADDITIONAL NOTE: UPDATING THE START CONTEXT

Earlier in 2018, after the completion of this project, the Greater London Authority (GLA) purchased the St Ann's Hospital site as part of the Mayor's flagship £250million Land Fund. Whilst this move reduced the imminent risk of losing the site to a private developer, it by no means guarantees the realisation of StART's community-led vision. In this context, SIA could prove an important tool for StART as they continue to make the case for a community-controlled development.

Figure 2.13. SIA process diagram produced by DPU students in collaboration with StART members. (DPU Student Group, 2017)
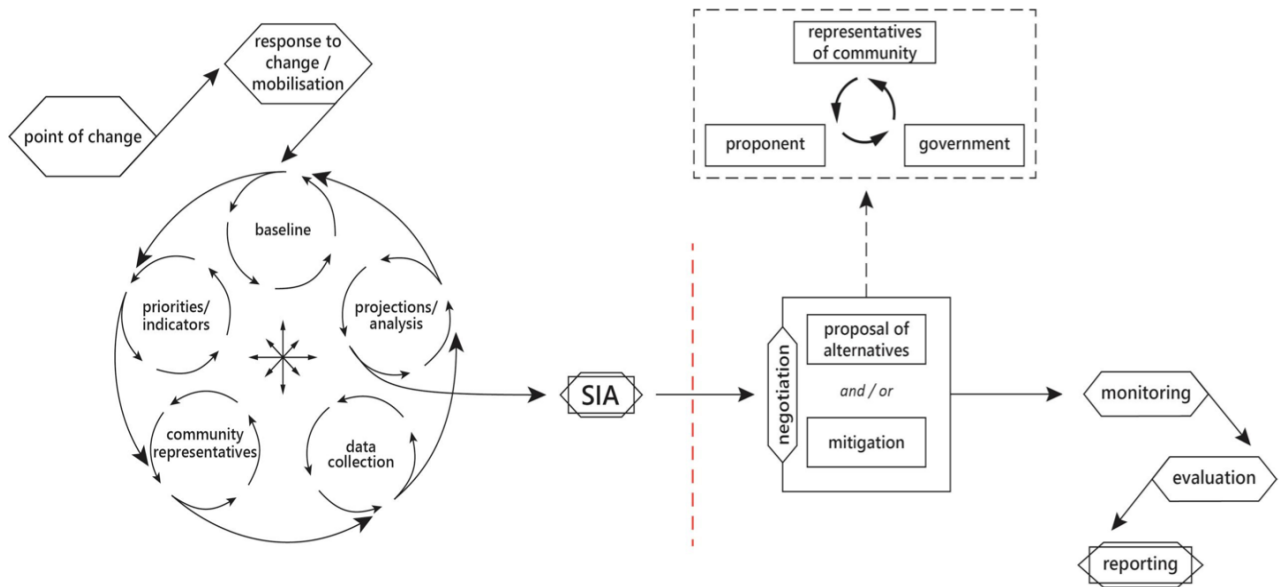
CONDUCTING A SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT: TOWARDS A POSSIBLE PROCESS

Developed through the students' engagement with StART, Figure 2.13 highlights a possible process for completing an inclusive SIA. The process is divided into three main phases: (1) The identification of needs and assessment of impacts; (2) Multi-stakeholder negotiation, proposing alternatives / agreeing mitigation; and (3) ongoing monitoring and evaluation. The local planning authority has the responsibility to provide the financial and technical support necessary to enable full community participation at all stages. Furthermore, to identify the needs of the community, the student's research showcased two possible methods of engagement – (1) focus groups with new members and (2) public engagement via StART's community stalls model.
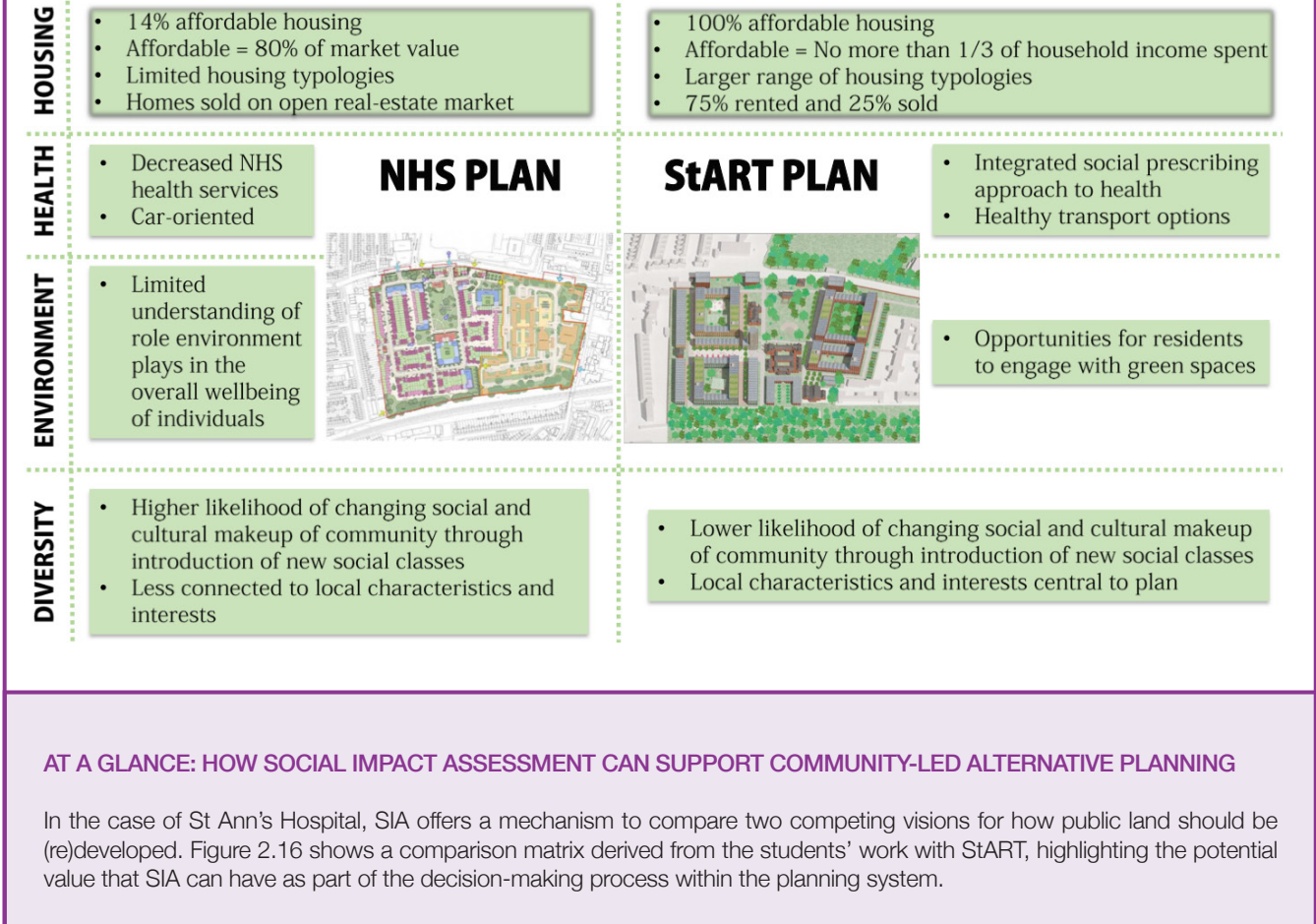
Figure 2.14. St Ann's Hospital Site Map (Paul Böttcher, 2017)

Figure 2.15. Existing buildings proposed for retention by StART as affordable light industrial units (Paul Böttcher, 2017)

Figure 2.16. Diagram highlighting potential of SIA as a comparative tool for decision making. (DPU Student Group, 2017)

HOUSING
- 14% affordable housing
- Affordable = 80% of market value
- Limited housing typologies
- Homes sold on open real-estate market

- 100% affordable housing
- Affordable = No more than 1/3 of household income spent
- Larger range of housing typologies
- 75% rented and 25% sold

HEALTH
- Decreased NHS health services
- Car-oriented

NHS PLAN   **StART PLAN**

- Integrated social prescribing approach to health
- Healthy transport options

ENVIRONMENT
- Limited understanding of role environment plays in the overall wellbeing of individuals

- Opportunities for residents to engage with green spaces

DIVERSITY
- Higher likelihood of changing social and cultural makeup of community through introduction of new social classes
- Less connected to local characteristics and interests

- Lower likelihood of changing social and cultural makeup of community through introduction of new social classes
- Local characteristics and interests central to plan

AT A GLANCE: HOW SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT CAN SUPPORT COMMUNITY-LED ALTERNATIVE PLANNING

In the case of St Ann's Hospital, SIA offers a mechanism to compare two competing visions for how public land should be (re)developed. Figure 2.16 shows a comparison matrix derived from the students' work with StART, highlighting the potential value that SIA can have as part of the decision-making process within the planning system.

3. Learnings from the Social Impact Assessment in London Planning Project

Based on the student's collaborative research projects and broader discussions within the Just Space Network, the following pages outline Just Space's emerging position on *Social Impact Assessment* (SIA). This includes a possible methodology for SIA, reflections on key principles underpinning SIA and reflections on data collection and process. Combined, these reflections and proposals point to SIA as a vehicle for reframing traditional planning and policy-making processes as a community-centred approach.

3.1 Social Impact Assessment: Constructing a Methodology

To achieve this reframing of traditional planning and policy making, the DPU / Just Space project revealed a possible three-stage approach for Social Impact Assessments:

STAGE 1: Develop a detailed understanding of the local context and the diverse communities involved

This can be achieved through:

1. Conducting a local audit/baseline study to document existing community assets, spaces and networks (housing, employment, social and community infrastructure, green infrastructure, transport etc.).

2. Carrying out a focussed needs assessment tailored to the requirements of diverse communities. This assessment must pay close attention to social class as well as representation from people of all age groups, languages, ethnicities, abilities, sexualities, religions as protected under the Equalities Act 2010.

STAGE 2: Outline the potential impacts (positive and negative) expected to result from a given planning policy or development proposal.

This can be achieved through:

1. Collectively assessing how the proposed policy or project will contribute to meeting the needs / aspirations identified during Stage 1. This step will help maximise positive opportunities for local communities and build the case for an alternative community-led planning process.

2. Evaluating potential threats and risks to local communities posed by a given policy or proposal. This evaluation could draw on signals, trends and patterns from other comparable areas to allow learning from past failures / good practices and consider impacts that go beyond specific development site / area boundaries.

STAGE 3: Formulate alternative community-led planning policy or development proposals.

Based on the analysis carried out in Stages 1 and 2, this stage seeks to translate community aspirations into alternative policy or planning proposals or meaningful revisions / mitigation strategies. Where possible, this process should look to build on existing community-led alternatives, such as community plans, neighbourhood plans, or manifestos and charters being championed by local groups. If such alternatives are not already in place, a strategy would need to be implemented to ensure resourcing and capacity building for local groups to engage in this process.

This stage is essential in seeking to ensure the fair and inclusive distribution of opportunities and challenges arising from development in London. Moreover, in itself, it has the potential to create positive social impacts in terms of strengthening community infrastructure and social capital.

THINKING AHEAD: COMMUNITY-LED MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The participation of community groups throughout the implementation of the plan or the delivery of the development is an important issue. Indeed, the Just Space "Towards a Community-Led Plan for London" makes strong demands for effective community participation in the monitoring and evaluation of change.

It is therefore useful to think through how some of the priorities and indicators revealed through the Social Impact Assessment might be taken forward as monitoring indicators to track the successes or failures of the policy or development. The linking of SIA indicators and monitoring indicators is an important step to ensure sustainability and accountability in relation to what is valued and desired by existing communities on the ground.

On-going community engagement in monitoring and evaluation requires additional capacity and resources. This should be considered whilst conducting the SIA.

3.2 Social Impact Assessment: Thinking Through Data Collection & Process

Depending on the local context and available resources and capacity, a variety of methodologies can be used to collect and analyse data throughout the different SIA stages. In practice, a mixed-method approach is likely to be most appropriate and might include: documentation from community and voluntary sector organisations, wider stakeholder/community testimony, interviews, observation, site visits, the analysis of monitoring or baseline data, and/or questionnaires. The range of activities selected for inclusion is important, as each one provides a different engagement opportunity for diverse local communities to make their voices heard.

Other research approaches currently being explored by Just Space are: (1) Longitudinal research – in which data is collected from the same sources over an extended period of time in order to track processes of change; and (2) Social audit - in which the social impacts of a community organisation are measured.

Whatever the method, space should be created to capture both *quantitative* and *qualitative outcomes* – in assessment and monitoring phases:

- **Quantitative Outcomes:** Such as improvements in health, educational attainment, crime reduction, increased employment levels, quality of the living environment, economic and material well-being (the balance between individual good and social good, present impact and trans-generational impact)

- **Qualitative Outcomes:** Including (1) Personal impacts (increased self-confidence, enhanced self-esteem, enjoyment, inclusion, skills acquisition, prospects and future outlook); and (2) civic/community impacts (community involvement, community culture, identity and pride, active community, local democracy).

When designing the research methodology, it is important to be mindful of a) the time and resources various methods impose on communities and; b) the ability of various methods to speak to diverse communities.

Figure 3.1. Nicholas Okwulu (PemPeople) introducing DPU students to local business owners (DPU Student Group, 2017)

Figure 3.2. Interview panel of StART members (Paul Böttcher, 2017)

Figure 3.3 DPU students attending meeting with Wolves Lane Consortium partners (Quihua Qi, 2017)

3.3 Social Impact Assessment: Key Principles

For *Social Impact Assessment* (SIA) to support the transformation of London's planning policies and processes towards truly inclusive, community-centred planning approaches - in line with the ambition of building a *City for All Londoners*[1] – it is important to underline key principles guiding the development of SIAs. These are:

1. **Participatory:** *Social Impact Assessment* must remain relevant to the needs and aspirations of London's diverse local communities, incorporating the specific characteristics and views of those communities most directly involved in, or impacted by, planning policies and proposals.

2. **Pluralistic:** *Social Impact Assessment* must be encompassing enough to value diverse local knowledge, expertise and perspectives. This means being particularly attentive to diverse social identities such as class, age, language, race/ethnicity, ability, sexuality and religion and appreciating their intersectionality.

3. **Co-produced:** The scope of *Social Impact Assessments* must be set by local community priorities with community development and capacity building opportunities provided at all stages. Positioned as part of a wider participatory planning process, the state's responsibility would be to provide political, technical and financial backing for this process[2].

4. **Independent (from private sector interests):** Commissioning processes for *Social Impact Assessments* should be open and transparent, with local communities involved centrally throughout the process. Where possible, SIA commissioning should also be used to build on existing academic and research networks in order to help strengthen their links with community groups.

5. **Inclusive and Accessible:** *Social Impact Assessment* research and assessment methods must be easy to understand, interpret and use by everyone. Wherever possible, SIA tools should be designed to facilitate broad-based community participation in their delivery.

6. **Meaningful:** *Social Impact Assessment* must be understood as a meaningful, process of change; not a box-ticking exercise.

Figure 3.4. Students interviewing StART members at the Chestnuts Community Centre (Paul Böttcher)

4. Conclusions

Social Impact Assessment (SIA) represents an opportunity to revisit traditional, expert-led planning processes in London and give meaning to the National Planning Policy Framework's (2012) requirement for 'early and meaningful engagement and collaboration with neighbourhoods'. It provides a mechanism to co-create a genuinely shared understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing our city.

To achieve this transformation, SIA processes must be designed as a means of tapping into the information, data (quantitative and qualitative) and knowledges that are not otherwise being captured by mainstream statistical datasets or consultation processes. In particular, SIA offers an opportunity to recognise and harness the significant resources already documented and held by community and voluntary sector organisations.

This recognition of local knowledge offers organised communities a sense of power and control over both local and city-wide planning processes, opening space for the genuine co-production of development between actors in the state, civil society and private sector. Such an approach would help create a rationale and support for planned interventions in the city, especially those that are community-led.

To maximise this potential, SIA methodologies must be mindful of the amount of time and resources required of the communities involved. Providing adequate resourcing and training for diverse and inclusive research activities, (e.g. community meetings, face-to-face conversations, walkabouts etc.) is crucial to ensuring that community participation goes as deep as possible without exceeding the desire and capacities of local groups. Indeed, for SIA to be meaningful, it will require significant political, financial and technical buy-in from local partners.

This report presents a working version of Just Space's emerging SIA position. Moving forward, Just Space will continue campaigning for Social Impact Assessment to become a key component of planning in London and will continue to develop the details of their proposal. The DPU will remain an active partner in this endeavour.

Figure 4.1. DPU / Just Space exchange event (DPU Student Group, 2017)

Afterword

Social Impact Assessment is one of 4 key issues on which Just Space is developing detailed policies as a means to secure a just London for all. The others are industrial strategy, land reform and health and well being.

The Just Space position on SIA will evolve as the initiatives described below move forward.

1. **Learning exchange** – We need to learn from others who are experimenting with Social Impact Assessment. In the city of Salvador de Bahia in Brazil, a network of community groups and campaigns called Lugar Comum has developed a community-led popular audit tool. This tool evaluates regeneration policy, supports community mobilisation and provides an accountability mechanism. An exchange between Just Space and Lugar Comum is taking place when a delegation from Brazil visits London in September 2018.

   Just Space also need to connect with initiatives that may be using different tools, but are raising the importance of social issues in the planning context. For example, the New Policy Institute who believe that the interests of low income households should be central to the London Plan; Just Fair and Race on the Agenda (ROTA) who are campaigning for a socio-economic duty to be given effect in the Equality Act 2010.

2. **London Plan** – The examination in public of the draft New London Plan takes place between January – March 2019 and is an important opportunity to discuss the SIA with Government Planning Inspectors, in front of the Mayor's representatives and to engage a variety of London stakeholders with the benefits of the SIA. Just Space will raise the Social Impact Assessment at the start of the Examination in terms of the inadequacy of the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) of the New London Plan and later on, under Chapter 5 Social Infrastructure, as a policy tool that should be required of Boroughs to gather grounded evidence about social infrastructure and community spaces.

3. **Demonstration project** – We need here in London a full Social Impact Assessment of a planning policy document or major development proposal to show the value that the SIA could bring both to communities on the ground and to the institutions. For this to be a bottom up participatory process, the initiative probably needs to come from a community organisation. However, resources and support will undoubtedly be required and this is where Universities could play a starring role, pioneering a new mode of development that is inclusive and participatory.

Just Space is developing relationships with many of London's Universities, given impetus by a session at the Tate Exchange in July 2018 where representatives from 11 Universities came together to discuss Community-University collaborations. However, it may be that major developments by UCL, such as at the Eastman Clinic site in Camden, offer the best opportunity for the first SIA to be undertaken in London.

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Further Information About the Community Organisations Involved in this Research:

Southwark Travellers Action Group
www.staglondon.org

PemPeople
https://www.facebook.com/PemPeople/

Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations
https://www.facebook.com/Southwark-Group-of-Tenants-Organisation-92869943484/

Peckham Park Road Baptist Chuch
http://www.pprbc.co.uk/

The Feminist Library
https://feministlibrary.co.uk/

Wolves Lane Centre
http://wolveslane.org/

Wolves Lane Consortium members:

OrganicLea - https://www.organiclea.org.uk/2017/03/wolves-lane/
Ubele Initiative - https://www.ubele.org/
London Grown - https://www.facebook.com/londongrown/
Crop Drop - https://www.cropdrop.co.uk/
Shared Assets - http://www.sharedassets.org.uk/
Dee Woods

St Ann's Redevelopment Trust
http://www.startharingey.co.uk/

UDP STUDENTS REPORT 2018 - DPU

The Development Planning Unit, University College London, is an international centre specialising in academic teaching, research, training and consultancy in the field of urban and regional development, with a focus on policy, planning management and design. It is concerned with understanding the multi-faceted and uneven process of contemporary urbanisation, and strengthening more socially just and innovative approaches to policy, planning management and design, specially in the contexts of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East as well as countries in transition.

The central purpose of the DPU is to strengthen the professional and institutional capacity of governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to deal with the wide range of development issues that are emerging at local, national and global levels. In London, the DPU runs postgraduate programmes of study, including a research degree (MPhil/PhD) programme, six one-year Masters Degree courses and specialist short courses in a range of fields addressing urban and rural development policy, planning, management and design.

Overseas, the DPU Training and Advisory Service (TAS) provides training and advisory services to government departments, aid agencies, NGOs and academic institutions. These activities range form short missions to substantial programmes of staff development and institutional capacity building.

The academic staff of the DPU are a multi-disciplinary and multi-national group with extensive and on-going research and professional experience in various fields of urban and international development throughout the world. DPU Associates are a body of professionals who work closely with the Unit both in London and overseas. Every year the student body embraces more than 45 different nationalities.

To find more about us and the courses we run, please visit our website: **www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/dpu**

MSc Programme in Urban Development Planning. The course focuses on international practices in urban development policy, planning and management that address contemporary political, socio-economic, spatial and environmental transformations in cities of the global south. As urban growth continues apace, fuelled by the uneven effects of globalization processes, cities and towns are being reconfigured as key drivers of regional and national development. Increased fragmentation, intensifying inequality and environmental degradation are taking place in a context marked by the differentiated impacts of neoliberal policy, altering the roles and relationships between those involved in the development and management of cities. This programme argues that planning has an important contribution to make to these contemporary urban challenges. Accordingly, the programme seeks to provide candidates with the analytical and practical approaches to engage reflexively with urban development and planning processes, as well as enhance their strategic and propositional capacities, within the framework of socially just urban governance. Working with an appreciation of the situated complexities of practice, along with a recognition of processes of inequality, difference and diversity, the course aims to delineate collective agency for planning, and the contours of strategic action planning.

To find more about the course, please visit our website: **https://www.ucl.ac.uk/bartlett/development/programmes/postgraduate/msc-urban-development-planning**