

**THE PRODUCTION OF INFORMAL SPACE: A CASE STUDY OF AN
URBAN COMMUNITY GARDEN IN ENGLAND**

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Abstract

This research explores the production of informal spaces in England. Informal spaces are those used by people who do not own the land. The research focused on how such a space is produced, through a variety of processes and activities. The use and function of informal spaces is rarely prescribed by governmental agencies and is often determined on an ad hoc basis by its users. These users are sometimes consensual and symbiotic, however there is often conflict and dissidence amongst users. The sub-text to these myriad inter-relationships is the production (and re-production) of power. Actor-Network Theory (ANT) is employed to address the research question '*how is informal space produced*' using an empirical case study. A multi-method approach using: interviews, observations and documentary materials/mediated data yielded a thick description of multiple actors in the research site and augmented the ANT methodology. The research contributes to knowledge in three principal areas: empirical, theoretical and methodological. The empirical contribution relates to the specific case-study area that has previously not been studied. The theoretical contribution to knowledge concerns the combination of ANT 'translation' framework enmeshed with the fine-grained accounts and intricate ethnographic-type work generated from the fieldwork, particularly to such a 'spatial' field of study. Thirdly, the adoption of a hybrid methodological approach drawn from a range of transdisciplinary practices contextualised within ANT contributes to new methodological knowledge.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Preface to Introduction

The informal city is big. Globally, the informal city houses one third of the world's urban population. More than one billion people are already classed as informal city dwellers and according to the United Nations a million additional people migrate to informal cities every week. Whilst the informal city is largely a phenomenon in developing countries; it is not exclusively so, aspects of informality increasingly form part of the formal city in developed countries. Informal spaces have become important facets of formal cities and provide a greater diversity in the urban realm.

1.1.2 Foreword

Informal spaces are those used by people who do not own the land. Informal spaces (or something akin to informal spaces) are known variously as: autonomous spaces, transgressive spaces, terrain vague, loose spaces, are often parts of the city that are derelict or left over space. Invariably with no formal purpose, they lie outside of formal, official ownership, classification and control. They are often out of the gaze of formal authority and official surveillance. Informal spaces in the UK are used by a wide variety of heterogeneous users (referred to as actors) from illicit or unorthodox uses: sex-workers, alcoholics, drug-takers, ravers and graffiti artists to more ordinary uses: gardening, resting on a bench, children playing and dog-walking. This research examines the production of informal space in England. The notion of production is used here in a very broad sense of the word; myriad forms of use and activities are considered as modes of production. Informal spaces lack an overt purpose or clear function that characterize much of the formal spaces in a city: parks for recreation, roads for driving, pavements for walking etc. The uses of informal spaces are more dependent on the chosen (or necessary) activity of its users. As such, informal spaces play an unusual role within the urban fabric for providing less programmed or ambiguous space that might be used in a number of ways. Many of the users and activities exist in harmony with each other, yet there is also conflict (which raises issues of power and control). The research examines

the relationships between the uses and users of informal space through an extended case-study investigation. This research is focused on informal spaces in the developed nations, specifically, England.

Actor-Network Theory (ANT) is used in conjunction with a multi-method qualitative approach designed to yield a *'thick description'*. Actor-Network Theory (ANT) has provided the theoretical framework for investigating this research area. Rather than providing, for example, a purely sociological or purely geographical framework, ANT approaches the assembling and re-assembling of milieu as a hybrid of politics, leisure, technology, ecology, economics, sociology, and architecture (etc.) which simultaneously describes the constitution of informal space. Informal space is not a finished product; it is constantly in the process of production, i.e. in a state of flux, being made and re-made, and this research captures that production in action. For ANT the term *'actor'* is not restricted to humans or social actors, the term includes all material objects of the space, and the space itself is also considered an actor (and an assemblage of actors). Actor-network theory maintains that any entity that acts on or affects other entities within the frame of investigation is an *'actor'*. Each actor plays a part within a more complex network or hybrid assemblage built-up from social and non-social actors.

1.1.3 Research questions

The overall aim of this research is to examine the production of informal space in England. In order to achieve this, the research addressed the following principal research question: *How is an informal space produced?* The research explores the theory and practice in relation to this question as well as undertaking new empirical work. As part of the broader principal research question, there are three research sub-questions to be addressed: (i) *how do actor-networks operate in the production of space;* (ii) *what (or who) produces informal space;* and (iii) *how are power-relations structured in an informal actor-network.* The principal research-question and sub-questions involve an examination of the associations and chain of relations between actors involved in the production of informal spaces. Much of the literature concerning themes of power, capitalism, resistance and informality is often relatively abstract or general; this research connects

these themes more specifically with empirical evidence. These questions are explored using an in-depth case study in the UK.

This research examines and reconstructs how (and to some extent why) these networks form. As part of this investigation, relationships between networks are also examined when networks form *in relation to* others. During this investigation of networks and associations, the identity of actors is not static, they too are changed, altered and/or produced during this process. As such, the study describes the power-relationships qua transformations between actors: social and non-social. The examination of power uses the ANT analytical framework of '*translation*' that theorises how actors enact and/or maintain power relationships. How actors interact with each other; defines both themselves and others through this process of translation (if it is successful). The structure of the PhD is focused on the three concepts described here; "*with respect to the forms of ... power engendered by things, three concepts are key: networks, hybrids, and translations.*" (Preda 1999:349). The networks of actors in informal spaces are described above, hybrids refer to the (re)classification of actors and networks and translations are the process by which the former are generated. Production occurs as power relations through these networks, hybrids and translation.

1.1.4 Methodology

The empirical research is based around the use of a case-study of an informal space in the UK. This case study context is incredibly rich in detail, and there are also myriad heterogeneous actors, social and non-social, to be examined. A multi-method case-study approach is used to facilitate the capture and examination of this wide variety of actors. The adoption of a multi-method approach also doubles in utility in that it can serve to triangulate between the different sets of data. The methods used are: interviews, observations, and examination of documentary materials and mediated data. Some of the interviews were held *in situ* whilst others were undertaken in the homes of local residents. Observations were undertaken throughout the year and at varying times of day and night (and in all weather conditions). Throughout all stages of the research, including the design of the research, best practice in ethical research was undertaken (and agreed with the University ethics committee).

The case-study site is located amidst Victorian-era terraced houses that form tight, narrow streets. The site is an irregularly shaped parcel of land varying from approximately 30 metres at the front, 100 metres wide at the rear and 15 metres deep. The site had been a derelict parcel of land (left over from bomb-damaged housing) and for many years was used as an informal playground by local children (known colloquially as '*The Debris*') and for some years as a dumping ground for old cars. From the mid 1980's the space has been tidied up, cleared of much of the rubbish and debris and increasingly gardened by a number of different residents.

The choice of case study location was determined partly through ethical and safety consideration; informal spaces necessarily involve people using space that does not belong to them; thus there is often some degree of illegality or at least ambiguity in relation to legislation. One end of the spectrum of activities manifest in informal spaces is highly illegal but at the other end there are few activities that would be considered transgressive of the law; in this instance the case-study site is more towards the '*safer*' end of the spectrum. The case study must meet an important criterion of informal space; it is used by people who do not own the land. The size, location and choice of case study site were partly determined in relationship to the choice of research methods and research question. The case study was neither too large for a single researcher to be able to cope with, nor too large to be written up within the word count and remit of a PhD study. The researcher has been investigating this specific case-study site for a number of years before the inception of the PhD process (i.e. from late 2005). The formal period of research, specifically associated with this PhD, covers the timescale from the middle of 2010 until the end of 2013.

1.1.5 The structure of the thesis

This thesis is organised into seven chapters; the first chapter is the introduction outlined here. The second is a review of literature that examines the three key terms: informal, production, space (*and a fourth linking theme of 'dirt'*). The third chapter establishes the analytical framework and deals with epistemological

and ontological perspectives, particularly with regards to Actor-Network Theory (and its use of '*translation*'). The fourth chapter describes the methodology and justifies the research methods used. The findings report on the single-case study used, and this is set out in two closely related chapters, five and six. Chapter seven is the final section sets out the conclusions for the research and a reflexion on the process.

Précis of Thesis Chapters

This thesis addresses the research question: *How is informal space produced?* This précis provides a concise account of each of the subsequent chapters with a brief outline of how each chapter contributes to the thesis. This thesis is organised into seven chapters; the first chapter is the introduction outlined here. The second chapter is a review of literature that is structured according the three key terms of the principal research question: informal, production, space (with a separate section examining each). There are overlaps and coterminous areas across these sections, these are examined in more detail in a fourth section, which is categorised under the heading: '*dirt*'. Concluding the literature review is an overall summary and reflexion on the literature and how this informs and advances the empirical stages of the research. The third chapter bridges between the literature review, methodology and empirical chapters of the thesis. This chapter establishes the analytical framework (ANT) and deals with epistemological and ontological perspectives, particularly with regards to Actor-Network Theory (and its use of '*translation*'). The intention of the third chapter is to provide an explanatory nexus between the themes of the literature and the intellectual framework for the research approach. The fourth chapter describes the methodology, research methods and justification of the research design. The methodology and research approach is linked to the overall research question, literature review and epistemological and ontological framework. The third chapter sets out the decision making process of the design of the research and examines the methods and methodology of the research strategy. The research strategy was principally designed to address and answer the research question '*How is an informal space produced?*' The research design adopted multiple methods that were appropriate to, and capable of, investigating the focus of the

research inquiry. The use of a case study approach is explained and justified; and critically examines, in turn, the individual qualitative research methods used as part of the case study fieldwork. The approach to analysis and coding of the data collected is situated in relation to the analytical framework. The findings report on the single-case study used, and this is set out in two closely related chapters, five and six. The first findings chapter is subtitled '*communitygarden*' and the second chapter '*town-green*' to help differentiate the two parts of the empirical work. Both of these chapters present the findings of the research in the form of a '*hyper-thick description*'. The case-study is principally organized around the ANT approach '*translation*' and explores how an informal space in England was translated into a community garden and subsequently into a town-green. The first findings chapter portrays the translation of an urban wasteland into a *community garden*. Throughout this process the space retains the definition of being an informal space whilst it undergoes this transformation. The first findings chapter examines how translation was achieved; in the empirical case-study it required the seeming unification of two isolated domains: nature (garden) and society (community) into a hybrid (*communitygarden*). The translation in the second findings chapter portrays how the informal space/communitygarden is translated into a '*town-green*'. The chapter establishes the concept of '*town-green*' as defined within UK law, and how such an informal space is translated into a town-green. Chapter seven sets out the conclusions for the research and a reflexion on the process. This chapter synthesizes the findings of the case-study using the research questions for its organizing structure. The conclusions reflect back on the research strategy and specifically the use of actor-network theory, translation and the research questions. The thesis' contributions to knowledge are set out according to three areas of concern: empirical, theoretical and methodological.

2 INTRODUCTION TO THE LITERATURE REVIEW

This research addresses the question: *How is an informal space produced?* The literature review examines the three key terms of this research question: informal, production and space. The review is structured according to these three terms; with a separate section examining each. There are overlaps and coterminous areas across these sections. These are examined in more detail in a fourth section, which is categorised under the heading: ‘*dirt*’. Concluding each subsection is a brief summary of each sub-theme and the end of the literature review is an overall summary and reflexion on the literature, and how this informs and advances the empirical stages of the research.

2.1 PART ONE: INFORMAL

The section begins with an examination, and definition(s), of the term ‘*informal*’ in relation to the production of space. From these definitions the notions of legislation, power and capitalism emerge as important concepts in the construction of the meaning of informality, particularly in relation to the production of informal space. The next subsection contextualizes the term informal in these notions of: legality, capitalism and power. This section concludes with a summary and reflexion¹ back on the literature reviewed and implications with regards to the research question.

2.1.1 Definition(s) of informal

‘*Informal*’ has three inter-related meanings: “*irregular, unofficial, unconventional*”, “*without formality;*” and “*everyday, casual*”. These terms convey the ‘*feel*’ of what an informal space might be, in a rather loose sense, they purposively designate the mood of what this research has focused on - it contextualizes the seemingly ad hoc, laissez-faire, unstructured nature of the spaces and the activities that occur within them. The term ‘*everyday*’ is used widely in much of the literature and refers to a variety of different notions of

¹ For a detailed explanation of the term ‘reflexion’: please refer to subsection 4.12.

² ‘*Stacks*’ being the name for a music sound system.

³ And many elisions and variations of the terms ‘*time*’ and ‘*space*’.

activity, behavior, practices and spaces. Crawford (2008:15) describes how everyday places have ‘*informal*’ qualities and are produced through “*unofficial action that is not authorized by government or any official power structure*”; which defines informality as unofficial and everyday. Crawford (2008) acknowledges the work of theorists such as Lefebvre (1991), de Certeau (1984) and Bakhtin (1984) in her use of the term informal. These are generally positive appreciations of the term informal. These definitions are necessarily rather broad and generic; however the term informal has more specific connotations when used in relation to the notions of spatiality and ‘*urban*’ contexts which is explored in the following sections.

2.1.2 Definition(s) of informal: spatial

Informal spaces are defined here as spaces used on a temporary basis by individuals or groups who do not own the space (Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung, 2007). This interpretation of informality is thus developed in relation to spatiality. There are a number of concepts similar to, but not precisely coterminous with, informal spaces; for example, ‘*found spaces*’ which are “*places intended for other uses that people have occupied to meet their public life needs*” (Rivlin, 2007:38) i.e. external spaces that have been re-appropriated unofficially. Another example is ‘*espace vague*’ which are “*external places, strange spaces left outside the city’s effective circuits and productive structures.*” (Sola Morales 1995: 121). The translation of *espace vague* is problematic as there is not a direct equivalent: *espace* in French is a more loaded term than ‘*space*’, ‘*territory*’ or ‘*land*’ as along with denoting a physical place, it has connotations of specifically *urban* land and one that is economically exploitable. *Espace vague* is explicitly concerned with abandoned or forgotten urban spaces, although they do not necessarily imply any specific form of activity, they may even remain unused. There are also ‘*loose spaces*’ that include “*leftover and abandoned spaces...that have been appropriated for new and often temporary uses*” (Frank & Stevens 2007:6) although these are not necessarily owned by others.

There are many empirical examples of informal spaces, for example: in Detroit forty per cent of the former industrial land had become derelict but now much of

it has been re-appropriated by artists, activists and other users (Temple, 2010); in Berlin the fall of the Soviet state and the subsequent dismantling of the Wall have generated an enormous amount of derelict and disused land (Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung, 2007). The formal authorities do not have either the funds (*nor need*) to develop all of this space, and much of it has been temporarily loaned, and/or appropriated without permission, to myriad groups and activists to use these spaces as they wish (Haydn and Temel, 2006). These re-uses have included squats, playground, allotments, bars, raves and temporary homes; many of these are informal spaces.

In the UK more specifically, the location of informal spaces are heavily linked with, although not exclusively, derelict spaces. Dereliction might have occurred for a number of reasons. Bombing during the Second World War mostly took place in urban areas and the result of this destruction is still evident in the urban fabric today (Tallon, 2010). A major source of derelict space was as a result of the urban economic restructuring, beginning in the 1970's onwards, of manufacturing industry (*ibid*). This process, very broadly, involved the closure of many large and small manufacturing plants and factories as physical production moved to locations that had a cheaper labour source, for example the Far East (Castells, 1997). Many factories closed for good, while others relocated at the edge of city areas, where land was cheaper and larger sites were required. The resultant shift left many urban areas and buildings derelict with no money and sometimes no need for redevelopment (Jones & Evan, 2008). There have been other causes of dereliction such as the effects of Planning policies for example blight (Tallon, 2010), or individual circumstances from death within a family where there is no inheritor(s). In many of these cases, ownership becomes ambiguous, control is relinquished and/or there is a period of time in which the space could be occupied and used by those who do not own it.

The term '*informal*' in this context derives, particularly from the United Nations re-definition of slums and squatter settlements as '*informal*' cities (Gerxhani, 2004). The UN definition of an informal city is "*land to which the occupant have no legal claim, or which they occupy illegally*" (UN, 2001). The literature related to spatial informality is heavily influenced by the UN definition of informal

cities. This is perhaps not surprising given the scale of the phenomenon as informal cities contain one billion residents and will comprise the majority of the planet's urban dwellers by the middle of this century (UN, 2007). The extent of informal cities is vast, and its influence is felt throughout literature regarding spatial informality. In this literature, language/discourse has been appropriated or adopted in related descriptions of informality. This is not to conflate informal cities of the developing nations with an informal space in the UK per se. The UN refers mostly to space in developing countries (although not exclusively), whilst this research is situated in the UK and is contextualised within a European and American urban society. However some of the literature relating to informal space in developed nations borrows from the literature and themes of informal cities. The material, social, spatial and economic conditions differ, but the discourse remains the same (or similar). It is difficult, if not impossible (or at least unnecessary within the remit of this research) to attempt to disentangle them. Specifically in the UK, there is much land where ownership is unknown, ambiguous or contested and the use of these spaces would all fit into the category of informal, without it being defined necessarily as illegal; similarly there are spaces and sites that have been left undeveloped due to the costs of remediating pollution and/or lack of demand for certain locations. Informality is defined, in relation to a relatively unregulated urban area or part of a city. The first applied use of the term '*informal*' is concerned with or defined through its '*spatiality*'.

2.1.3 Definition(s) of informal: social

Due to the UN's use of the term informal in relation to cities, and specifically the correlation with illegality; the adjective '*informal*' has also been carried into other definitions, such as economics, particularly the '*informal economy*' (Feige, 2003). Kudva (2009) claims that informality is "*understood either as an economic sector or as a form of shelter and service provision*" that is illegal or outside of the law i.e. an economy where taxes are not paid. (This notion of '*informal*' economy is defined mostly in relation to informal cities of developing nations, rather than, for example, the '*other*', '*shadow*' and/or '*black*' economy of '*developed*' nations such as the UK or Italy – although there are strong similarities between both). Informality is linked socially in relation to a

pejorative legal status of an individual ‘*worker*’. The informality is linked to the socio-economic status and social activity of the individual. The theme of illegality permeates its usage rather than more benign interpretations. The notion of informality in relation to illegality is an extension of the UN’s spatialized interpretation. This literature review does not intend to determine whether this pejorative language is appropriate, but merely to acknowledge that the term ‘*informal*’ is situated within this purposive language. The informal economy is not coterminous with informal cities, but in the context of developing nations, there is a much closer link than, for example, in the UK. The internal economies of informal cities are considered to be informal (i.e. illegal) – but the inhabitants of informal cities also ‘*commute*’ to work within formal cities, which blurs the boundaries of what constitutes ‘*informality*’. There are also informal economies within formal cities that have no relation to informal cities (what might pejoratively be described as ‘*black markets*’) to further obfuscate the issue. Notably, it is the labour force derived from informal cities that is often powering the formal economies recent growth (Centre for Economics and Business Research, 2010).

Eliding spatial and social definitions somewhat: Kothari (2008) defines informal spatially *through* social use in the informal sector; wherein a space becomes informal when an informal worker occupies that space. This still adopts illegality as the principal modality of informality, but ties this notion to the individual person and through this to a socio-spatial economic (il)legal status. Informality becomes transient and temporary in this definition, conceptualizing “‘*informality*’ as a highly mobile” condition (Hunt, 2009:346). Informality is the modality of the ‘*action*’ of an individual in relation to legal status, one where space becomes imbricated, or perhaps implicated, with illegality. The related socio-spatial aspects can be described as “*the sites of enmeshed networks of labor, employment, and shelter that are the lifespaces of informals*” (Rakowski, 1994:3). It is the combination of users and the space that both transforms and defines the meaning of both as a mutually constitutive network (Frank & Stevens 2007:2). The transgression of norms, social and spatial, generates a practice of occupying and appropriating urban space in ways not intended by the designers

or owners invokes a condition of informality (Doron, 2007). This generates a second applied interpretation of informality as a socio-spatial continuum.

2.1.4 Definition(s) of informal: transience

Informal cities are considered relatively temporary or transient in comparison with a formal city. Squatter homes are often located (out of necessity) in those places considered unbuildable by the formal city: floodplains, steep slopes and locations that are liable to mud slides (Dovey & King, 2011). Accommodation is fabricated from plastic sheets and other non-robust materials, which are destroyed by strong winds and rains, not to mention issues with fires. Dharavi is one of the more '*famous*' informal cities (as championed by Prince Charles (Charles HRH The Prince of Wales et al, 2010); but despite being over one hundred years old and ostensibly permanent it is due to be cleared (by its '*legal*' owners) for redevelopment into a formal city (for profit). This notion of non-permanence has a resonance to kinetic cultures such as nomads, what is sometimes described as the '*fourth world*' (Manuells, 1974) or in the UK as '*urban nomads*' (Doron, 2007). Doron (2007:220) describes such informal nomadism as "*activities carried out by urban nomads – vending, sleeping, having sex, playing music, planting, painting, inhabiting*". It is germane to note that these kinetic cultures are often outside official structures and/or formal institutions have very little (political or economic) power and have conflictual relationships that correspond to the themes that recur in this research into informal spaces. In the UK, informal spaces are described as places where development is minimal and if it occurs at all is unplanned and without an initial strategy (de Certeau, 1984). Changes to such spaces are ad hoc and created with minimal effort (McKay, 1998). Informal is related to a lack of preparation, planning or strategic thinking with the corollary that such spaces tend to exhibit minimal significant structural or permanent changes (Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung, 2007). This means that there are often few permanent structures or features; the changes that are made are often temporary or transitory. The third applied use of informal is related to themes of non-permanence, transience, temporariness and kinetic cultures.

2.1.5 Definition(s) of informal: resistance

There is a conception of informal in relation to space and activity that is related (partly) to the action of *‘doing’* rather than merely consuming; but it is extended to also imply a notion of resistance to mechanisms of capitalism or control in general. These are *“spaces where there is a desire to constitute non-capitalist, collective forms of politics, identity and citizenship, which are created through a combination of resistance and creation, and the questioning and challenging of dominant laws and social norms”* (Chatterton & Pickerill, 2008). Foucault (1986:25) describes these *‘heterotopias of deviance’* as spaces *“in which individuals whose behavior is deviant in relation to the required mean or norm”*; some informal spaces fit this description in relation to resistance against the normative structures of society, particularly capitalism. Resistance might not necessarily be an explicit aim, but the unintended outcome of practices; for example carnivals, festivals and parties are (often) aimed primarily at pleasure or fun, yet inherent in many of these activities is a degree of lack of control, disorder, unpredictability and matters getting out of hand; these situate carnivals as inherently resistant to control regardless of whether this is intentional or desirable (Bakhtin, 1984). This could be categorized in a number of ways (although there are overlaps across these categories); firstly the term informal is directed towards people making and creating spaces for themselves (Chase et al, 2008). Individuals or groups make environments that might be for pleasure or recreation; for example skate-parks (Borden, 2001), bmx tracks (Atencio et al, 2009), dens or places to hang out or to feel at home (Sciorra, 1996).

A further (albeit inter-related) category includes performing activities that stand outside of the norms of formal capitalism and commodification. These activities include examples such as: graffiti (Dickens, 2008), parkour (Daskalaki et al, 2008), reclaim the streets (Aufheben, 1998), raves (Macindoe, 2011; Rietveld, 1998) or direct action as a form of protest (McKay, 1998) and there is either an explicit or implicit rejection of the status quo of the activities and practices related to capitalism (in the broadest sense). It is the rejection of, for example: driving a car, going to the shopping mall, or passivity itself that is questioned and reacted against. In these activities, there is little notion of capital (in the

economic sense), these activities are free or almost free, with minimal financial costs connected, and not reserved for an elite. A third category concerns activities (and/or spaces) where there is some degree of commerce or capitalism, i.e. buying and selling are involved, but this is outside of the official system. Examples include informal street sellers, street markets, or the unofficial use of yards as workshops (Chase et al, 2008). In an example from the UK rave culture in the 1990's "*money from the drinks bar and bucket collections was poured back into extending the stacks*"² (Malyon, 1998:188). The '*capital*' gained from part of an activity is used in this example, to promulgate that, or a related, activity with the target of providing or realising an alternative lifestyle or practice. Capital from street markets or unofficial street sellers can be seen as part of the informal economy (this example is implicitly connected to the informal economies of developing nations). The fourth applied use of the term '*informal*' is partly defined through socio-culturally deviant activities and/or anti-capitalist practices as modalities of '*resistance*'.

2.1.6 Definition(s) of informal: illegality

These definitions do not necessarily provide a description in and of informality itself, but more in relation to *another* system. The use of the term '*informal*' in relation to the slums of the developing world can be taken to be negative, as these cities are often renowned (rightly or wrongly) for crime, violence and insanitary conditions (Mowforth and Munt, 2008). The term informal thus has a pejorative connotation – one that is not inherent in other interpretations of the term. The meaning of the term informal is heavily influenced by this specific interpretation by the UN, particularly in relation to illegality as it extends to: individual persons, property, urban space and economics and social activities. Informality is "*a category of activity that results from the interweaving of ... the illegal and criminal*" (Friedmann, 2005:194). Thus informality is defined here in relation to a legal situation. This points to informal, not merely as '*irregular*' or '*casual*', but specifically with regards to a legislative apparatus. Given the definition used by the UN, it might perhaps have been more accurate for them to have coined the term '*illegal cities*' rather than informal. However, for this

² '*Stacks*' being the name for a music sound system.

research, informality is not restricted solely to that of illegality – although it does not preclude this category either, as informal spaces are often unregulated, unofficial and/or illegal.

Informality as defined by the UN (2001) is not a concept with its own describable qualities immanent unto itself; rather it is relationally conceived as excluded from law (i.e. *informal is illegal*), whilst simultaneously included within the law (i.e. *informal is defined through its illegality*). This has similarities with the notion of homo sacer, which is defined as that which is "*included in the juridical order solely in the form of its exclusion*" (Agamben, 1998: 12). This is a concept originally used to describe the situation when a legal judgment was passed on an individual, sentencing them to death by anyone, anywhere. At this point, the person exists outside of the law, as this sentence effectively places all other legislation as irrelevant, as the '*death sentence*' over-rides any other legislation; whilst simultaneously they exist within the law as their situation is created through legislation. They have no rights – and yet paradoxically, at the point all their rights are removed – they have the '*right*' to do anything as they have already had their punishment sentenced in advance. Whilst the notion of *homo sacer* has not been used literally in the UK (although the effective sentencing of members of Al-Qaida such as Bin Laden could be said to satisfy the condition of homo sacer in many ways) the principle is used metaphorically. Informality is imbricated in (and exterior to) legislation as a mechanism of power that produces or transforms the status and/or identity of humans. By implication (and particularly in relation to ANT) the body could be any organic (or perhaps inorganic) body, and not merely human (i.e. not exclusively '*homo*'). Illegality is the context within which informality is both defined and created (informal could be conceptualized as an '*actor sacer*'). There is a conceptualization of illegality as immanent to informality: informality defined in relation to, and within, law; yet simultaneously (and paradoxically) informality is defined external to (legitimate) law.

2.2 Informality and Legislation

The definitions posited above, particularly that of the UN, are in relation to a legislative or legal position and this subsection examines what is referred to as

'legislation' in this context. Legislation is the action of making laws (Ehrlich, 2002); where law could be most broadly described as “*a rule of conduct imposed by a secular authority*” (OED, 1993:1544). This initial definition of law is rather crude, as there are many types of law and many types of rules, some of which are secular and some of which are religious. Social *'rules'*, mores and norms of behavior that are culturally constructed (i.e. not legal rules) are examined in greater detail in the next subsection. The common understanding of *'laws'* are those created, imposed and maintained by a government (Hart, 1994). There is insufficient space (or need) to fully investigate the delicacies of law here, not least as “*law, and the specification of the distinctions between law and other rules, have proved surprisingly difficult to articulate*” (Harris, 2007:3). In relation to this research, there is no need to be overly specific about the legal systems that are used in the definitions above, as it is rare that there is much specificity in the literature reviewed about which laws or which legislation are actually being referred to. Nonetheless there are some salient notions of law that remain germane to this context and are explored here.

Durkheim (1964) argued that in pre-industrial societies, law was mostly punitive or repressive, where the aim of legislation was to punish crimes and misdemeanors. In industrial and complex societies, law is restitutive rather than punitive (Hart, 1994). The aim of contemporary law is to facilitate a redistribution of equity or justice, i.e. to compensate the victim and restore their status/wealth to the position prior to the crime. Law is concerned with moral and economic regulation. These broad categorizations are oversimplified, as there are restitutory rules operating in *'simple'* societies, and oppressive laws in contemporary societies. Nonetheless these broad insights into the role of law are helpful in a general contextualization of the progression (or at least *'change'*) in the purpose and mandate of legislation over time. The UN definition of *'informal'* sits mostly within the second category of law – that of restitutive justice. Occupiers take over space that is owned (in theory at least) by other individuals, groups or institutions and if the process of law is enacted, illegal occupiers may be removed from those spaces. Informality is also defined in relation to economic activities, and those carrying out informal activities in *'formal'* spaces can be asked, or forced, to leave (or cease these activities). In the UK, for

example, the Occupy movement occupied a variety of public spaces (mostly formal) but through the process of legislation, eventually all were removed from those spaces – to restore the rights and status of the ‘*original*’ owners as they were prior to the infringement of law.

These definitions of law, of ownership, and of those who transgress the law, say nothing about the justice of those laws, nor whether the owners of land and/or property have any moral entitlement. Indeed much of the criticism of the legislative process is that it is often unjust and maintains power relations that discriminate in favour of a wealthy and elite minority.

2.2.1 Informality and Othering

These conceptions of informality as an *other* system or only in relation to another system, i.e. formality; highlight the process of ‘*othering*’ that takes place that is part of the cultural construction of the meaning of informal. The process of othering not only defines informality in discourse; ‘*othering*’ creates informality in ‘*reality*’. At one level, the ‘*other*’ is defined in contradistinction to the ‘*same*’: in social sciences this describes how social groups or distinct cultures exclude other groups that are perceived as different (Barter-Godfrey & Taket, 2009). Star, Bowker and Neumann (2003) suggest that classification in itself valorises one view and silences another, akin to the process of othering. This process can also occur on an individual level; where a person disassociates from ‘*others*’ (real or imaginary) who appear different to them (Schwalbe et al, 2000). The term ‘*other*’ is used in a wide number of academic contexts most notably psychotherapy and post-colonialism (Said, 1978; Bhabha, 1994). Whilst these overlap to some degree, there are differences in their interpretation and signification. This process can be complex, particularly when taken into the realms of psychoanalysis; nonetheless the outline here establishes the general conceptualization as ‘*same*’ as: familiar, identifiable and to some extent, identity; and the ‘*other*’ as: unfamiliar, uncertain and undesirable. This notion can have a spatiality related to it, for example the creation of ‘*same*’ spaces such as the home at an individual level, or nationality at a social scale. At its worst, this process can lead to the demonization (and exploitation) of groups, nationalities and cultures. The notion of othering extends not just to internecine classifications

between human social groups; but between human and non-humans (Costello & Hodson 2012). In traditional sociology, there is a clear divide between humans and non-humans thereby only examining ‘*human*’ sociology. The tenets of Actor-Network Theory reject this division between human and non-human as an a priori position, partly as an attempt to remove the potential effects of othering when examining a phenomenon. The UN definition of informality in relation to its il-legality could be considered a process of othering; as the term formal is connected with the power structures and identities of the formal structures and organisations, of which the UN is one; whereas informal is defined merely in opposition, as ‘*other*’.

2.3 Definition(s) of informal: summary

There are a number of qualities of informality in relation to space; informality is often connected to illegality, particularly space that is squatted or used by people who do not own that space. The term informality is related directly to a socio-spatiality that contextualizes informality rather pejoratively and leads to the related definitions of unlawful economies (i.e. ones that avoid tax) as informal economies. Informality is further connected to illegality through an individual person and their informal activity in space. However, these references to illegality are not universal as there are more positive connotations particularly when informal is considered as part of a resistance to capitalism and consumerism. Informality is often a kinetic, transient and temporary condition, conceived as a temporal relational network. For the purposes of this research, the definition of informal that will be used will be that which is unofficial, everyday, spatial, relatively kinetic, unconventional *and* which might be illegal.

These applied definitions of informality are often overlapping in their remit and interpretation of the potential meaning of informality. The inter-relations between much of the terminology and conceptions of informality describe a tangle of spatial, social, psychological, economic, legal, cultural and political domains. This network of entities and relationships are mutually co-constitutive of each, in a fluxive and contingent manner.

The definitions of informality are primarily developed in relation to ‘*other*’ domains particularly: capitalism, illegality, consumerism and ultimately power. In particular the use of the term capitalism is used explicitly (and critically) within literature on the informal. The next subsection explores the meanings of capitalism within this context, as it is an important and recurring theme. Underpinning the meaning of, knowledge about, and construction of, informality, is that of ‘*power*’. The relationship between informality and power is more implicit. After the subsection on capitalism, this chapter concludes with an examination on the salient aspects of power in relation to informality in more detail.

2.4 CAPITALISM

“It is not so clear what is meant exactly by capitalism” (Lefebvre 1991:10).

Capitalism is related in the literature, directly and indirectly, to the theme of informality; particularly the notion of informal in relation to everyday practice and an (il)legal position. The use of informal is often conceived as an act of resistance against the effect or tendencies of capitalism. The legislative mechanisms that contextualize the defining of informality are in relation to a mode of government, governing and/or control that are manifest within a capitalist system. Capitalism also forms the overarching system within which much of the literature of ‘*power*’ is situated.

This subsection examines the notion(s) of capitalism as employed/evidenced within the literature review. The section begins with a summary of the breadth of meanings that capitalism is taken to mean in this context. The section then describes and identifies the system of capitalism more specifically in relation to the research question. Capitalism is particularly relevant to the research in that much of the literature relating to informal spaces tends to situate the activities and practices in contradistinction to capitalism; either as a form of resistance to, or resort from, the effects and mechanisms of capitalism. The section examines the implications of this literature in relation to the production of informal space, before concluding with a working definition of capitalism for this research.

2.4.1 Introduction to capitalism

The term '*capitalism*' is used frequently throughout the literature reviewed in relation to the production of informal space. The principal unifying aspect across much of the literature is the absence of an accurate definition of what this term '*capitalism*' means, "*the word 'capitalism' has had too confusing a career*" (Latour, 1987:223). This word has been both widely used and over-used and has a very broad and sometimes conflicting set of meanings. Uses of the term '*capitalism*' within the literature reviewed range variously from detailed analyses of Marxist theory (Lefebvre, 1991; Debord, 1961; Deleuze and Guattari, 2004) through to a general byword for contemporary society (Haydn & Temel, 2006, Auge, 2008) to contemporary processes of globalism (Castells, 1997; Lepik, 2010) or to broader ideas relating to shopping and consumer society (McKay, 1998; Borden, 2001; Tomlinson, 1999; Shields, 1991).

2.4.2 Definitions of capitalism

Capitalism is "*an organizing system that conditions and shapes our everyday lives... capitalism is constantly being remade or resisted in every, social, political and economic transaction*" (Rogers, 2014: 17).

Capitalism in the broadest sense refers to a social and politico-economic system that is organised around the use (or, depending on your perspective, exploitation) of capital (Fulcher, 2004). Capital (i.e. wealth in the form of assets and/or money) is controlled or owned by an elite minority/class, the labour of the majority is exchanged for wages and any capital gain/profit goes to the elite (ibid). This approximation of capitalism is considered to extend in size to be a global system with most countries engaged or involved (to varying degrees) with capitalism (Socialist Party of Great Britain, 2012). Capitalism as a process extends much wider than the narrow definition as a financial system. Marx defined it as a mode of production of commodities for consumption; wherein even labour itself became a form of commodity (Elster, 1999). In "*capitalism both work and the products of work are abstracted and take on meanings which*

transcend their use values” (Oswald, 1996:51). This aspect of capitalism links to the notion of commodities as saleable goods and hence in turn to shopping and consumerism. This is an oversimplification of the term, as capitalism also describes a very wide notion of activities and entities: *“money and its powers of intervention, or commercial exchange, the commodity and its generalization, in that everything can be bought and sold...landed capital commercial capital, finance capital...commodities labour, knowledge, capital itself, land – are what constitute capitalism”* (Lefebvre, 1991:10). In quotidian terms the meaning is often simplified into ‘shopping’ or elided to signify a consumerist society; where being in a shopping mall *“is to claim one’s status as a consumer which, under a capitalism which reduces people to their function in an economic equation”* (Shields, 1989:159). However the notion of capitalism, or at least the mechanisms of capitalism are considered to be far-reaching and considerably more profound than merely the emergence of shopping malls.

The process(es) of capitalism, it is argued, have become so complex that most of the workers within the system are no longer able to distinguish that they are within capitalism, so occupied with their labour and the desire to consume, *“their activities are not transparent to them; their eyes are fixed on the fetish”* (Perlman, 1969:8). The mechanisms of capitalism also encompass aspects not directly related to ‘labour’ or ‘capital’: for example leisure, sport and recreation are implicated in the means of production of the system of capitalism (Canjuers & Debord, 1960). Mass-media and mechanisms of communication also become inculcated within the capitalist system (Chomsky & Herman, 2002). Debord (1983:1) argues that *“in societies where modern conditions of production prevail, all of life presents itself as an accumulation of spectacles”*. Capitalism generates so much separation between the mode of production and the product (or commodity/fetish) that this has all developed as merely a spectacle and no longer ‘real’. Baudrillard (2006) suggests that the schism between the actual commodity via additional layers of packaging, brandings, and marketing have lead to the condition of simulacra; a simulation in place of the real. The consumer is immersed in a world of representations: *“the simulacrum is never that which conceals the truth - it is the truth that hides the fact that there is none. The simulacrum is true”* (Baudrillard, 2006). Capitalism has replaced reality and

meaning with signs and simulations of reality; but there are now simulations of simulations of simulations that are so far removed as to obscure any connections to reality. Whether these are accurate interpretations of the extent of capitalism are the subject of myriad books and discussions, often heavily influenced by political persuasion, and extend beyond the required remit of this research question. Nonetheless they touch on the broad themes raised by the term ‘*capitalism*’ as evidenced in the review of literature in relation to the research question.

2.4.3 Consumerism

Capitalism is often conceived as principally concerned with consumerism, with shopping as its apotheosis. The notion of consuming is a recurrent theme in the literature where capitalism involves the process of shopping – with individual humans sometimes portrayed as some kind of mindless automaton: “*everyday life has been surrendered to the techniques of mass marketing and the commercial control of the mall management*” (Gottdiener, 1986:301) where “*the consumer does not desire. He submits...He obeys the suggestions and the orders given to him by advertising, sales agencies*” (Lefebvre, 2002: 10-11). This is an oversimplification of the complexities of not just shopping malls, but of capitalism also. Much of contemporary life is not involved with shopping nor consuming and even within a shopping mall the notion of consumerism is questioned, “*one finds individual reversals, destabilizations, and interventions in a continuous play for the freedom of this space made by users who must not be written off as passive consumers*” (Shields, 1989: 161). The notion of capitalism generating passive consumers is perhaps too simple a conclusion; this is not to say there is not consumption taking place, but there is also resistance and/or ambivalence to this (de Certeau, 1984).

2.4.4 Resistance to capitalism

Informality as mode of resistance to, or against, capitalism is frequently raised in the literature. Anti-capitalism for some means ‘*doing*’ rather than ‘*consuming*’ or ‘*buying*’ (Haydn & Temel, 2006; Mackay, 1998). The sentiment of the pursuit of practices and activities that involve direct action or involvement in the process

of making or producing are considered to lie outside of capitalism (Chase et al, 2008; Lefebvre, 1991, de Certeau, 1984). “*Informal actors*” and their appropriation of unused spaces become modes of resistance; “*these sites and the actors involved also spatialise and visualise a resistance and temporary alternative to the institutionalised domain and the dominant principles of urban development*” (Groth & CorJin, 2005: 503). Skateboarders, bmxers, gardeners, squatters, graffiti artists and many other counter-cultures are sometimes conceived as providing a mode of production or model of activity that is not part of the capitalist system (Haydn & Temel, 2006; Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung, 2007; McKay, 1998; Chesters & Welsh, 2006). This is an overly broad generalisation that belies the specificity of any particular practice. Counter-cultures that ostensibly appear to be non-consumer based are also imbricated within capitalism, but in a less obvious or direct way to shoppers in a mall; i.e. accounts of non-capitalist pursuits are also sometimes over-simplified. If we take one example, skateboarding is often cited as playful or for pleasure and not for profit as a counter-movement or sub-culture with a unique identity that that resists capitalism (Atencio et al, 2009). However, skateboarding has sponsors, advertising and marketing; which are controlled by brands that are often global multinationals; i.e. capitalist (Donnelly, 2008). Skateboarding is closely related to fashions in clothing, boards, moves/tricks and even the argot/language used – which are all connected via on-line communities, making the latest fashions almost instantly global and homogeneous (Debord, 1983). Skateboarders are also reliant on products of the capitalist system; boards, wheels, decks, stickers, magazines etc. In another example, guerrilla gardening is also described as a non-capitalist practice “*no longer a passive consumer, you become...an active citizen*” (Tracey, 2007: 1) in the way that it obviates the process of ‘*consuming*’ and that it rejects any exchange of capital, and that the gardeners challenge the functions of existing derelict or underused spaces that were often generated as the by-product (or waste product) of capitalism (Tracey, 2007). Whilst much of this may well be true in certain instances, the notion that an activity, such as guerrilla gardening, lies entirely outside of the domain of capitalism is questionable (Reynolds, 2009). Some of the examples of guerrilla gardening involve the ‘*tidying up*’, or ‘*cleansing*’ of, an area that is derelict or unsightly, which in turn contributes to a process of gentrification. Guerrilla

gardening “has a gentrifying effect, whether intended or not” (Reynolds, 2009:32). Wherein guerrilla gardening is contributing to the ‘*improvement*’ and enhancement of an area, which in turn leads to the increase in desirability of that area, which leads to an increase in house prices, i.e. guerrilla gardening and capitalism are associative (Reynolds, 2009). Guerrilla gardening involves devices and materials such as: spades, forks, trowels, herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers, much of which are purchased from garden centres, which in turn are associated with capitalism *qua* shopping. Guerrilla gardening as a phenomenon is a global practice, promulgated across the internet as a meme; so although gardening might be deemed ‘*local*’ in one sense, it is simultaneously ‘*global*’ in another; made possible, that is the dissemination of the *idea*, through the internet, mobile devices and global communications (Tracey, 2007). This example is neither saying guerrilla gardening is wholly capitalist, nor is it concluding that it is not; rather it is situating the activity as both and neither and the liminal space in-between; dependent on individual circumstances and contexts. This applies to the many sub-cultures or counter-cultures that are often cited to provide a degree of resistance to capitalism whereas the network of relationships between a culture (and/or sub-culture) and capitalism are more complex and entangled.

2.4.5 Cultural capital

Capitalism is mostly defined with ‘*capital*’ as an economic term. However Bourdieu, in particular, has connected capital beyond economic interpretations, specifically: social capital, cultural capital and symbolic capital (Portes, 1998). All of these forms of capital are imbricated in notions of power relations, although often in highly complex and difficult to perceive mechanisms. Cultural capital relates to the process through which cultural assets can be manipulated. These might be skills, qualifications, and forms of knowledge or educational privilege that can be used to effect cultural authority (Wacquant, 2005). For example, the educational ‘*success*’ of the elite does not reside exclusively in their knowledge and qualifications, but is also manifest in the behaviours, gait and accents of the educated – all of which could be used to manipulate cultural capital. Social capital refers to assets related to the social groupings one identifies, or is identified, with (Lane, 2000). Social capital is “*the aggregate of*

the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition” (Bourdieu, 1985:248). These are the relationships and associations of interest, influence, group memberships and affiliations through which social capital is realized via *“the ability of actors to secure benefits through membership in networks and other social structures* (Portes 1998:6). Symbolic capital such as prestige, honor or celebrity status, are sources of power. This is less perceptible than cultural or social capital, where there are often discernible effects; symbolic capital is constructed in relation to culturally specific processes of valorization (Bourdieu, 1985). All of these forms of ‘*capital*’ further extend and obfuscate the meaning of the term and usage of capital and capitalism; yet are united by the notion of the exploitation of assets by an elite at the cost of *another* (subordinate) group. Exploitation is not merely to gain an advantage in some fiduciary or social manner, but through these processes; the elite embed their knowledge, customs and practices as legitimate and the norm.

2.4.6 Capital(ism) and controls

Capitalism is the system implied or explicitly stated as the mode of control or governance, in relation to the production of informal space, in much of the reviewed literature. A dominant theme in the interpretation of ‘*informal*’ is contextualized in relation to that of a legislative system; this is inter-related to the structure(s) of power/control which can determine (and act upon) that which is legal and/or illegal (van Horen, 2000). The definition from the United Nations regarding informal cities are mostly for territories or countries within a capitalist system (albeit to varying degrees of capitalism). Capitalism structures the overarching system within which power relations are realised. Capitalism is the social and politico-economic system within which legislative and governmental mechanisms operate (Nkurunziza, 2008). The relationship of capitalism to control is contextualized in a definition of informal *“land to which the occupant have no legal claim”* (UN, 2001:111-112). In this excerpt are the concepts of law, as in a ‘*legal claim*’; and that land can be ‘*owned*’, which in this context means as a form of asset or capital: i.e. a form of capitalism (Chen, 2007). Land, as a capital asset, often becomes the basis for evicting ‘*illegal*’ occupiers, allowing

for developers or a governing elite to capitalize on the value of the land for redevelopment, “*forced evictions from informal governments are often carried out in favour of the market*” (Huchzermeyer & Karam, 2006:5). (Informal) spaces are part of a capitalist system, wherein land can be owned as a form of capital (Toulmin, 2008). (It is theoretically possible that land could be occupied outside of a capitalist system; however most of the literature and prevalence of informal spaces tend to be coterminous).

2.4.7 Summary of capitalism

Capitalism affects society and space (and economics, science, language, the media etc.), particularly activities such as shopping, going to work and commuting – which form the bulk of quotidian life. The interpretation of capitalism is often in the form of a critique in terms of the negative aspects of such practices (and the related spaces that facilitate, or result from, these practices). The integration of human labour into the system of capitalism further complicates the process, so that the individual human becomes a part of the process and product of capitalism. The requirement to work, the output of that labour, and the associated desire for consuming commodities produce a vicious (or virtuous, depending on your perspective) circle for the reproduction of capitalism. There is evidence that resistance to a capitalist system is possible. Capitalism is sometimes contrasted or defined by what it is *not*; pursuits for pleasure or fun, carnivals or playing around, for example: skateboarding, bmxing, or activities such as gardening, street knitting, squatting and urban exploration; or simply *not* working or at least not working for a profit; fit into such a definition. Informal economies are sometimes a form of resistance to the formal economy, and hence of capitalism itself. It is rare however if any of these examples of resistance are quite so simple and clearly demarcated; capitalism and consumerism are complex and can involve passive consumerism, active consumerism and/or more nuanced forms of resistance in almost any context, often by the same individual at different times.

The use of the term capitalism in the literature review is pervasive and its purported effects far reaching. The term ‘*capitalism*’ as used in this research is the widest in scope and encompasses the range described here. The meaning of

the term capitalism is context dependent, and as such the interpretation of the word is dependent upon that context. When the term is used henceforth, its meaning is likewise context dependent.

2.5 POWER

“Power still rules society; it still shapes, and dominates, us.” Castells (1997:359).

There are many modalities of power; which form recurring and important themes in this literature. The notion of power is imbricated in law, legislation, capitalism, resistance and definitions of informality. This subsection does not aim to summarise the myriad tomes on power; rather it examines the dominant themes that emerged during the literature review that are germane to the ‘*production of informal space*’. These themes focus specifically on power in relation to this context.

Power is incredibly complex to define, indeed Law (1991:165) describes the situation thus: *“power is surely one of the most contentious and slippery concepts in sociology. Used, re-used and endlessly abused.”* This subsection aims to explore these themes that specifically relate to power and the informal production of space. This subsection begins with a description of networks of power, i.e. how power is constituted, then explores how asymmetries of power emerge and effect dominant and subordinate power relations; how power produces and reproduces itself and the conditions in which it prevails; before concluding with a subsection on how power manifests itself through surveillance and at a corporeal level.

2.5.1 Introduction to power

The everyday understanding of power is often conceptualized as something one group owns and exerts over another (Westwood, 2002). In this perspective, power is exerted on those with less power through force or coercion. Power is used to impose ideas, beliefs, structures and/or practices over a subordinate group, implicitly and/or explicitly (Harrison, 2011). Power, as understood in these terms, is often connected with forceful means of maintain or securing power, as Mao infamously claimed *‘power comes from the barrel of a gun’*.

Force and power are often closely related, with Machiavelli's (2005) *'The Prince'* as an explicit treatise on maintaining power through coercion (along with other mechanisms). Power could be considered akin to an object or something owned that one person (or group) metes out upon another. Power is, however, much more complex and complicated to define specifically (Westwood, 2002). Power comes in a number of modalities, "*power has many forms, such as wealth, armaments, civil authorities, and influence on opinion*" (Russell, 1996:4) and is exerted on and through a heterogeneous network.

2.5.2 Networks of power

Power can be conceived of as not merely something owned or maintained by one group to be meted out on another, but more as a relational network, where power is exerted through consensus, from one group to another (Harrison, 2011). Power develops over time in this context as the inter-relationship(s) between different actors or entities. There is often an asymmetric distribution of power between these groups that endures over time, though these can change, improve or deteriorate. This relational notion of power is more complex than the initial everyday usage of the term. Power is "*net-like*" (Foucault, 1980a:98) and operates not just through multiple groups or individuals as part of a series of relationships; but through a variety of materials, practices and spaces. The effects and instruments of power are related to a wide number of entities. Power is "*diffused in global networks of wealth, power, information and images, which circulate and transmute in a system of variable geometry and dematerialized geography*" (Castells, 1997:359). Power is to be found in, and constitutive of, a complex and variable network. There are many factors and entities that form part of power relations.

Power is diffused and/or distributed across a range of material and social actors. Foucault (1980b:194) describes this as a "*heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions*". Power operates as: devices, mechanisms, plans (of action), technologies, legislation, institutions as well as social groups, spatial arrangements and cultural norms. The examination of power is neither entirely

sociological, nor wholly physical, nor exclusively legislative; rather it is to be understood in the entirety of this network. This relational, or network, view of power is relevant to the production of informal spaces that situates and *“understands the materiality of power in the commonsense, everyday world of subjects – the very stuff of the social as a lived space”* (Westwood 2002:27). The everyday of informal spaces is, in turn, associated with the production and reproduction of power and how relationships are constituted through these processes.

Power must be *‘lived’* or exercised; it cannot be reserved for future purposes (Law, 1986). Power does nothing, or is nothing, when one simply *‘has’* power – it is only power when it causes another to act (Latour, 2005). *“Power is composed here and now by enrolling many actors in a given political and social scheme, and is not something that can be stored up and given to the powerful by a pre-existing society”* (Latour, 1986a: 264). Power is not something one *‘has’* or possesses, it is only when something is affected or performed that one can say that power is *‘acting’*. When one exerts power – it is argued that it is others who are forced to act or *‘do’* the acting; power is not the cause of the action but is evident from its consequences (Callon, 1986). Power can be increased or harnessed in assembling and aligning a number of different actors and/or entities within a network to behave as one (at least for some of the time). This unification of entities as a mode of power is sometimes targeted towards, or against, another network of power; that might generate, for example, a *“grassroots’ alternative to this domination”* (Castells, 1983:291), i.e. a collective of people who form a social movement to fight against specific grievances or perceived problems related to asymmetries of power. *“Understanding what sociologists generally call power relationships means describing the way in which actors are defined, associated and simultaneously obliged to remain faithful to their alliances”* (Callon, 1986: 215). The collective of actors who are aligned together, or who are acting together in unity are a manifestation of (one of many) power-relations.

Power is conceived here as part of the interrelationships between multifarious actors and agents in a given context. Power is manifest within any given context and it can have palpable qualities that have influenced or affected other actors

within a network (Latour, 2005). These interrelationships are not static or immutable (though some are more durable than others) “*networks are assemblages of forces, they emerge from and dissolve into the play of power*” (Brown & Capdevila, 1999:38). This re-iterates the concept of power as something that changes over time as part of a series of relationships. The challenge is to study the actors *and* the associations between actors, as this is where power becomes discernible; “*power, like energy, must be regarded as continually passing from any one of its forms into any other.*” (Russell, 1996:4). The production of informal space is concerned with power relations; understanding and describing those transformations and associations. Actors attempt to attain their objectives, needs and/or wants; whether the conscious decisions of humans, subconscious actions of humans or ‘*natural behaviour*’ of non-human actors, into other actors, and through this process add the potential of other actors’ power to their own (when successful).

2.5.3 Production and (re)production of power

It is considered that power is constituted, structured and/or organised in such a way that power seeks to not merely maintain, but also reproduce itself and furthermore to affect the context whereby this reproduction is made more favourable/possible (Perlman, 1969). This power system could be in the form of a principality (Machiavelli, 2005), a social group (Bourdieu, 1977), a political system (Chomsky & Herman, 2002), an economic system (Lefebvre, 1991) or some other configuration/context. Gramsci’s notion of reproductive power is described as a hegemony, whereby the elite, or ruling, class have their views, practices, perceptions, knowledge and values accepted as the cultural norm (Joll, 1977). Power is not merely or exclusively the use of force, but, at its extreme, the complete extirpation of one culture’s values by another (Gramsci, 1992). The ideology of the elite becomes the dominant perspective for the broader society. “*What some call superstructure, and what others call culture, includes an elaborate system of belief and ritual behaviours which define what is right and what is wrong and what is impossible; and the behavioral imperatives that follow from these beliefs*” (Piven & Cloward, 1977). This can include economics, politics, cultures, religion and knowledge itself; whereby the dominant cultural

hegemony effectively becomes the norm that is unquestioned and immutable. Resistance through those occupying informal space is, at times, an *attempt* to question or rebuke the foundations of the dominant knowledge, practices, and beliefs.

The relationships of power between different groups is organised to reproduce itself and maintain the dominant power structures (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004). In the contemporary world, it is argued that capitalism is extirpating existing cultures, practices, spaces, languages and forms of knowledge (Lefebvre, 1991). Furthermore the growth of digital media, global communications which form the '*space of flows*', i.e. the global movement of information via material and immaterial networks extend, produce and reproduce the productive repertoire of capitalist power relations (Castells, 2001; Castells, 1989). The '*logic*' of mass-production extends from the factory, to the organisation of cities, the disciplining of the human labour force through to '*logic*', as a secular, rational, intellectual perspective, replacing other perspectives or ways of seeing, interpreting and/or understanding the world (Foucault, 1991). These processes and effects reproduce themselves, to further extend and promulgate the hegemon; in this case capitalism. Power reproduces itself partly through the reproduction of an elite who maintain, control and disseminate their own culture, and in turn that modality of power. The production and re-production of power can involve issues of culture, religion, identity, architecture, language, nature, economy and knowledge itself.

2.5.4 Manufacturing Power

Reproduction of "*power and knowledge as social processes can involve technologies of depiction that contribute to the reproduction of social order*" (Fyfe and Law, 1988:286). Prevalent modes of reproduction, particularly for the reproduction of capitalism, are contemporary multimedia, mass marketing and modern communication (Castells, 1989). Power can be exerted, maintained and manipulated through mass media, such as television and advertising (according to Chomsky & Herman (2002)). This is in turn paid for (mostly) through the advertising revenues of large (capitalist) businesses and corporations to support not merely more mass media but, in turn, those capitalist organisations

themselves. These are aligned with the interests of the government; whereby an alliance of government, media and business are united to effect and ‘*manufacture consent*’ (Chomsky & Herman, 2002). This consent can be seen as homologous to hegemonic processes; power structures replicating power structures. The relationship between media, contemporary culture and power is important: “*propaganda is to a democracy what the bludgeon is to a totalitarian state*” (Chomsky & Herman, 2002:20). As well as the mass-media mechanisms of power could be added: space (itself), architecture, the organisation of buildings and cities, public and private space, regional development, technology and communications (Lefebvre, 1991; Castells, 1989). These are all entities within a network wherein power relations are exerted, modified, performed, produced and reproduced.

2.5.5 Asymmetry of power

“*Power is never equally distributed. There is no power where power is equal*” (Harrison, 2011:5)

One modality of power is conceived as the accumulation of multiple actors and relationships with a similar agenda or acting in a united way to produce an asymmetry within power relations (Law, 1986). This could be an organised institution or an informal collective; the germane aspect is that there is assembled an asymmetry of power. It can be seen that institutions are frequently organised in such a way to produce the effect of a dominant, hegemonic and/or totalitising power (Westwood, 2002). Institutions are *de facto* large conglomerations of people, practices, legislation, codes, buildings, technologies and signs that are designed to produce a certain form of organisation, behaviors and practices amongst its actors. This co-ordination of multiple actors can extend further; emanating out from the institution into, for example, urban space. Asymmetries of power can be understood in this context. For example the combined power of local authorities, police and the legislative system are assembled or networked to produce a specific strategy for codes of behavior in urban society, particularly with regards to what is defined as illegal. Institutions are a large collective of various actors all associated with a single form of power; or power operating in a single direction or (seemingly) with a single voice (Latour, 2005). The resistance

of individuals or smaller groups against this collective is illustrative of the notion of the asymmetry of power. Even though an '*individual*' might well associate with a number of other allies and actors, their power is often '*less*' effective than institutional power. This is not to say there is one large form of power versus one smaller power. For within the institutional apparatus there are disagreements, conflicts, struggles and changes to law. There are contradictions across organisations and lapses in the enforcement of those strategies. Official organisations must operate and make manifest their strategies in order to produce and reproduce those power relations (Law, 1986). Institutions are one example of an asymmetry of power, but there are many others. "*Power is expressed in the monopolization of space and the relegation of weaker groups in society to less desirable environments*" (Sibley, 1995:ix). In terms of spatial asymmetry of power, there are many groups and individuals who are excluded from some urban spaces. There is an imbalance of females compared to males in urban spaces and there are asymmetries of race and socio-economic groups (Madanipour, 2004). There are often multiple instances of power(s) acting in any given context and asymmetries in those power-relations.

What these conceptions of power denote are the multifarious (and emergent) ways in which power can operate, and invariably does, often to the effect of reproducing a particular way of life for a governing or controlling elite. Power is often perceived as negative as a result of this tendency to facilitate domination, control and/or homogenization (Westwood, 2002). This perhaps suggests that power is both mono-directional and unavoidable. However, this is not the only transference of power; there is scope for resistance against or within this asymmetry of power (Foucault, 1991). Power is not solely negative; power can also be positive. "*We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'*" (Foucault, 1991:194). Power conceived as a network of effects and forces is inherently a matrix of positive and negative, and/or '*good*' and '*bad*' entities. Power can be emancipatory and liberating if it can be harnessed or exercised in an appropriate manner. There are many examples of revolutions, or resistances throughout history, as well as changes to the elite and those who '*hold*' power, which are evidence of both the fragility of power and that power is

also exercised by the *'weak'*. The *'informal'* is often perceived as weak and seemingly powerless, which is true to some extent, but that there is more complexity to it; power is the sum of all the relationships, large and small; and the existence of revolutions illustrate that any system of power is dynamic and not immutable.

2.5.6 Power/knowledge

"Power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth" (Foucault, 1991:194).

Power and knowledge are closely related; knowledge, particularly in the form of discourse is considered to co-constitute power (Foucault, 1980b). Knowledge is yet another form, or modality, of power that structures and controls. Knowledge including *'scientific'* knowledge is/are part(s) of a network of power.

"Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it... Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart" (Foucault 1998:100-101). This is more than the maxim *'knowledge is power'* whereby knowledge of someone or something, for example a military enemy, enables strategies to be sought to overpower the opposition. In this conception, the relationship between knowledge and power is more fundamental and subtle. Knowledge itself, the system of knowing and the entirety of worldviews all form a network of power (Blaikie, 2007). The *'scientific'* knowledge that prevails currently is based on a different system and structure of knowledge to, for example, the Middle Ages (Kuhn, 1970). This form of power is endemic to the language and basis of knowledge that this research is situated within.

The relationship of knowledge, language and power is complex. It is outside of this research to examine the effect or impact of the current paradigm within which this research is embedded. The application of knowledge however within informal spaces is more determinable, as is the application of discourse, particularly the effect of purposive and technical language. However, the use of language and the nature of what constitutes acceptable forms of knowledge are more clearly part of the *'construction'* of this research process. Further

exploration of these issues is contained within subsequent research framework and methodology chapters.

2.5.7 Power, bodies and surveillance

“Performance is also an instrument of urban memory, the body its archive”
(Kirstenblatt-Gimblett 2008:21).

The effects of power are exacted on, or come to affect, (specifically in relation to human actors) the individual human body (McLaren, 2002). Whilst the notion of power is at times a rather abstract notion, its application and ultimately the effect on that most intimate ‘*space*’, the human body, is profound. The space of the body, the spaces of the city, power, mechanisms of control (and in this context capitalism) are all inter-related. Foucault (1991) uses the context of a prison as an extreme case study to describe how power operates through space and other mechanisms on individuals. In a panoptican prison, each cell is observable from a central point by a guard, which is designed so that the prisoner cannot see if they are being observed. In the panoptican, one of the modes of operation is that the individual prisoner is under supervision, but cannot know when they are being observed. This condition of ‘*permanent visibility*’ (Foucault, 1991:201) combined with uncertainty can produce conforming practices of behaviour. The prisoner should behave in a certain manner for fear of being observed breaking the rules (and further punished). The prisoner eventually adopts this behavior by turning the disciplinary gaze upon themselves; it is the prisoner who begins to manage their behavior rather than, for example, through direct, restitutory or punitive action by a guard. The behavior and identity of the prisoner alters during this process, becoming self-governing as they internalize conduct/ways of behaving, as a result of a complex series of institutional, psychological, spatial, architectural and emotional apparatus. The principles of a panoptican prison are similar, it is argued, outside of the prison, but the effects are much more subtle and ambiguous (McLaren, 2002). Foucault (1991) expands the panoptican metaphor particularly the notion of the individual modifying their behavior as a result of surveillance. Whilst surveillance in society is not as severe or punitive as in a prison, the ‘*power*’ of social norms and codes operate on the individual; in terms of how they hold themselves, where they sit, how they stand, to whom they

talk, how they dress etc (McLaren, 2002). Bourdieu describes this as the habitus; this is an individual's habits, deportment, behaviour and mannerisms i.e. "*a set of dispositions which incline agents to act and react in certain ways*" (Thompson, 1991). These dispositions are partly structured by society (and space etc) and partly by each individual human actor and these are constructed partially through responses to context (Grenfell, 2008). All of society is under surveillance, resulting in the self-disciplining practices of individuals (Foucault, 1991). Power affects, and interrelates with, the individual human in complex ways. The technologies of power, literally and metaphorically, extend out from the prison into the built environment: schools, factories, hospitals, universities and informal spaces.

2.5.8 Summary on power

Definitions and interpretations of '*informal*' are often contextualized as a form of power relations: informal in relation to the formal; official versus unofficial, usually as an asymmetry of power - with informal as power-*less*. Yet there are many of types of power and ways in which it operates. Power is not a single entity, nor is it an immutable quantity; it can be produced, reproduced and/or destroyed. Power is a network of (inter)relations of entities, associations and/or forces such as: wealth, institutions, individuals, materials, practices, technologies and knowledge. Power is exerted throughout the network, not merely from '*top-down*' but in multiple directions. A network analogy captures the multifarious and heterogeneous materials, practices and entities that can be involved in, or constitutive of, power relations. Power is not static; it changes, transforms, mutates and is constantly in flux. It is argued that power *reproduces* itself and produces the conditions conducive to its reproduction. This can be through mechanisms such as the organisation of cities, buildings, transport and through media, communication and digital technologies. Power is practiced and performed rather than owned or held in storage. Power can be the effect produced by groups of (human and non-human) agents working together. Arguably perhaps, one of the operational (operational in the sense that it can be detected during empirical fieldwork rather than remain an abstract or intangible concept) definitions of power is that it must be '*acting*' in some way or on

something, for it to be considered '*power*'.

Power is a nebulous term that can vary considerably at different scales and times. Power can be conceptualized as operating at a number of scales; for example the level of cultural and social contexts and at the level of the human body and its practices, habits and dispositions. Power needs to be understood in its specific context. This context can involve local, global and/or virtual phenomena. In order to understand the effect or modalities of power, it is necessary to examine each particular context, where "*the operation of power is specific to its instances*" (Law, 1986:16). Informal can be seen as practices, activities and/or attitudes/modes of resistance to dominant forms of power; official power, formal institutions. Informal can be understood, or is interpreted sometimes, as a resistance to capitalism in general. In this way the research is an examination not only to informality; but also as a corollary, to formal, capitalism and hegemonic power systems.

2.5.9 Reflexion on informality, capitalism and power

There is not necessarily implicit criticism of the notion of capitalism in the context of this research, despite explicit criticism of capitalism within much of the literature. The literature review does not aim to adjudicate on these issues; rather, the literature positions informality in relation to capitalism, and through resistance a transgression of that capitalist system. Likewise, in this literature review, '*power*' is often contextualised pejoratively. However, the term power in this research denotes nothing inherently positive or negative; partly as the decision (on the merits (or otherwise)) of the phenomenon of the production of informal space is outside the remit of this PhD; and partly as power contains the aporia of positive and negative simultaneously.

2.6 Summary of informality

The subsection began with definition(s) of the term '*informal*' in relation to the production of space. These contextualized informal in relation to spatiality and sociality and also imbricated in illegality. This generated the conditions of that illegality, i.e. legislation itself, which is, more abstractly, a form of control. The

literature pointed to the related notions of everyday-ism and resistance; which in turn, were contextualized within capitalism and power. Ultimately concluding that the research is an exploration in power-relations.

The meaning of informal is complex and varies dependant on the context in which it is used. Informal is sometimes conceived in contradistinction to formal; as unofficial as opposed to official. Informality is often constructed (socially, legally and scientifically) as different and inferior. This results in a complex network of meanings and implications, informal can be the resistance to dominant authority/control yet informal is also subordinate to that control. Informal becomes an alternative, and perhaps enemy, to the formal. Through the conflicts between or through formal/informal there are transgressions that alter, extend and reproduce the relationships and conditions of formal/informal. This is a material and social reality; but it is imbricated in knowledge itself, struggling to either get itself recognized as legitimate or as an alternative to the formal. In turn, this generates an aporia in the interpretation(s) of informal. At the most abstract level, informal resists the formal, it challenges it, and at times even overthrows it.

Informality can be spatial, social and a socio-spatial hybrid; these might be permanent, but are frequently temporary or transient conditions. Informality describes that which is '*irregular, unofficial, unconventional*' and whilst this is a rather loose description, it captures much of the literature that conceives informality in a positive way. Definitions of informality are situated in relation to a certain contingency with informality imbued with transience and temporary. These include the practices and/or spaces of the everyday, the aspects of quotidian life that are the humdrum, taken for granted, habitual and those not part of capitalist or consumerist cultures. This overlaps to some extent with informality as the socio-spatial relationships of resistance. Resistance is often contextualized against capitalism, commodification and consumerism although there is also resistance to dominant modes of behaviour and social mores. Informality can, at times, be interpreted as both the practices and the spaces of resistance. There is also a pejorative aspect to informality that which is illegal, particularly in relation to the occupation of space, but also informal activities tend to be described as illegal or quasi-legal.

2.7 PART TWO: SPACE

2.7.1 Preface to section on space

A key aspect of space is that is strongly inter-related to society; society makes space and space makes society. This section of the literature review thus explores the salient issues relating to space, and in turn society. However, these are not the only two parameters, there are many more issues, social and non-social, that come into play. There is a consideration of social, semiotic and material worlds embedded within this chapter: politics, economics, nature, geometry, history, technology, geography and culture. This accords with an actor-network theory approach where there is less division between social and non-social worlds.

This section is in three principal parts; the first examining and defining space; this is further broken down into; geometrical space, social space and temporal space. These categories are then contextualised within Lefebvre's notion of space as a trialectic. There is a critique against the importance and influence of spatiality. The second part of this section examines semiotics and the meaning(s) of space before an overall conclusion on the literature relating to '*space*'.

2.7.2 Defining space

This section examines literature relating to space and attempts to provide a working definition of space for the purposes of this research. The scope of the literature review was directed at a definition that related to spaces that are: informal, in production and outdoor. Although there is some debate on what constitutes space; there is much consensus that it is a relationship between physical (or '*spatial*') qualities and other (often '*social*' and '*semiotic*') qualities. The definition of '*space*' in this research is not a purely geometric boundary, but one that is bound up with other social and semiological qualities. The notion of space is mutually co-constituted within networks of material and social domains. The terms '*place*' and '*space*' are often used interchangeably by different authors and in different contexts to the point that "*space and place are often regarded as synonymous*" (Hubbard et al, 2004:3). The use of the terms place and space has

also modified over time; the term '*space*' rather than '*place*' shall be used henceforth for clarity.

2.8 Spatial networks

“Not so many years ago, the word ‘space’ had a strictly geometrical meaning”
Lefebvre (1991:1).

2.8.1 Definition of space: geometry

The first definition/interpretation of space is geometric. The concept of space has shifted from that of a mathematical volume of an area or volume to a much more complex and contingent entity. The most basic interpretation of physical '*space*,' in this context, describes the Cartesian aspects of a city or urban area. These are the streets, squares, piazzas, avenues, mews, alleys, parks and plazas that make up the '*space*' of towns and cities. This research is limited to outdoor spaces but the principle also describes the interior of buildings and architecture such as *“workplaces, schools, medical complexes, consumer services outlets, recreational areas...shopping centres, sports stadiums”* as spaces homologous to those of the external public realm (Castells, 2000:429). Space is therefore defined in a relationship with the physical arrangement of buildings (mostly) but can include other built material such as walls and fences and natural features such as hedges, trees and rock-faces. The physical disposition of a space is also affected by quantities such as: seating, lighting, flora, fauna, scale, security and myriad other issues. This geometric concept of space was seen as an inert backdrop to the social life of the city; space was considered immutable rather than protean, fluxive and *produced*. Space was bounded and described by Euclidian geometry, *“until the 1970’s most human geographers considered space to be a neutral container”* (Hubbard et al, 2004:4). Space was segregated off from people, societies, cultures, economies and politics.

2.8.2 Definition of space: social-space

The second definition/interpretation of space is social. The definition of space as a geographical and/or inert volume shifted towards an interpretation that included '*social*' aspects. There is a reconceptualisation of space as more than

geometrical with the imbrication of social entities (Harvey, 2009). Lefebvre's '*The Production of Space*' transfers from an initial description of physical territory towards a conception of spaces that are 'social' in character; "*(social) space is a (social) product*" (Lefebvre, 1991: 26). Space is re-conceived as mutually constituted by and through society; space is defined partly in relationship to society; and society is partly defined in relation to space. "*Space is not a reflection of society, it is its expression. In other words, space is not a photocopy of society, it is society*" (Castells, 2000:441). Society and space (*re*)produce each other over time; space constructs, controls and produces society, which in turn constructs, controls and produces space (Foucault, 1991). This concurs to some extent with the premise that "*space and time, is a social construct*" (Harvey, 1993:293). Space is no longer a separate entity that can be considered in isolation; but must be considered as a more complex network that is both made by other entities, and in turn 'makes' (or at least 'affects') other entities.

"Places entail various kinds of performances" (Urry, 2007:254)

It is argued that much of our identity and behaviour is "*made up of a string of endlessly repeated psychic and social acts*" which are "*performative, not essential*" (Michelson, 1999:147). Individual's and/or society's identity is constructed through these acts. Butler (2006:28) argues that "*every performance repeats itself to institute the effect of identity*". This repetition is constitutive of, and situated partially in, the social world and partly the spatial world. Urban space is a fundamental part of that which enables, facilitates and/or hinders the development of human identity (Foucault, 1991). The actions or performances of individuals are part of a complex series of inter-relationships, with one of the dominant relationships being 'spatial'. Crary (1999:370) describes this 'space' as "*a patchwork of fluctuating effects in which individuals and groups continually reconstitute themselves.*" Identity is produced and reproduced in complex relationship(s) with space. Space might be urban or a room or sequence of spatial arrangements (although this research focuses only on external, public space). The relationships are multi-directional, space acts on society and society

acts on (and/or in) space. Identity is partly produced through these socio-spatial actions (Mol, 1999).

2.8.3 Definition of space: temporal network

“Time is something. Therefore it acts” (Bergson, 1991:93)

The third definition/interpretation regarding ‘*spatial*’ is that of a ‘*temporal network*’. This conceives of space as a temporal process involving a network of myriad inter-related entities. *“Space is not a commonsense external background to human and social action. Rather, it is the outcome of a series of highly problematic temporary settlements that divide and connect things up into different kinds of collectives”* (Thrift, 2003:95). Space is conceived as a series of kinetic relationships iteratively produced in correlation with other factors such as society, politics and economics (Massey, 1999). Understanding space as partially constituted by its relationship to other effects/entities/actors developed from the 1970’s onwards (Hubbard et al, 1994; Agnew, 2005). Theorists have extended the interpretation and understanding of spatiality through a wide range of issues such as: economics (Castells, 1977), racism/nationality/identity (bell hooks, 2009; Said, 1978), feminism/gender (Butler 2006; Rose, 1993), telecommunications (Castells, 1997; Serres, 1995), criminology (Wilson and Kelling, 1982), control/power (Foucault, 1991), technology (Virillio, 1986), art practice (Rendell, 2008) and nature (Whatmore, 2002). Space, society, politics, economics, feminism, nationality, technology, identity and capitalism all become enmeshed in a complex and mutually constitutive *temporal network*. That which is spatial has become much more complex through the emergence of communications and technology which extend and transfigure notions of space, cities, and where action occurs (Castells, 2000). Temporal processes operate on different scales and territories: regional, national, continental and global (Agnew, 2005; Castells, 1997; Castells, 1989). The creation of these local, regional and global scales are temporarily constructed and their meaning is contingent and varied across history and boundaries (Smith and Harvey, 2008). Bijker & Law (1994) refer to networks of differing length; networks of: production, trade and finance for example. i.e. a relational network. The relationships between the flows of economics, society and politics across and through space are important

(Massey, 2005). There is a shift in conception from the static geometric qualities of place, towards the movement of flow and flux across and between space(s).

Space and society are defined by relations, crossing and/or occupying them, with importance placed on this being “*mutually constituted, or dialectically related*” (Wainwright & Barnes, 2009:967). Lefebvre conceives of a trialectic relationship (which is explored in greater detail below); the key concept is that space is a process *and* that space is a network of relationships. “*Our epoch is one in which space takes for us the form of relations among sites*” (Foucault, 1986:22). Space, society, economics, identity and politics are produced and reproduced through a network of relationships. Different actors change over different timescales – and the effects of their change is only detectable across different timescales; for example, fashions change annually, soil takes decades to accumulate; species take millennia to evolve. As space is processual, i.e. occurring, developing, changing and producing over a temporal period; time is also an important part of space “*space and time are inextricably interwoven*” (Massey, 1994:261). There are many attempts to explore the relationship and implications of time/space³ as a continuum, rather than isolated entities: timespace (May and Thrift, 2001); space/time (Massey, 1992); time-space (Harvey, 1989) or rhythmanalysis as a “*temporalised*” space (Lefebvre, 1996:230). All of these conceptions of space are united in their recognition that space is co-constituted as a network of multifarious domains operating temporally; described here as a ‘*temporal network*’.

2.8.4 Definition of space: the trialectic of space

The three definitions of space: geometric, social and temporal network are described in relation to the production of urban space. There is a re-interpretation of those themes by Lefebvre (1991) described as a ‘*trialectic of space*’ (i.e. a triple dialectic), which examines how these interact to produce and reproduce space. The spaces referred to by Lefebvre are abstract in the sense they refer to a series of theoretical conceptions of space. The first space is that occupied or generated by everyday practices, and is called ‘*perceived space*’ or ‘*spatial*

³ And many elisions and variations of the terms ‘*time*’ and ‘*space*’.

praxis'. This is the space that is experienced directly or bodily and through this is derived an awareness or understanding. These are often the quotidian rituals of going to work or returning home or everyday interactions of people in space. They lead to, and partly form, the habits, dispositions, tendencies and behaviours in urban space. The second space concerns '*representational space*' or '*conceived space*' and are related to theories of space, particularly those used by professional and institutional organisations. These representations are often literally the blueprints of architects or town-planners' documents, but can include other forms of signs, symbols and illustrations of space as well as language itself (Soja, 1996). This is conceived space, devised in the mind or through a theory before being implemented or enacted physically. The third space is '*representational space*' or '*lived spaces*' and is the imaginary and/or imagined space constructed by individuals. These are individually produced, and so are potentially at odds with formal or official representational space. These representations are coded, decoded and encoded by the individual with their own interpretations, which also includes the social and cultural paradigms of the time. Lefebvre (1991) conceived of these spaces as a form of resistance to the hegemony of conceived space; challenging their meaning and signification, whilst also often dominated by them. Lived space is "*linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life*" (Lefebvre, 1991:33). With all of these three '*spaces*', the pertinent aspect is that Lefebvre describes them all as modes of production as they are all conceived as dialectical processes through which society and space are produced.

The trialectic is taken up enthusiastically by Soja (1996) in his book '*Thirdspace*' which is an elaboration of Lefebvre's central issues. The three spaces that are related dialectically (or more accurately *trialectically*) produce a synthesis in the guise of a thirdspace. This thirdspace is a complex and complicated imbroglio, which includes, "*real, imaginary, objective, subjective, knowable, unimaginable, repetitive, differential, unconscious, transdisciplinary and unending history*" (Soja, 1996:56-57). This collective resembles a network of related entities than three divided spaces of the trialectic.

The definition of space comprised of: geometric, social and temporal network differs from perceived, conceived and lived space in that the latter focuses more (but not exclusively) on space as an abstract theoretical concept. What this implies is the importance of meaning and signification of space, and in turn, on the semiotics of space. These are explored in the next section, but before that, there is a critique (or rebuttal) of spatiality.

2.8.5 Critique of spatiality

Despite the “*the centrality of space in social theory and the significance of the so-called spatial turn in disciplines such as sociology, cultural studies, and literary studies*” (Hubbard et al, 2004:2) the importance and relevance of spatiality is not universally accepted. Indeed, in his early work, Castells (1977:442) sees space as relatively unimportant “*space, like time is a physical quantity that tells us nothing about social relations*” thereby reducing space back to the Euclidean box for social settings. Castells (1977:124) does not see the ‘urban’ or ‘spatial’ as a different condition to any other issue or theme; “*There is no specific theory of space, but simply a deployment and specification of the theory of social structure, in order to account for the characteristics of the particular social form, space, and its articulation with other historically given forms and processes*”. The relevance of spatial relationships is played down and placed alongside, or even subordinate to, other social, economic or other influencing factors. Notably, in his later works, Castells revises his position on the importance of space in his later works, and whereby “*space is not a reflection of society, it is society*” (1983:4) but nonetheless places less emphasis on space than most of the other theorists reviewed here.

Actor-Network Theory adopts a term such as ‘*spatial*’ tentatively at the onset of an investigation (Latour, 1992). The use of a term such as spatial often allies an investigation into a specific discipline, perhaps human geography, rather than an investigation that might of necessity be more trans-disciplinary. However, the provisional use of an *a priori* category such as ‘*spatial*’ does not preclude the use *a posteriori*. If some of the effects, processes or phenomenon are attributable to space after the research takes place, then these terms are justified. Indeed, it is through the examination of this literature that space is used here as a device for

assembling all the various issues described as social, economic and political under the simpler heading ‘*space*’ for the purposes of progressing this research question. It is precisely because this research project is situated geographically and ‘*geometrically*’ that the spatial aspects are so important, and justifies (presently) the use of the term space within an ANT framework.

2.8.6 Summary of spatial definitions

Space is a complex entity that can be defined partially through the inter-related themes of geometrical space, social space and temporal networks. Physical space is ostensibly the simplest to understand and describe, as this is the geometric volume of a street, park or square. However even this interpretation of space is Gordian as space is mutually constituted of/by many things. Space is a temporal network of a multiplicity of different entities. In the literature reviewed the social aspects of space are deemed very important but still as part of a network of multiple actors. Social space is thus also defined through the social, human or individual interpretation of space as perceived, conceived and/or lived space. The interpretation of space, its signification, and the signs of a space are connected to its semioticity. The next sub-section examines the meaning and relevance of semiotics in more detail.

2.9 SPACE & SEMIOTICS

2.9.1 Semiotic space

Space is not an inert or neutral container; it has meaning or multiple meanings and significations. Space is partly formed through, or constituted by, its semiotic content. The next section examines semiotics and the meaning(s) of space.

2.10 Introduction to semiotics

Semiotics is the study of ‘*signs*’ and their interpretation. Semiotics is sometimes understood as how people construct meaning from their environment (or from other things (Sebeo, 2001). “*Semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign. A sign is everything which can be taken as significantly substituting for something else*” (Eco, 1977:7). In the context of this research

study ‘*signs*’ includes not just literal signs, such as road signs or instruction labels, but include text, diagrams, advertising, posters as well as the built environment, architecture, landscape and urbanism. “*The study of signs, however, must take into consideration also applied semiotic structures, as for instance, architecture, dress, or cuisine...any edifice is simultaneously some sort of refuge and a certain kind of message*” (Jakobson, 1968:703). Semiotics in the domain of language is often conceived of as the relationship between the signifier and the signified (de Saussure, 2001). For example, the word ‘*apple*’ is a signifier for the actual fruit – but there is only an arbitrary connection between the letters a-p-p-l-e and the pomaceous fruit of the *malus domestica* family of trees. The signified object, in this instance an actual apple, can also have multiple signifiers, for example the word ‘*apple*’ in multiple different languages or the emblem on the computer (on which I am currently typing). The connection of signifier and signified is very complex and blurred, extending our example a little further, the word ‘*apple*’ now also refers, not only to a fruit, but also to a computer company and the Beatles recording company. Along with these direct connections are more oblique connotations to religion (through Adam and Eve) and to issues of good/bad, knowledge and evil. This example merely illustrates the complexity of tracing connections between signifier and signified and the multiplicity of meanings related to one ‘*sign*’.

2.10.1 Semiotics, meaning and value

“*The meaning of meaning is a semiotic labyrinth*” (Nöth, 1995:92).

For Saussure, the connection between signifier and signified is arbitrary; language is the basis through which these meanings are made. Barthes (1967a) inverts Saussure’s conceptualization of semiotics in relation to language by situating semiology as a part of linguistics. Language provides the domain within which all signification is contextualized, placing primacy on language on the development of meaning. Wittgenstein (2005§3) explains, “*for a large class of cases – though not all – in which we employ the word ‘meaning’ is its use in the language*”. The basic relationship between signified and signifier has endured since Saussure, however the dominance of language as the sole vehicle for meaning making has been critiqued and extended. For the purposes of this

research it is not critical to determine either way, other than being aware of the strength of the relationship of language to semiotics. As well as language; physical and cultural factors also contribute to the creation of meaning (Peirce, 1958). Signs can be used to represent and communicate meaning, and those meanings are constantly being updated and modified where actors “*recognize and use signs and, in a short period of time, acquire effortlessly the system of signs... of the culture in which he or she is being reared*” (Danesi, 2002:32). This is where meaning is derivable from its context (Leech, 1980). Whilst there are myriad conceptions of what meaning is, or the meaning of meaning; for the parameters of this PhD a pragmatic approach is taken; where “*meaning is a synonym of sense or content*” (Nöth, 1995:93). The meaning(s) attached by actors is understood in relation to the context. Semiotics is predicated on a socio-cultural context within which meaning and communication occurs (Eco, 1977). In this interpretation of semiotics, each sign is not read or understood out of its context; instead, the meaning or understanding of a sign must involve the relationships of each sign. Signs are understood as complex networks within their ‘*field*’ but not as simple strings of meaning. The production of meaning is context-specific, but can include that which is signified by the sign (which might include more than one meaning), plus the interpretation(s) of that sign by various actors.

In this complex relationship between sign, signified and signifier there is also the meaning of the context of those relationships “*a sign does not simply stand for an object, it tells something about the meaning of that relationship, and this requires a third component*” (Siegel, 1995:459). This contextuality of a sign points to the potential individuality of meaning that is assigned. Each actor constructs their own interpretation, even if there is considerable consensus, similarity or agreement over meanings (Eco, 1977). Meaning is not universally understood (*a priori*) rather, the meaning is constructed (*a posteriori*) dependent upon society, context or materiality. The corollary of this position means that there is more than one possible meaning for any entity, as it is the accumulation of multiple interpretations of a sign and its context (Barthes, 1967b). Nonetheless there are not an infinity of possibilities, there are contextual parameters that can homogenize and reduce the range of meanings. For example, knowledge is

contextualized within the current scientific paradigm (Kuhn, 1970; Foucault, 2002).

There is a limit to the possibility of signification, as there is a limit to “*affordances*”, i.e. physical possibilities of the material world (Norman, 1999). As there is a limit to what space can be used for, and hence the meanings related to this, the meaning and affordances are both delimited and related. Affordance defines all the ‘*action possibilities*’ that are physically possible for a material entity (Gibson, 1977; Gibson, 1979). “*Different surfaces and different objects, relative to the particular human organism and its technologies, provide affordances*” according to Urry (2007:50). Affordances refer to what a material or space affords by way of possibility. Affordance is related to the actions the material ‘*suggests*’ to its user(s), which connects the physical affordance with semiotics. An entity with seat-like affordances suggests this usage to actors in the space (Norman, 2002). This is not to say that a seat is the only affordance of such an object, for a seat could equally be used as a table, a plinth or a number of other purposes (Aminzadeh & Afshar, 2004). An urban space which has bare earth provides affordances for activities such as gardening. Affordance is not limited to the properties of the object, it is the relationship between the object and the user that defines affordance (Norman, 1999). The notion of affordances is not limited to human action, as an informal space affords ‘*action possibilities*’ to animals and flora alike (Gibson, 1979). In some ways the concept of ‘*affordances*’ resonates with ANT as material and human actors are conceived of, and constituted, simultaneously. Affordance does not exist or emanate from the object *de facto*, rather affordance is the inter-relationship(s) between a material, entity, surface, space and an actor. “*An affordance is neither an objective property nor a subjective property; or it is both if you like. An affordance cuts across the dichotomy of subjective-objective*” (Gibson, 1977:129). This is similar to what Serres (2007:225) describes as a quasi-object “*The quasi-object is not an object, but it is one nevertheless, since it is not a subject, since it is in the world; it is also a quasi-subject, since it marks or designates a subject who, without it, would not be a subject*”. Affordances limit the semiotic possibilities of the material world, but equally are also imbricated in semiotics.

The terms ‘*meaning*’ and ‘*value*’ are often used synonymously within the literature and the application of the terms in the literature is rarely qualified with a specific interpretation, apart from literature on semiotics. The use of these terms here is taken in their widest interpretation(s). Whilst value has some connotations with economics, there is a broader application of the concept of meaning is created when it is given value. It is an intellectual process in that ideas “*take the form of words, images, sounds, odors, flavors, acts or objects... when we invest them with meaning*” (Chandler, 2003). Meaning and value are represented as signs and a series of ‘*culturally constructed*’ notions. Adler (1956:272) proposes that value can be categorised into four groups: 1) universal values, such as those produced by god; 2) the value in an object (material or non-material); 3) value “*located in man (sic)*” derived from his/her (or society’s) needs and/or desires; and 4) value related to actions. There are overlaps between them, and connections across these categories; value can also be hybrids of these four categories.

2.10.2 Semiotic networks

Eco’s (1986), Barthes’ (1967a) and Latour’s (1992) use of semiotics in relation to signification through multiple, open and contingent domains resonates with actor-network approaches; as each sign (and/or actor) is connected to a complex web of other meanings, interpretations and identities that cannot be understood by disassociating a sign from its context. Barthes (1967b:6) proposes that the meaning/s of a sign are “*gathered into a single field all the paths of which the text is constituted*” which conjures up a network structure as an approach to semiotics. Latour (1993b) pushes the application of semiotics beyond language and discourse towards, or perhaps into, the material and technological worlds to include a far wider realm of signs. The role of language and discourse is important but has been restrictive in understanding the semiotic richness of a given context (Latour, 1993a). Whilst not ignoring the oral and linguistic meanings, ANT places greater emphasis on non-discursive entities whereby “*a full account of a thing must therefore situate it in the network of other things*” (Lister et al, 2003:296). The import of this approach to semiotics is to further extend the field and innumerable centres of signification and meaning-making

beyond the human/social world into the flora, fauna, technology and materiality of the site.

2.10.3 Summary on semiotics

On a pragmatic level, semiotics is an examination of the relationship between signs and their meanings as a way of actors understanding and navigating their environments. Actors use, produce and interpret signs to make sense of the world and semiotics is one of the principle modes through which this is done. There are many interpretations of what the signification of signs might be; for example, ‘*sign*’ is taken as a synonym for ideas; as well as a synonym for actors, as well as being a sign for something else. Space itself is a sign, or an ensemble of signs. There are a number of codes related to the signs of society and sub-culture and understanding these shared codes is an important aspect of becoming (or not) a member of that culture. *“We learn to read the world in terms of the codes and conventions which are dominant within the specific socio-cultural contexts and roles within which we are socialized”* (Chandler, 2001:156). Those codes are not restricted exclusively to human cultures; other actors also have their own codes, for example fauna understand their own set of codes. Likewise when human come into contact with fauna there is another set of codes and signification that comes into play (Haraway, 2003). These codes and signs extend within, and across, the multiple social, environmental and material domains of the case study area (and beyond). *“To study ideology, is to study the ways in which meaning (or signification) serves to sustain relations of domination”* (Thompson, 1991:4). Domination is a synonym for asymmetries of power: this links the production of meaning with semiotics and power through their inter-relationships.

2.11 Summary of spatial literature

Space in the context of this research is a complex term. Besides the relatively straightforward physical or geometric qualities of space; space is increasingly conceptualized and defined as a network of actors. These networks include a wide variety of heterogeneous actors: geography, places, society, economics, history, semiotics and movement. An important characteristic of these networks

is that they are not fixed, permanent or static, but are often temporary, transient and fluxive. Some of the relationships might endure for a long time and some for a very short period. During those inter-relationships there are changes of identities and new relationships formed over time, some fleeting but some more enduring. Space is *produced* (by society and other actors) and in turn space *produces*. These are inter-related as part-product, part-process and part-hybrid material and social worlds. Space also acts semiotically; space is a sign in itself; and it is comprised of multiple signs. The humans within each space add further signs and symbols. The meaning(s) of these signs is partly produced by the sign itself and partly by the consumer or reader of that sign. This produces multiple interpretations and significations for each space.

2.12 PART THREE: PRODUCTION

2.13 Foreword to production

As a preface to this subsection it is perhaps germane to mention that the term production has been used here in acknowledgement of Henri Lefebvre's book '*The Production of Space*'. Initially written in French in 1974 and translated into English in 1991 the book has been enormously influential in a range of disciplines, and particularly: urban studies, human geography and urban design: "*the Production of Space influenced an entire generation of architects and social geographers in Europe, Latin America, the US and Britain*" (Aronowitz, 2007:134). Whilst this research is deferential to the book by adopting parts of its title; this is where direct similarities end. Lefebvre's book is not specifically related to informal spaces, but is mostly concerned with urban space produced through capitalist processes. A central contention of the book is that space is a social *product*, i.e. the two are mutually co-constitutive and cannot be separated out. Cities have an effect on society; structuring it, controlling it, enabling it, facilitating it; and society produces, builds, maintains and creates urban space.

2.14 Introduction

'*Production*' has been connected to the concepts of: mass-production, factory methods, assembly lines and capitalism in general. It is the prefix '*mass-*' that

designates production specifically to capitalist techniques. Mass-production is directly linked to physical objects and their manufacture; yet there are many other aspects implicated. In the literature of capitalism; mass-production techniques are applied to, or used metaphorically, in relation to: labour, capital communications, advertising, media and ultimately to knowledge itself. Production has a series of cultural connections and associative meanings; many of which are related to capitalist means of production. Yet the word '*production*' is understood not only in the context of capitalism there are many other contexts in which the word is used, that are not related to capitalism. Production is a recurrent theme in Actor-Network Theory; much of ANT is concerned with studying a phenomenon '*in action*' (Latour, 1987) or '*in the making*' (Latour, 2005). Production is simultaneously a process *and* the outcome of a process; i.e. a process and product (Lefebvre, 1991). Production is used in both senses in the literature and all of the definitions provided here are accepted for the purposes of this research.

'*Production*' has multiple meanings and definitions in the context of the production of informal space. This first sub-section defines these meanings of production that are used in this research. The term is explored here in three categories: physical production, social production and semiotic production; which relate to three broad themes in the literature related to informality and/or space. The review then explores how through, or across, these three categories '*meaning*' is produced. Finally, the section examines how production is both a constant process *and* how all three categories are inter-related as a network.

2.14.1 Physical production

The first definition is the physical production of an informal space: building, digging, planting, construction, painting, weaving, moving objects and/or modifying. This form of production is also described as: making, constructing, DiY, re-appropriating (Chase et al, 2008; Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung, 2007; de Laet & Mol, 2000; McKay, 1998). This is perhaps the most obvious and literal interpretation of the concept of production. It involves a physical and visible change to an environment. When production is the result of humans, some of the physical change might be brought about as an unintended

consequence of action, but it can include intentional change. This production might be the deliberate modification or construction of an informal space for a specific purpose or with a strategic aim. Examples include the manipulation of unused land into a bmx track by local youths (Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung, 2007) a hybrid market/congress hall/info-point/media-lab made from scaffolding and recycled materials (AAA/PEPRAV, 2007) or the construction by immigrants of a small shelter in a vacant plot (Sciorra, 1996). Connected to this form of production is the notion of '*sweat-equity*'; whereby the producers of the space invest time, energy and other resources as a form of *capital*; in return they get some benefits, for example feelings such as satisfaction, happiness or benevolence or, perhaps more directly, a perception of ownership or equity qua legal ownership. Production can also be the modification of an informal space for various purposes, often on an ad hoc basis. An example of this could be yard-sales laid out along the street at the front of houses (Chase et al, 2008) or a temporary ski slope (weather permitting) (Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung, 2007). Not all forms of physical production are intentional or planned; for example, there are desire lines produced by people walking across spaces, often informal spaces, leaving trails and paths across and in space (Gehl, 2006). There are traces of wear and tear in the urban fabric through the attrition and abrasion of everyday usage (Littlefield and Lewis, 2007). Even minor vandalism, could be considered a form of unintentional physical production, dependent upon the nature of the vandalism (and the intent of its authors).

In an urban context, many forms of physical change brought about by action could be classified as a form of production. The actors can be human or non-human; the production could be as a result of organic processes or inorganic processes such as mineralisation etc. For example, informal spaces that have been left abandoned (by humans) for some time are inundated with weeds, bracken and other invasive plants that can rapidly colonise land that is otherwise unused. Over time these spaces can accumulate soil that can cover existing hard surfaces such as tarmac or paving; weeds can also grow directly through hard surfaces to further break tarmac. The invasion of such fauna can soon result in the space being inaccessible to most humans – particularly casual or infrequent

use (Temple, 2010). Coincident with such space comes a different set of actors; vermin, urban foxes and insects can also add alternative forms of production in multifarious ways. The change from an empty or derelict urban space into one filled with vegetation is quite a profound physical alteration. Along with these organic processes, there is the material '*deterioration*' of spaces; through reactions or processes such as rust, patination, oxidation, cation exchange, spalling, pollution and mineral depositions. Whilst this might be considered unsightly wastelands or derelict, these spaces are increasingly viewed as important pockets of biodiversity in cities. Thus this form of production, literally made of organic compounds, can be imbued with an ecological significance or value.

2.14.2 Social production

A second definition relates to social '*production*'. Informal space might be '*produced*' through the action of individuals and social groups. In this definition, the physical space does not necessarily change, but the activity of its users change the meaning, purpose, signification or classification of that space (Chase et al, 2008; Littlefield & Lewis, 2007). A very public example might be a prominent protest – the demonstrations of the Arab Spring are a memorable and politically potent mode of social production (Rice, 2013). Some of the Arab Spring protests are fleeting, others have endured for months; but it is through the presence and purpose of the crowd that gives the space a new memory, meaning or significance (Bhabha, 1994). Tiananmen Square was also linked to peaceful protests and violent counter-actions and these conflictual social events were produced and inter-related with this space (Langley, 2009). The Berlin Wall is a '*space*' that signifies far more than the physical presence of the wall; it is imbued with notions of East-West relations, political systems, the Cold War, capitalism versus communism, the end of communism, totalitarianism (and is now re-produced as a '*visitor attraction*' for tourists) (Williams, 2007). The Berlin Wall has been (re)presented through its social and political significance more than its spatial qualities.

Events and carnivals are infrequent social occurrences, but are often related to specific spaces; these events can generate a (temporary) production of space

(Bakhtin, 1984; Collins-Kreiner, 2010). The yearly Glastonbury festival involves a quite an amount of physical production for stages, toilets and parking; yet it is the scale of crowds at this event that define and produce the festival – without the social grouping of such magnitude, there would be no festival produced. Protests, demonstrations and riots could also be categorised in this way, as they are predominantly produced through purely social actors (asides from perhaps the materials of placards or petrol bombs) (Rice, 2011a). Smaller scale examples include, for example: a benign plaza situated in an office district which at weekends becomes transformed by Filipino workers into a community gathering place, where an itinerant and underpaid social group congregate to have lunch and meet others from their community (Hou, 2010). Alcoholics and/or drinkers taking over an unused parcel of land to drink and talk together also produce a new identity for a space particularly if they frequent the space on a regular basis (Shaftoe, 2008).

The social actors do not necessarily need to be humans (Callon, 1986). Some flora and fauna could also be considered as ‘*social*’ producers. Although not (or no longer) an ‘*informal*’ space, the bull runs in Spain are an example of ‘*social*’ production where the bulls could be conceived as actors; similarly in Sienna, Italy, the Palio festival involves horses as actors that transform the streets and plazas. It would be difficult to remove these fauna from the scene and focus only on human actors to understand the context. In the UK, and on a more prosaic level, the presence of *wild* creatures such as foxes, rats and birds contribute to production (not least in the production of vital ecological systems). Dogs are closely associated with the presence of their ‘*owners*’ and form close bonds with the owner and facilitate other social interactions, particularly dog-owners gathering to discuss their respective pets (Serpell, 1996). Dog-walkers and dog-owners form, at times an almost hybrid entity, with dog owners speaking to their dogs like humans, whereas at other times the dogs run off in packs (Haraway, 2003).

In social modes of production, the space is transformed, often fleetingly, through the expression or activity of its occupiers. Production in this sense is often not permanent, more often it is relatively fleeting, however the memories and legacy

of this production can endure for a considerable time. Social production is related to meaning and how it is embedded, lodged or suffused into the physical.

2.14.3 Semiotic production

Situated between, alongside or across the physical and social is a third form of production referred to here as '*semiotic production*'. This refers to the production of signs (literally) and/or the production of signification.

Production emerges when individuals become active, rather than passive, in the production of meaning. For Eco (1984) a sign is '*open*' and allows a wide and rich interpretation by the reader or viewer. In an analogous approach Barthes (1967b) proposes that the meaning of a sign is not necessarily understood through its origins (for example, in the author or creator of a sign) but in that sign's '*destinatio*' through the multiple readers, interpretations and actors that encounter each sign. The sign "*is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture*" where meaning is distributed across those actors that have a relationship with the sign (Barthes (1967b:6). Production in this context can be understood to be when "*individuals (and groups) are productive, and not just reactionary or passive, forces in the games of truth*" (Castellani, 1999:269). This semiotic modality of production is resonant with de Certeau's (1984) notion that individuals are able to shift from consumers to producers (of meaning). There is a shift in the location of '*meaning*' embedded in the object (whether that be a space, a sign, or a social event) to a location embedded in the mind of the viewer of that object (Barthes, 1967b; Hall, 1980). "*Nothing in a given scene can prevent the inscribed user or reader from behaving differently from what was expected.*" (Latour, 1992:161). In this sense, individuals produce their own meaning within a socio-spatial context. What is produced is ambiguous and unclear as there is a multiplicity of authors or manufacturers of knowledge (Eco, 1986). Aspects of the signification of production are related to the symbolism and meaning(s) of objects and the socio-material world. "*Every thought is a sign*" (Peirce, 1999:49). The shift referred to, is a shift in terms of a theoretical or ontological perspective, not a shift in the relationship of actors to their world. It is argued that the production of meaning in this sense relocates the signified to the individual, which is, to add agency to the actor (Latour, 1992;

Bakhtin, 1981). Whether this shift is possible is debatable: Shields (1991) proposes that this form of production is available to all whilst other authors describe this production as possible (or perhaps evident) for only *some* individuals (Chomsky & Herman, 2002; Lefebvre, 1991) or none (Debord, 1983).

A visible manifestation, or perhaps more accurately *reification*, of this mode of production are the detournements of billboards (McDonough, 2002).

Detournement is "*turning expressions of the capitalist system and its media culture against itself*" (Holt & Cameron, 2010:252). Large corporate posters, attached to the side of buildings or erected along roadsides, advertising the wares of global chains have come under attack. "*Tsunamis of writings, signs, images, and logos flooding rural, civic, public and natural spaces as well as landscapes with their advertising*" (Serres, 2011:41). The resurfacing of large parts of cities for adverts has been an insidious process. Semiotic guerillas consider these adverts to be visual '*dirt*' and using direct action methods, intervene by altering the posters, billboards, images and signs (Lasn, 2009). The posters are mutilated, defaced or reappropriated to subvert or parody the intended message. Various known as (or related to): badvertising, culture jamming, adbusting, hacktivism, guerilla semiotics and subvertising. These hackers play three roles: the first is the subversion of the message of the specific image/advert; secondly they disrupt the taken-for-granted status of these adverts, making the viewer aware of the presence of the billboard, and not merely the image. Thirdly, these visual protests call into question the '*right*' to the city (including its aesthetics) and how they have been effectively sold off without democratic consent (Rice, 2012). This is a sophisticated and purposive rejection against multinational companies and the spread of capitalist mechanisms. Umberto Eco (1986) is particularly relevant to the field of informality in this context, as one of his main contributions is the '*semiological guerrilla*' that informed and inspired movements such as culture-jammers and hackvertising. Semiological guerrilla-ism is a means by which meaning can be generated in contradistinction against mass media and dominant cultural messages. This guerrilla warfare would be a mode of shifting from passive reception of message to active producer of meaning.

Whilst semiotics strictly means ‘*the study of signs*’ it is also taken to mean signs and their meanings (Nöth, 1995). It is in this loosest sense of the word that the term semiotic production is used; it involves or includes the production of signs literally (banners, placards), as well as adverts and the subsequent re-appropriation of those signs; and the interpretations and meanings of those signs. It can also be manifest in more subtle signs, for example: the ‘*design*’ or style of a bench or the choice of flowers planted in an informal area, as these also give signification of meaning(s) and are often connected to distinct cultural groups.

2.14.4 Hybrid product/production

“Places are not fixed, given or unchanging but depend in part upon the practices within them.” (Urry, 2007:254).

(Urban) spaces are sometimes conceived as permanent; some cities are even described as ‘*eternal*’, yet they are patently neither. Space is far more complex and transitory; it is a hybrid of product and a process. Mol (1999:75) describes this as “*done and enacted*” and can take place in multiple sites: historically, discursively, physically, legally etc. Production/product is related to identity as a form of anti-essentialism; identities are constructed through multifarious acts of performance. “*The nature of society is negotiable, a practical and revisable matter (performative)*” (Latour 1986a: 264). This describes how identity (social or non-social) is not innate but where identity can be performed, produced and/or constructed. Production is where “*things get performed (and perform themselves) into relations*” (Law, 1999: 4). It is the inter-relatedness of a variety of social, semiotic and material domains that leads to, produces or enables the construction of identity (Callon, 1986). In the case of an informal space this involves not merely the space itself, but myriad network(s) of actors.

Production was defined as part process and part product; as a hybrid condition. However, the notion of (space as) a product, a completed and immutable entity, is somewhat misleading. There is arguably no end product per se, rather on-going processes of production. Durable networks can be mistaken or (mis)construed as essential and immutable. A ‘*product*’ in these terms is more akin to a very stable network where most of the actors and relationships are

organised in an ostensibly permanent configuration. Latour (1987:2-3) describes this as a black-box “*the word black box is used by cyberneticians whenever a piece of machinery or a set of commands is too complex. In its place they draw a little box about which they need to know nothing but its input and output*”. A black-box is often part of a more complicated system that is so unquestioned and/or stable that it can be ignored within that system (Rice, 2011b). Black-boxes are rarely opened or questioned; it is time consuming and often expensive to do so (Latour, 1987). Facts, things, cultures, spaces get approximated to the condition of immutability. Complex, kinetic, transient, fluxive networks get black-boxed *qua* stable, immutable entities.

2.14.5 Reflexion on production

There is a sub-text to production that contains a paradox, or more accurately, it is in the ‘*reporting*’ on production there is a paradox. The section begins with physical production; this really is changing the material world; or at least that is what it seems. The physical world is changed (or changing), i.e. produced through human and/or non-human action. There is also a form of social production; this is through the accumulation of human (and sometimes non-human) bodies in a space that temporarily changes it; but more profoundly, changes the meaning and signification of that space (for other humans). There is also semiotic production by humans – such as hacktivism, which is not particularly physical, any more than the words on a page could be considered physical, but they are not overly ‘*social*’ either; they are a mode of production *qua* sign. The reason for the initial classifications into three categories is as a result of an examination of literature concerning, for example, physical production; as evidenced by the many case studies and empirical examples of communities, sub-cultures, groups and individuals building, generating or producing habitats and environments to serve various purposes. The focus of these examples is generally on physical production. Likewise, the next category is on social production; i.e. literature where the focus is on human bodies and the accumulation of those to effect specific forms of organisation; such as festivals, raves or carnivals. This social literature is less concerned with the physical environment, whether that be geography, architecture, urban morphology or the

material conditions of those sociological activities. Literature concerning semiotic production is likewise framed on the importance of the message and/or the sign, rather than the material or social worlds. The paradox is that the literature review begins with a classification into forms of production that are; firstly physical, then social, then semiotic; but the review ends by conflating these classifications.

2.14.6 Conclusion on production

The three modalities of production; physical, social, semiotic can all be conceived as acting in one direction in the sense of their meaning being transmitted from the event, or space to the viewer. This situates an actor as a form of '*consumer*' of that message as some kind of mindless automaton. In the reverse direction, there is the notion of human-actor who '*produces*' the meaning through her or his own interpretation of the scene. In this conception of production there is no universal meaning or signification inherent in the space, the society, or the sign; rather this is all produced in the mind of the (human) actor. Arguably, meaning is an interplay between all of these; meaning is produced and reproduced in these network inter-relationships.

Production can be conceived as a kind of performance. This portrays the idea of production of identities, hybridity and subjectivity as an ephemeral process. Performance captures the transience of much of what we consider, in casual or quotidian terms, '*permanent*'. These are connected back to Latour's black-boxes as a means of producing immutability. The physical, natural and social worlds are in a constant process of: dissolving, decaying, fragmenting, eating, bearing fruit, ripening, growing, dying, splitting, melding, joining, fracturing, cracking, fusing, melting, freezing, hibernating, transforming, exploding, imploding, producing and reproducing. It takes a phenomenal amount of effort to get the world to remain in a state that is considered permanent. Thus the hybrid concept of product/ production captures a number of these themes: the production and reproduction of identity and the performance of permanence; the production of meaning and the meaning of production.

2.15 PART FOUR: DIRT

2.15.1 Introduction to dirt

“Associations are made between faeces, dirt, soil, ugliness and imperfection”
(Sibley, 1995:7)

The production of informal space is embroiled in the (contested) themes of capitalism, pollution and waste along with the inter-relationships of material, social and semiotic worlds. These themes are contested, re-appropriated and reclaimed by different cultural and scientific groups. This section uses the title of ‘*dirt*’ as the linking theme that captures much of these complex, contradictory and contingent inter-relationships. The ‘*dirt*’ relationships are particularly germane in relation to the specifics of the empirical fieldwork. Dirt has a number of meanings and interpretations dependent upon the context in which it is used. Dirt is a synonym for soil, which when contextualised within ‘*soil sciences*’ and is the focus of study mostly from a ‘*neutral*’, ‘*scientific*’ perspective (although even this is an increasingly politicised perspective as the role of dirt is implicated in combatting climate-change). Dirt qua *soil* is explored; from the perspective of soil sciences and also how it is a mode of production; albeit a non-human form of physical production. In informal spaces, soil accumulates, builds up and accretes over time and, in turn facilitates many other actors. Yet dirt is simultaneously a culturally produced term (or ‘*sign*’) that denotes soiling, staining, pollution and/or adulteration. Dirt is connected to the notion of waste (literally and metaphorically) particularly in relation to consumerist society and the by-product of the capitalist means of production. This extends even to human labour with (some) lives assigned as waste products, particularly the residents of informal cities. Dirt, pollution and waste are tropes used to express the by-product(s) of capitalism and are implicated in the generation of informal space. Dirt can equally be applied to definitions of informality and space and there are interconnections between the two. This section of the literature on production contains some relatively heterogeneous content, from earth sciences to culture studies from climate change to Gardener’s World and from urban foxes to space-junk. This reflects the trans-disciplinary subject of the research that sits outside

the boundaries of any one traditional academic discipline. This section begins with an exploration of the multiple, culturally produced, interpretations of dirt.

2.15.2 Dirt cultures

In visual and cultural theory, dirt is described as “*matter out of place*” (Douglas, 2005:44). “*Notions of dirt (and its kin contamination, ruination, neglect, vandalism etc) are imbued with both contradictions and value judgements*” (Littlefield, 2012:14). This constructs dirt as a concept with an “*emphasis on the social construction of dirt*” (Campkin, 2007:72). This definition of dirt is in relation to (or, out of) a place *and* as material. Dirt does not belong to *a* place, or space, nor by implication or corollary, does it belong anywhere else: dirt belongs nowhere. Dirt is where it should not be, moreover, dirt should not ‘*be*’. Dirt is often hidden from view, removed, ignored or eradicated. “*We dispose of leftovers in the most radical and effective way: we make them invisible by not looking and unthinkable by not thinking*” (Bauman, 2004:34). Dirt is othered. Dirt is constructed culturally in relation to a specific context and specifically in contradistinction to that space.

Dirt is a material in Douglas’ (2005) definition; it is ‘*matter*’. Dirt is a physical product and a physical process. It is sometimes interpreted as impure and unwanted ‘*waste*’ to be disposed of or cleaned up. Dirt is connected with the notion of waste, as a by-product or waste-product. This resonates with critiques of capitalist means of production, market forces and the resultant pollution (Berger, 2006). Dirt emanates into the air from the chimneys of factories, into rivers from sewers as well as land-fill sites and refuse spaces. Dirt is tied to capitalism due to the by-products of mass-production and means of production, which can generate dirt on an unprecedented scale (Thompson, 1979). Dirt *qua* pollution spawns another interpretation; this time allied with climate-change, biodiversity and ecology (Davis, 2003). The dirt that is pumped into oceans, seas and rivers; emitted from cars, lorries, factories, houses and dumped almost everywhere forms a global system of pollution that threatens the planet’s ecosystem. “*Solid residues, liquid gases, emitted throughout the atmosphere by big industrial companies or gigantic garbage dumps, the shameful signature of big cities*” (Serres, 2011:41). Dirt that forms this pollution is perceived as man-

made⁴ rather than a natural entity. Human identity becomes defined partly through dirt; Serres (2011:3) describes how “*appropriation takes place through pollution*”. Dirt, decay and pollution that humans produce define their territories. In this conception of dirt, it literally ‘*takes place*’ rather than being ‘*out of place*’. This locates dirt not on the periphery, but at the centre. Dirt is understood in relation to its context, and the context is mostly the space of capitalism (as opposed, for example, the space of ‘*nature*’, virtual space or abstract space). The opposite of dirt could be described as that which is clean and productive i.e. formal. Capitalism embraces both of these modes; for example the shopping mall, the epitome of capitalist space, is neither literally nor metaphorically dirty; its floors, corridors and toilets are spotlessly clean, cleaned and cleansed (Auge, 2008). Pollution, dirt and waste are recurring tropes for capitalist production. Dirt is seen as a pollutant, as a contamination, and the outcome of contemporary (capitalist) lifestyles.

2.15.3 Semiotic dirt

Dirt is not only material, although this is its manifestation in the physical world. Dirt is related to non-material issues of religion, purity, ideology and imperfection (Douglas, 2005). There are religious overtones to dirt; and many other culturally specific interpretations of that which is theoretically and/or spiritually clean or dirty. There are myriad interpretations of dirt, but this review delimits the scope to the research question; *the production of informal spaces*. The ‘*pollution*’ of the streets, cities and roadsides of urban areas (and increasingly rural areas) with signs, hoarding and advertising are seen as semiotic dirt or “*soft pollution*” (Serres, 2011:41). This is not the ‘*material*’ dirt of soot and grime that often suffuses urban areas; it is the contemporary equivalent. Advertising is to capitalism what pollution was to industrialism. Informal spaces are often literally dirty with real, material dirt; yet they are often free from ‘*semiotic dirt*’ as they are often those spaces that stand (temporarily) outside capitalism.

⁴ The use of the word ‘man’ does not denote anything in relation to male rather than female; the term signifies that which could be defined as the species *homo-sapiens* and nothing more (nor less).

2.15.4 Excavating waste

Dirt *qua* waste is the subject of much urban literature, both literally and metaphorically. Waste is a real presence in most informal cities; they are literally crafted from the waste products of the formal city (Davis, 2006). The prevalence of waste permeates the informal city; not only is it physically created out of waste, it produces further waste, including human waste. Human excrement is put into plastic bags and literally thrown out of the window onto the surrounding buildings and spaces (Neuwirth, 2005). The informal cities produce a phenomenal amount of human waste and without adequate sanitation infrastructure the disposal of waste literally transfuses the area, and the slum is awash with the stench of excrement (Davis, 2006). Waste is not restricted to informal cities; it is applicable to all cities, urban spaces and beyond. Waste even extends to labour and human life, with many humans consigned to the garbage pile (Brennan, 2008). Dirt and waste not only permeate the physical spaces of cities, it has come to permeate even the metaphors of the theorists who describe it. Koolhaas (2004) describes the contemporary urban condition as *'junk-space'*; Baudrillard (1994:263) describes how the *"planet has become a dustbin"*; Neuwirth (2005) describes how the city is seen as a waste product and NASA describes how even the skies and inter-planetary space are now filled with *'space-junk'*. These metaphorical uses of the notion of waste, dirt and junk are mostly negative. However, there are some positive associations with waste, dirt and pollution. Banham (1974) eulogises waste as a thing of beauty *"God gave us the sun and the ocean, but the colours come mostly from the fumes and pollution that we ourselves pump into the atmosphere every day. Enjoy it! The, best of it does not last long."* There are also rose-tinted and romanticised descriptions of ruination, decay and decadent splendour (Berger, 2006; Bailey, 1984). There are even faux ruins built that reflect the esteem with which decay can be held (Littlefield & Lewis, 2007). Berger (2006) eulogises derelict wastelands and *"drosscapes"* and is optimistic about their qualities for human users. Serres (2011) ascribes the emission of waste as the marking of space; akin to how animals claim territory in *'nature'*. Dirt as a metaphor extends from informal cities, to formal cities, to human life, to the planet and out into space; junk is everywhere, marking mankind's spatial territory.

2.15.5 Summary of dirt cultures

“Waste, then, isn’t a fixed category of things; it is an effect of classification and relations.” (Hawkins, 2006:2)

Dirt contains an aporia of meaning(s). Dirt is a pejorative trope for a kind of waste product. Dirt (among other interpretations) is implicitly connected to capitalist modes of production and man-made pollution. Dirt is a by-product of the system of exploitation of the earth’s resources. Dirt also refers to the semiotic irruption of capitalist media: signage, posters, advertising hoardings. Dirt is considered a system classification, mostly of that which does not fit into classifications anywhere else, i.e. *‘matter out of place’*. In this respect it can be considered a hybrid entity, as it is conceived as inherently *anti-, post- or trans-disciplinary*.

However, the word has been re-appropriated as part of the ecological movement and climate-change strategy as a positive entity. Dirt involves many important biological and atmospheric qualities that could ameliorate global climate-change. This recuperation of the term involves a re-examination of the function of dirt, soil, earth, excreta as nature and natural, rather than culturally constructed subjectivities. The literature review now examines some of these interpretations of dirt as well as their relationship(s) to production.

2.16 Dirt Networks

2.16.1 Preface to dirt: soil, nature, weeds, pests and biodiversity.

This subsection examines dirt through the themes of: *soil, nature, weeds, pests and biodiversity*. The terms that are often used in relation to this: decay, derelict, abandoned, ruination, contamination, grime and dirt often convey a negative connotation, particularly when located within urban, geographic, architectural or sociological literature. This is not the intention here, rather these words are those used widely through the literature, and are re-used here, but without the connection to any pejorative status. Indeed, within ecological or biological

literature, dirt and these related terms, take on alternative (and positive) signification. The discourse is simultaneously describing, at times, what could be described as ‘*natural*’ processes and/or substances; decay, grime, dirt, mould, waste, excreta, detritus, slime, rust and decomposition. As actors in this research include non-humans, and as much of the informal spaces are often coterminous with derelict and abandoned territory; this subsection examines some of the principle productive actors. The literature related to non-human actors comes from a variety of different academic disciplines. Dirt here is a network of actors, alliances and assemblages of identities, interpretations, and relationships enacting modes of production. The first non-human actor examined is soil as this is (literally) the foundation for a number of other actors such as flora and fauna, which are, in turn, examined in further detail.

2.16.2 Soil

“Everyday life is compared to fertile soil. A landscape without flowers or magnificent woods may be depressing for the passer-by; but flowers and trees should not make us forget the earth beneath, which has a secret life and a richness of its own.” Lefebvre (2002:87)

Soil is one of the key, if silent and innocuous, actors in the process of dereliction. Particularly (although by no means exclusively) when there is an absence of human actors; the action of soil is one of the most important actors in deteriorating, abandoned and/or forgotten spaces as it facilitates the occupation by myriad other actors (as well as itself). Although soil acts in a very slow and often indiscernible way to humans, it can nonetheless be described as an actor: affecting, restricting and enabling other actors in this context. Soil builds up over a period of time and covers the previous layer of ground. This conceals much of the objects and materials that were formerly visible; in abandoned spaces, this might be the tarmac of former roads or the concrete substrate of ruined buildings. Soil then provides the basis or context for the plants and flowers that are essential for the flora to exist as well as a habitat for various fauna.

2.16.3 What is soil?

It can be described as a hybrid entity; it is a matrix of organic matter, minerals and other materials (Gerrard, 2003). Soil has a structure that comprises solids, liquids and gases; the proportions of which vary dependent on weather, climate and substrate qualities (Birkeland, 1999). Soil is the product of a variety of different contextual entities; it originates from the root bases of the various plants that grow on or near to its surface and this is combined with the minerals of the area – i.e. the geological context, which are derived from the rocks, stones and/or sands of the vicinity (Wild, 1993). Fauna also forms part of this matrix, particularly the dead remains thereof. Soil is referred to as a regolith, and it is delimited by the zone that is influenced by plant roots, which might be depth ranging from a few centimeters to several metres (Birkeland, 1999). The deposited layers of soils form into bands known as horizons with myriad different process underway within soil horizons: leaching, chemical process, organic processes, cationic exchanges and anionic exchanges (Wild, 1993). The inter-relationships with oxygen are important as “*soils can be said to breathe*” (Gerrard, 2003:16) and this transition acts as an important habitat for fauna in the upper layers of soil. It also contributes to the carbon cycle whereby the atmosphere-plant-soil ecosystem interacts; plants decay and form part of the soil, which in turn decomposes and chemically bonds to release atmospheric CO₂, which ultimately gets re-absorbed by plants as one continuous cycle (Wild, 1993). Soil is produced through the interaction with its context: the lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere and biosphere (and human intervention too) (Ward, 2008). This locates soil in a critical context of production – it is the layer that forms the ground (literally); yet at a microscopic level is the product of the interaction of multiple domains - the sky, earth and nature.

Transition space

The earth is the plane that demarcates the ground and the sky; it is the base upon which all of the other activities are founded. Yet it is not that simple when examined in detail; soil ‘*is*’ the product of ground and sky, it is literally a three-dimensional transition space/matrix between ground and air (Wild, 1993). Whilst on initial inspection, it is relatively easy to conclude that the earth is a solid plane

upon which everything else stands, rather like the stage in a theatre, whereas in reality this analogy does not hold. The ground is much more fecund, interactive and complex than a theatre stage. The boundary between what we consider as solid ground and gaseous sky is also not so clear – as the upper horizon of the regolith is simultaneously a composite of solids, liquids and gases (Gerrard, 2003).

Soils are domains where a variety of secondary actions are enmeshed; they enable and facilitate other actions; beyond those actions that are related to the production and reproduction of soil. Soil provides the base for many plants and other organic material to survive. The root system of plants, particularly grasses are located in the upper regolith (Wild, 1993). This is where there is a complex interchange of nutrients, water and gaseous matter between roots and soil. There are a number of other organic substances that do not depend on roots but are dependent on soil (Mauset, 2012). Some fauna are also to be found in soil, either living there permanently or temporarily using it as shelter; some fauna such as worms literally pass through the soil decomposing it as they go – providing an important part of the process of soil production (amongst other outcomes) by breaking down dead plants and animals to return nutrients to the soil (Mauset, 2012). The living and dead are sublated together in soil. This zone is where the animate and inanimate assimilate one another. Rather than considering the ground as a thin line that forms a surface plane, it is a more ambiguous territory that could be described as extending the realm of the sky, or blurring the boundary of earth and air.

2.16.4 Summary on Soil

Whilst it might seem overly fastidious to elaborate on soil; it is necessary to better understand this material as it has such profound influences on the case-study space, particularly the actions of plants, flowers, fauna and gardeners. In relation to this study of informal space production, described in greater detail in the methodology and findings chapters, the inclusion of a review of literature on soil is germane. For anyone who has listened to the BBC's *'Gardeners World'* on the radio; they would appreciate that for gardeners, there is seemingly no end to the discussions on the importance of the role of soil. Soil becomes a conduit

for travel (worms), a storage facility (water, oxygen), a place of war (root competition), decomposition (of roots), breaking up rocks (geology) bacterial proliferation (birth), chemical interaction (exchange) and a '*cemetery*' for subterranean fauna (death). Dirt is a hybrid: living, dead, organic, inorganic, chemistry, bacteria, minerals, culture and solid/liquid/gas.

Production of soil can be conceived as a modality of power, because it reproduces itself; and produces and reproduces conditions favorable to maintaining itself. The reproduction of soil is not conceived as a conscious or planned activity, the conditions under which this occurs nonetheless produces a dominant and controlling strata on informal spaces, usurping and extirpating the previous strata. Soil is a quasi-organic entity; partly organic, it produces chemical and inorganic process and shares some of the qualities of a living organism. Soil is an assemblage of multiple actors; it could be further taken apart and examined as plant matter, or as mineral deposits, or as a solid, or cultural construction. The classification and terminology of '*soil*' is paradoxical; a black-box that serves to define a complex, kinetic hybrid as an immutable single entity.

2.17 The production of dirt *qua* nature

2.17.1 Preface to nature/dirt

This subsection concerns nature and the interpretation of nature as dirt, and dirt as nature; where both are simultaneously forms of production. There has been a profound shift in the last few decades over the value of nature, flora and fauna in the UK, where derelict land or overgrown sites were once deemed as contaminated, worthless or lacking in biological value are now seen as ecologically important (Wittig, 2010). The environment, in all its guises, is seen as a form of "*natural capital*" (Hawken et al, 2010) i.e. an extension of the forms of capital beyond economic, social and cultural to nature (Blühdorn & Welsh, 2007). The shift to understanding the potential of weeds and (mostly) indigenous species as valuable contributors to '*bio-diversity*' has now been established legally and cultural (Muller et al, 2010). Indeed the '*wastelands*' and derelict spaces of the UK are now some of the most valuable sites for indigenous wildlife (Pysek, 1989). Legislation currently protects spaces and locations rich in

biodiversity. The calculating and recording of bio-diversity is now one of English government's indices of sustainability (Department For Environment, Transport And The Regions, 1999). This re-classification and re-appraisal, particularly of plants, often deemed '*weeds*' by gardeners has partly been a '*cultural*' change and politically driven one. The '*innate*' qualities of these plants have not significantly varied over this time, nor has its effect on humans, cities, urbanism, technology or any aspect of the way humans live. The change is ascribed to different perspectives on the '*value*' of certain flora and fauna that are defined as '*weeds*' or '*pests*'. In order to understand this in a little more depth, it is necessary to pick through the tangle of terms such as '*weeds*', '*biodiversity*' and '*nature*'.

2.17.2 Definition of a weed

According to definition by the *Centre for Agricultural Bioscience International* (CABI, 2012) weeds are plants that "*grow in sites where they are not wanted*". This definition is useful in highlighting the establishment of a culturally produced notion of a weed (and similar to Douglas' notion of '*matter out of place*'). In relation to this research, it is germane to recognize, regardless of its validity or basis, the concept of a '*weed*'. That is '*weed*' as a modality of nature that grows where it is not *wanted*. As *wanting*, in this context, is a human based activity, the principal way of determining a weed from nature or from biodiversity, is by the subjective judgment of individuals in their local context. Each gardener decides what constitutes weed, partly based on their own knowledge or perhaps linked back to the UK Weeds Act (1959) or knowledge of specific invasive plants. The definition of weeds is a local and contingent classificatory system. The notion of a plant being wanted or unwanted is culturally constructed, as this is not gleaned from nature itself, nor on the function of a plant (Pysek et al, 2004). This partly ascribes weeds a waste product and also more implicated in human activities than nature, which is perceived as (or *de facto*) distinct from man-made (Berger, 2006). This often sets '*weeds*' up against or in contradiction to the wider aims of biodiversity and '*nature*'.

2.17.3 The paradox of weeds

The paradox in attempting to define the value, or otherwise, of flora is in this example from the (1959) Weeds Act (which criminalizes ragwort), “*It is not an offence to have these weeds growing on your land and species such as ragwort have significant conservation benefits*” (Natural England, 2008). This describes plants simultaneously as a pest (i.e. a weed) whilst also providing significant benefits to conservation. The legal definition of weeds (in the UK) is relatively small, there are only five plants defined as weeds, whereas in practice far more plants are deemed as weeds. The definition of specific weeds in this Act is driven partly by economic considerations as the introduction or presence of weeds can deleteriously affect the economic productivity of that land. “*They [weeds] must not be allowed to spread to agricultural land, particularly grazing areas or land which is used to produce conserved forage*” (Natural England, 2008) this makes more explicit the relationship between economics and politics and the definition of weeds. Weeds, in this context, are defined through their adverse effect on economic productivity even though there are clear ecological benefits to the presence of these plants (Richardson et al, 2000). Weeds are politically, culturally, individually and socially defined; and this varies across time and contexts.

2.17.4 Nature as an illegal occupier: *Japanese knotweed*

Some plants and animals in the UK are classified illegal in relation to their protection, dissemination and/or introduction. “*It is an offence to plant or cause Japanese knotweed to spread in the wild under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981*” (Environment Agency, 2006). The legislation not only condemns human users of this weed as criminal, but the plant itself has not only no protection, but is targeted for removal and destruction. This situates plants as illegal occupiers of space; which is similar to that of informal cities where humans occupy land that is not legally theirs. Japanese Knotweed is deemed one of the most problematic by the Environment Agency; although not covered by the Weeds Act, there is separate legislation for this weed alone. Knotweed is explored here in more detail

as an appropriate example of a weed as an actor, partly as it has been made illegal and it is one of the more prevalent and infamous weeds in the UK.

Notably Knotweed crowds out other plants –so its struggle for power is also relatively clear to understand. Knotweed operates like many indigenous species of weeds in their appropriation of space. The plant colonizes by forming a thick, dense canopy of vegetation (Environment Agency, 2006). It operates by crowding out other species and effectively starving or depriving them from sunlight and hence the ability to photosynthesize. The soil becomes suffused with the root structure of the knotweeds, which takes up a considerable volume of space below ground. Technically the root system is a rhizome, which means, among other things, that the weed can reproduce itself from any part of the rhizome. The rhizome is a loose matrix of root-like structures that permeate through the soil underneath the plant (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004). It is not merely sufficient to remove the flowering or ‘*reproductive*’ parts of the plant as the rhizome is sufficient to allow the weed to regrow. Its root rhizome can extend down to several metres in depth and seven meters horizontally, which makes it difficult to remove (Environment Agency, 2006). The Japanese knotweed is a particularly ‘*aggressive*’ (or, depending on your perspective, ‘*successful*’) plant in this regard. Knotweed has been constructed as an illegal occupier of space through legislation and it has made human abettors accessories to the crime.

2.17.5 Crimewatch

The case of this weed illustrates how nature has been vilified, by what mechanisms and through which operations. Japanese knotweed is one of the more recent additions to the UK biological environment. The UK has had a long history of introduced species of flora and fauna, partly from its tradition of international trade and colonial exploitation. In Victorian times, the introduction of non-indigenous species was fashionable and, along with technical developments in the production of glass structures, enabled botanical gardens to flourish (Craig, 1988). Many of the plants and flowers (and fauna) of the UK that we now consider ‘*natural*’ are non-indigenous species. Despite their alien origins, the plants introduced during this time are sometimes protected or cherished, such as the National Trust’s conservation of invasive species such as

rhododendron (National Trust, 2012). However the prevailing view on the introduction of foreign species has reversed and is now frowned upon. This introduction can be done in a number of ways: it can be by accident, in the form of people inadvertently importing species and is now regulated for by the control of plants by travellers, extending as far as customs officials checking soil deposits in the grooves of visitors' shoes as part of their '*bio-security regulations*' (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2012). Introduction of plants can be intended or even malicious; with gardeners choosing to introduce a flower they know is banned, but carrying on regardless, and once flowers are established, even in a private greenhouse, it can spread out into the wild (Kabuce & Priede, 2010). These biological invasions can even be '*natural*' – with flowers, insects, and birds managing to cross the sea from the continent by various means and establish a foothold in the UK (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2008). This is not just flora, for example in London, parakeets introduced mostly from the 1960's onwards, escaped in such numbers that they managed to sustain themselves in the wild and they have attained such numbers that they are now London's tenth most populous '*wild*' bird (BBC, 2007). There is thus some degree of temporality in the classification of indigenesness. Any new flora or fauna that invades the UK is effectively classified as alien and hence a weed and then legislative apparatus is invoked against that species. In the case of the knotweed, this was made illegal in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is similarly detested in many other countries; the World Conservation Union (2012) lists it in its top 100 "*worst*" species (in a document that is deliberately reminiscent of an FBI 100 most wanted criminal status). Although weeds are part of nature, they are simultaneously considered a form of dirt; as a pollutant to a space and as unwanted matter that is out of place.

2.17.6 Bio sacer

Many weeds and pests are now illegal to spread; once discovered they must be removed under the threat of prosecution, or failing that, the UK Environment Agency will remove it and then charge the landowner or persons who spread the alien. Legislation extends not just to the plant but to society also. However, it is not true to say that both are criminalized equally. The human that spreads or

maintains the weed is prosecuted within the law; there are fines payable, restitutory justice and even custodial sentences. Whereas for the plant it is a death sentence by chemical execution; the weed is destroyed and this destruction is effectively outside of the Law. In some ways the plant is in a situation akin to the concept of '*homo sacer*' or '*actor sacer*' (as described earlier in the literature review). The principle is extended to flora and fauna that have sentences or judgments passed on them in this way; with a death penalty imposed, to be carried out by anyone, with anything, anywhere and at anytime. Thus the condition of '*bio sacer*' could be said to be present, where certain organic actors exist outside of the law, whilst simultaneously it is through the law that their identity as weeds emanates.

2.17.7 Summary of weeds

There is no actual thing as a '*weed*' in nature; the only definitions are created in relation to human cultures. In UK legislation this tends to be (but not exclusively) with regards to economic production and monetary value. In everyday terms, weeds are defined mostly through aesthetic and/or cultural considerations, which vary according to local context and cultures. '*Weeds*', '*biodiversity*' and '*nature*' are functionally and scientifically synonymous, but culturally they are different. Perversely even within the same legislative document, the same plant can be considered all three simultaneously. That there is considerable confusion in pinning down these terms is by no means dependent on these paradoxical and contradictory governmental reports and documents. A lack of knowledge about the processes and systems inherent to bio-systems is partly leading to this confusion.

2.18 The culture of biodiversity

Nature, including that which is defined as a weed, has undergone a profound shift in its signification (Latour, 2004). Connected to issues of climate-change and a concern for the survival and '*health*' of the world; nature in all its variety has become part of the solution to these complex issues. "*In October 2010, over 190 countries signed an historic global agreement... to take urgent and effective action to halt the alarming declines in biodiversity... It established a new global*

vision for biodiversity” (DEFRA, 2011:4). This statement from DEFRA describes how the approach towards biodiversity is constructed around a ‘*vision*’. This choice of words is perhaps surprising as biodiversity is ostensibly a scientific concern that should be based on facts and data, whereas the notion of a vision is closer to a political or marketing strategy. The connection between politics and science is at times, more explicit; for example the National Ecosystem Assessment (UK NEA, 2011:2) brought together “*500 natural scientists, economists, social scientists and other stakeholders from government, academic and private sector institutions and non-governmental organisations*” together to investigate ecosystems— situating nature as a political, social, scientific, cultural, economic and biological hybrid (Latour & Woolgar, 1986; Latour, 2004).

“*Biodiversity is important for its own sake and it has its own intrinsic value*” (DEFRA 2011:8). Nature is constructed here as having its own value and meaning. Along with its own intrinsic value, biodiversity is of value to human lifestyles in a number of ways: it is of beneficial contribution to “*food, fresh water, timber, fibre and fuel*” along with reducing “*the impacts of pollution and pest and disease*” along with aiding in combatting climate change and what are described as “*cultural services*” which are the benefits derived from humans interacting in nature, such as “*opportunities for outdoor learning and many kinds of recreation... aesthetic satisfaction, improvements in health and fitness, and an enhanced sense of spiritual well-being*” (UK NEA, 2011:5). Biodiversity is thus seen as a significant contributor to a wide range of human related activities – almost all supported by an economic case. Indeed in the UK National Ecosystem Assessment (2011:iv) report, the introduction states on the first page that the role of biodiversity is important because of the economic “*cost of providing these artificially.*” Dirt is an aspect of biodiversity and implicated here within cultural mechanisms and the economics of capitalism.

2.19 Summary of dirt

Dirt is a metaphor for nature, pollution, weeds, impurity, contamination and waste; it is also literally soil. It is a mode of production that can be physical, social and semiotic. There are many interpretations of the term, but most are

context-dependent and culturally constructed. Dirt is politicized in the debates about climate-change and polluting the planet; dirt is part of the solution as soil is an important contributor to the battle against global warming. Paradoxically, dirt is also conceived as that which is destroying the planet: pollution and waste. These are globally agreed (albeit contradictory) and legislatively controlled interpretations of dirt. Dirt also in understood at the '*local*' level; each culture also produces its own interpretation of what constitutes dirt, down to the individual level.

Dirt is an important mode of production, particularly in relation to informal spaces. Dirt produces and is produced through the physical and material world, such as deterioration, decay and dilapidation. Dirt in this form is not only physical, but it is semiotic in that it is a culturally constructed/accepted sign. Dirt links the themes of production and informality, literally and metaphorically. Dirt is a mode of production, a process and a product. It describes, classifies and defines many of the modes of production and the condition of informal spaces.

Dirt is a signification of waste and unproductivity, which can be both real and metaphorical, and are often synonyms for the informal. Dirt extends metaphorically to human actors as well as to spatial descriptors. Informal spaces are those used on a temporary basis by actors who do not own the space. The actors are thus conceived as unwanted interlopers in that space; i.e. as a form of dirt. Whether the actor is human or non-human, the implication is the same; both are classified as '*dirt*' through official institutions or a dominant authority/culture. Yet, dirt is understood contextually, and those who stand outside of the formal, or locate themselves in the informal, challenge the notion of dirt as unwanted and unwelcome. Dirt can be conceptualized as all that which is not official or as that which is not classifiable anywhere else. Informality and dirt are not coterminous but there are, arguably, considerable overlaps between the two. Notions of informality and dirt are partly constructed from that which is illegal: as occupiers of space where they are not wanted.

2.20 Reflexion on dirt

The literature review on dirt is from relatively isolated academic disciplines: earth sciences, soil sciences, ecology, biology, environmentalism, sociology, philosophy, economics, architecture, visual studies, cultural geography and urban studies. Whilst there are overlaps between these domains, the fields of knowledge (or at least the respective academic traditions) remain somewhat distant. The disjunction between the material and sociological worlds are not necessarily present in ‘*reality*’ but structure the general ordering of academia, knowledge and science as it currently stands. Actor-Network Theory underpins much of the approach to this research, particularly the strategy towards empirical work, is appropriate in that it suggests a mode of working that is transdisciplinary. Dirt is ‘*matter out of place*’ and this could be applied to this part of the literature review, where seemingly unexpected, incongruous and unconventional agglomerations of facts, data, knowledge and material are pieced together out of their normal place. The assemblage of these multifarious fields of knowledge could be deemed a form of intellectual or academic dirt. The section is somewhat heterogeneous in its content, but it is merely a response to the content of the literature and Latour’s (2005) dictum to ‘*follow the actors*’.

2.21 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

This summary draws together the key findings and main conclusions from the four subsections of the literature: informal, space, production and dirt. Each of these subsections already has their own independent summary and these will not be repeated here. This summary provides an integrated, perspective on the reviewed literature in relation to research question: ‘*How is an informal space produced?*’

Space is not (solely) a product – it is conceived as a process also. The production of space is part of the co-constitution of actors involved in this process and product. Space is not a single entity, it is a network of many, different actors. Actors and their inter-relationships are a fluxive and contingent system where identities can vary, transform or remain static. These identities are performed, rather than innate or immutable; they can change, be changed or change others.

Space is indivisible from a network of actors, though most notable is the inter-relationship with human (or social) actors. The spatial is social and the social is spatial. The co-constitution of socio-spatiality echoes that of the definition of informality; where this too is a hybrid of social and spatial entities. Spatiality and informality are conceived as networks of actors. These networks are not limited to social or spatial factors, there are myriad heterogeneous actors. The networks are product and process and in turn produce other networks. Space is a semiotic structure; it is itself a sign and is an assemblage of signs. Semiotics here concerns the interaction between the meanings that the signs of the space produce and the meanings/interpretations produced by individuals.

Informality is specifically defined through its counter-distinction to the formal, official, regulated and legislated. Informal space is connected to the themes of impurity, contamination and waste. Through these, and as a result of these relationships, informality is a term that can involve the process of othering and subordination, i.e. negative connotations. These are implicated in the relative values of those signs and thence to domination and asymmetries of power. Threading through the aporia of informality are emancipatory interpretations; these spaces are often deemed as transgressive, resistant to capitalism and/or to hegemonic power(s) more broadly.

The trope of dirt is applied to capture the paradoxical quality of informal space. Dirt is a metaphor for: pollution, weeds, impurity, contamination and waste; it is also: soil, nature, and bio-diversity. Dirt acts semiotically as a culturally constructed sign. Dirt produces and is produced through the physical and material world of deterioration, decay and dilapidation. Dirt links the themes of production and informality, literally and metaphorically. Dirt is a mode of production, a process and a product. It describes, classifies and defines the mode of production and the condition of informal spaces. Dirt is used to capture the transdisciplinary qualities of this research.

The production of informal space involves a hybrid approach that crosses: sociology, geography, philosophy, geology, ecology, biology, anthropology, economics, visual studies, art/cultural studies, urbanism and architecture. The framing of these issues does not fit neatly into any one of these academic

disciplines; instead an approach that is transdisciplinary is required. The following sections on epistemology, ontology, research frameworks and methodology attempt to contextualize the research question in an appropriate research framework (i.e. Actor-Network Theory).

3 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK, ONTOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGY

3.1 Preface

This section bridges between the literature review, the methodology and empirical chapters of this research. The intention of this chapter is to provide an explanatory nexus between the themes of the literature and the intellectual framework for the research approach. Actor-Network Theory is the intellectual framework used. ANT is a recurrent part of the reviewed literature and simultaneously informs critical aspects of knowledge and empirical data as well as contributions towards the theoretical and methodological approach for the research. There is a brief introduction to salient aspects of ANT and then this chapter sets out to explain, describe and justify the grounds for the adoption of ANT within this research approach. The second section of this chapter examines the notion of ‘*hybridity*’ from an ANT perspective. Hybridity is the term used to explain and describe the epistemology, ontology and theoretical framework of Actor-Network Theory. The third section of this chapter sets out the mechanisms of ‘*translation*’, one of the principal ANT approaches to research, and which forms the structuring device for the findings chapters.

3.2 EPISTEMOLOGY + ONTOLOGY

The literature describes the inter-relationship between physical (including natural) and social worlds. Much of the literature reviewed thus far points to the coterminosity of space with nature/society/politics/semiotics; and within these terms are related issues of agency, knowledge and structure. A research paradigm that enables an examination across all of these fields is required (Blaikie, 2007). The main problem is that there are few rigorous, detailed and widely agreed upon methodologies that one can adopt; as Dovey (1999:2) suggests “*any study of ‘place’ also entails a bridging of interest across different academic paradigms... there is no singular methodological position or school of thought on which this work is based.*” There is a need to provide some form of research structure that can either bridge across or connect the socio-spatial fields. The strategy to be

used for this research project (which was briefly introduced in the literature review) is referred to as '*Actor-Network Theory*'⁵.

3.2.1 Introduction to Actor-Network Theory (ANT)

Actor-Network Theory (ANT) at its most basic level attempts to connect how '*things*' (i.e. actors) come together, interact, alter identities and/or relate conflictually qua networks or as Law & Hassard (1999:3) describe it, "*entities take their form and acquire their attributes as a result of their relations with other entities*". ANT describes how almost any object or entity is an actor (*sometimes referred to as an 'actant'*) in this network, for example placing humans in the same category as scallops (Callon, 1986); hinges (Latour, 1992); all things and concepts act within a network, but no hierarchy of importance is predetermined (Law and Hassard, 1999). "*ANT blurs the organic and inorganic*" (May and Thrift 2001:27). ANT proposes a removal of binary categories, and with them many of the epistemological (and ontological) perspectives embedded within each discipline. ANT replaces them with a research approach that operates a hybrid epistemology (Latour, 2007). ANT research rejects *a priori* positions of knowledge; this ranges from the removal of structures and disciplines such as: sociology, anthropology and geography, through to removal of labels such as: place or space. In rejecting such labels, there is also a re-evaluation of the privileged positions of knowledge that such disciplines maintain, as through that privileged knowledge power and control is exercised over their field of study. Research is released from the "*inhibiting effect of global, totalitarian theories*" (Foucault, 1980a:80). ANT's approach moves away from binary opposition towards a hybridised position where multiple forms of knowledge and data are treated equally or '*symmetrically*' (Latour, 1992; Law 2004). Rather than binary opposites, the research field is organised through a continuum of theoretical spaces, operating multi-dimensionally. ANT hybridity provides a working platform for positing space and society (and other actors) on less opposing sides, by uniting them within this hybrid condition.

⁵ Known variously as: Science Technology Studies (STS), Actor-Network Theory (ANT) and/or Material-Semiotics (Law, 2008).

3.2.2 Action, actors (and ANT)

ANT literature often focuses on the importance of ‘actors’; on what effect one has on the other (and vice versa) or what is ‘acting’ in this context. The use of the terms ‘action’ and ‘actor’ by ANT are controversial in relation to some sociological interpretations. The meanings of these words are contested by some academics as part of a meta-discourse of structure and agency. Rather than attempt to adjudicate on the merits of different claims; this section explores the definitions of these terms (mostly) as interpreted by ANT and applied in this research.

The notion of ‘social action’, is defined by Weber (1997: 88) as “*all human behaviour when and in so far as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to it*”. This interpretation of the term of action as limited to human individuals is a widely held position, particularly within sociology. However this description of action is not universally agreed upon. The definition of social action *always* accompanied by ‘subjective meaning’ is difficult to determine both in practice and in theory. Even Weber (1997:112) concedes that “*in the great majority of cases actual action goes on in a state of inarticulate half-consciousness or actual unconsciousness.*” According to Weber, social action rarely has any subjective meaning that can be attributed to it. Bourdieu & Eagleton (1992:113) go further and suggest that “*the social world doesn't work in terms of consciousness, it works in terms of practices*”. Much practice is carried out (in this context by human actors) without any consciousness and not necessarily with any subjective meaning. This notion of social action, as a co-relate of practice, is echoed by Lefebvre (1991:150) who situates such practices thus “*spatial practice is lived before it is conceptualized.*” Social action as a practice, is looser than Weber’s more restricted definition, does not necessitate some degree of meaning or signification. This conception of social action as practice(s) is close to ANT approach whereby action is merely the practice(s) of any actor, regardless of their status and their intention (if possible).

ANT proposes that action can be carried out by anything that affects something else. Actors are “*entities that do things*” (Latour, 1992:241) and are “*whatever acts or shifts action, action itself being defined by a list of performances*”

(Akrich & Latour, 1992:259). Action is understood as an effect on another actor (sometimes described synonymously as *'actants'*) without primacy being given to humans. Non-humans, technology, space, nature are all treated symmetrically as having the capacity to act within ANT; which Law (1999:5) describes thus "*actors are network effects.*" Action is thus conceived as the relationships of a network of different heterogeneous entities.

3.2.3 ANT research framework

It is difficult to situate ANT within an existing social science research framework. ANT is used by a number of different authors who each have different versions of what the theory is (or isn't) and how it should be used; compounded by Latour's (2005:117) approach "*I made no pretence to follow standard definitions*". Regardless of the different terminologies used, there are operational similarities between the methods and approaches used by ANT and *'standard'* social science research. Blaikie (2007:3) describes how research begins with a *'research paradigm'* as the "*broad philosophical and theoretical traditions within which ways to understand the world are conducted.*" According to Blaikie (2007) it is the research paradigm that defines the relevant ontology and epistemology. Broadly, ANT uses a *'constructivist'* but not *'social constructivist'* epistemology (Latour, 2005:88) that refers to a view of knowledge where "*actors socially construct their reality. They conceptualize their own actions and experiences, the actions of others and social situations*" (Blaikie, 2007:22-23⁶). ANT would disagree with the use of the word *'social'* in this definition, but broadly concur with the notion of a constructed view of reality by *'actors'*.

3.2.4 ANT epistemology

This research frequently investigates how actors *'construct'* their own accounts of a situation. Situated within such a *'constructivist'* epistemology, Blaikie (2007: 56) describes specific *'research strategies'* as the guiding "*logic of enquiry*" and how they relate to the knowledge and data being sought. Blaikie (2000: 116) describes the *'abductive'* research strategy; "*it is necessary to piece together the fragments of meaning that are available from their externalized*

⁶ Blaikie (2007:22-23) refers to the term *'constructionism'* rather than *'constructivism'*

products.” This relates to the ANT strategy where, for example, the meanings of scientists are used to construct or describe a situation. The abductive research strategy is particularly appropriate for emerging or new areas of study (Mason, 2002). The production of informal space is emerging in two senses, firstly in that it is relatively under-researched, and secondly these spaces (and social groups) are literally in the process of being constructed. Although Blaikie (2007: 10) limits the abductive research strategy to discovering and understanding “*the social world of the social actors being investigated*”, ANT would remove the word ‘*social*’ from this definition and enable or allow a much broader range of ‘*actors*’ be investigated. With scallops (Callon, 1986), hinges (Latour, 1992) and skyscrapers (Georg, & Tryggestad, 2009) given equal (i.e. ‘*symmetrical*’) status to human actors, it is appropriate for research attempting to examine both physical and social worlds to adopt this wider definition of ‘*actor*’.

3.2.5 ANT ontology

Establishing ANT within an existing ontological position is arguably more difficult than epistemology. Blaickie (2007:13) describes two opposing ontological positions: relativist and realist; where a relativist “*theory assumes that what we regard as the external world is just appearances and has no independent existence apart from our thoughts*” whereas realism is where “*natural and social phenomena are assumed to have an existence that is independent of the activities of the human observer*”. These two ontological positions appear to be wholly oppositional, “*either something was real and not constructed, or it was constructed and artificial*” (Latour, 2005:90). However the boundary between realism and relativism is blurred: Blaikie (2007) defines five ontological descriptions that sit between these two extremes (whilst excluding more ‘*post-modern*’ ontologies). ANT further blurs the boundaries between these opposing ontologies; Latour (2005) situates the work of scientists as being both realist and relativist. In terms of the approach of ANT research, there is a strong link with relativism, which much ANT literature relates towards a relativist ontology. There are also some claims to ANT accessing reality, “*realities are real enough*” (Law, 2004:67); however there is less detail on how such realism is accessed (Mol, 1999). Whether an ANT researcher can access

'reality' is a moot point; Blaikie (2007:15) classifies this ontological position as 'cautious realism' where "one can never be sure that ultimate reality has been uncovered, there can be no doubt that reality is 'out there'".

One of the central tenets of ANT is to examine a situation whilst it is still being constructed, made, assembled or produced. Latour (2005:88) "*The great advantage point of construction sites is that they offer an ideal vantage point to witness the connections between humans and nonhumans*". Rather than trying to ascertain how actors conceptualize and interpret their reality after the event, it is preferable to see this construction in the making. Studying actors and attempting to describe their construction of reality, it is important that researchers should follow knowledge whilst it is "*in action*" (Latour, 1987:258). This aligns with the research aim to examine informal space during the '*production*' stage. The methods used to follow this production process are explored in detail in the methodology section.

3.3 Hybridity

"*The concept of hybridity as it is deployed by writers like Latour ... seeks to implode the object/subject binary that underlies the modern antinomy between nature and society*" (Whatmore 2002:27).

This section examines the interpretation of the term '*hybrid*' within literature and its application in this research. Hybridity is used across the literature review on informality, space and production. Hybridity is used specifically in much ANT literature (Latour, 1993a, 1996; Albertsen & Diken, 2000; Callon & Law, 1995; Elam, 1999; Michael, 1998; Tironi, 2010). Hybridity is an important intellectual concept for the theoretical framework for this research as well as informing the approach to the empirical fieldwork. There are three different uses of the term hybrid in the literature reviewed and whilst there are overlaps and inter-relationships between these, it is useful to review their qualities separately. The first definition of hybrid₁ specifically refers to '*new*' cultures, species practices, entities or variations thereof, such as through some transgression between once isolated domains. As shall be determined later in this research, the informal space itself is a form of hybrid₁. Examples from other disciplines include

colonialism, genetic modification or cyborgs; these result in entirely ‘new’ species, cultures, practices or entities. Although it is a term not used specifically in the literature, this is referred to here as *hybrid₁*. For *hybrid₁* the referent is the *outcome*.

Hybrid₂ applies to the transgression of existing classificatory, academic, cultural and/or scientific domains and re-conceptualisation of knowledge. This interpretation of hybridity (*hybrid₂*) recurs relatively frequently in the literature reviewed; much of the work of ANT falls into this category; for example Latour’s (2004) and Callon’s (1986) work on redefining or reclassifying nature and culture. This is often a relatively philosophical interpretation of hybridity; and is related to the merging/elision of the (apparent) dichotomy of process/product; being/becoming; structure/agency. The application/effect of the literature on hybridity is mostly relevant to framing the epistemological (*and partly the ontological*) framework for this research. *Hybrid₂* refers to the nature of knowledge which is related to how: knowledge is produced, data is gathered, and how information is processed, coded, decoded and translated. The intellectual challenge in understanding the production of informal space hybridizes: sociology, geography, philosophy, geology, ecology, biology, anthropology, economics, visual studies, art/cultural studies, urbanism and architecture. For *hybrid₂* the referent is the *epistemology*.

Hybrid₃ refers to transdisciplinary methods, tactics and practices adopted or deployed (to research and produce knowledge). This necessitates the application of a relatively heterogeneous range of methods and methodologies in order to access across different types of knowledge. The methods and practices adopted or deployed during the production of the informal space could be considered a form of *hybrid₃* as it involves a heterogeneous range of approaches, tactics, methods, means, programmes, materials, skills, stratagems and practices. The empirical research undertaken deploys practices and methods from: sociology, urban studies, architecture, cultural studies, semiotics, aesthetics, politics and philosophy. *Hybrid₃* is the methodological approach to the practice of this research as it transgresses across a number of fields and uses methods qua transdisciplinary strategy. For *hybrid₃* the referent is the *process*.

This sub-section explores the literature on hybridity in relation to the research question.

3.3.1 HYBRID₁

“‘Translation’, creates mixtures between entirely new types of beings, hybrids of nature and culture” Latour (1993a:10).

The term hybrid had previously referred (pejoratively) to the crossbreeding of races, particularly in the context of colonised and coloniser (Soja, 1996; Hall, 1993; Said, 1994). The term hybridity₁ in post-colonial literature has more positive connotations, for example under the guise of multi-culturalism (Mavrommatis, 2010). Post-colonialist writers use the term hybrid₁ to describe the outcome of the inter-relativity of two (or more) cultures (Saldanha, 2006). Hybridity₁ in ANT is not restricted exclusively to human worlds, instead materials, practices, architectures, beliefs and technologies are all hybridised. The ‘*space*’ between two (or more) cultures develops as a hybrid domain that emanates initially from the cultures, traditions and practices of (hitherto) isolated worlds; it is translated, reterritorialized, transgressed and/or deformed (Bhabha, 1994; Callon, 1991; Deleuze and Guattari, 2004). The (*re*)conceptualisation of identities and/or entities as a ‘*new*’, modified or modifying network is described by Sloterdijk (2004) as ‘*foam*’. This metaphor conjures the conglomeration of related, yet also, quasi-autonomous entities i.e. “*semi-detached structures, multichamber complexes*” (Sloterdijk, 2004:48) that interact or are interdependent, to some extent, on/with each other. Hybrids although new, are not isolated from their contexts, are not stable and immutable entities. Hybrid assemblages are contingent organisations that are deformed and/or affected by their adjacencies; there is ‘*dialogue*’, interaction and conflict with the network. It is the liminal space between cultures/practices where hybridisation emerges.

Hybridity₁ is not restricted to inter-cultural conditions; it might arise within a relatively homogenous social group, but through social change or new technologies, materials, innovations, practices and/or a hybrid of any/all of these (Callon, 1991). This modality of hybrid₁ includes a variety of possible outcomes, which might be: new cultures, artefacts or practices. Hybridisation occurs

through the merging of separate or distinct entities; where (previously isolated) agents/actors/actants iteratively and contingently elide or fuse together to form a *de novo* entity. In this conception of hybridity₁, there is a rejection of essentialism. Hybrid₁ contains the possibility of new genealogies and of the potential for different identities “*defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity*” (Hall, 1993:402). Hybrids₁ are “*annihilations of the principle of individuation*” (Serres, 2007:228) and situate hybridity as an alternative to, but not in contradistinction to, essentialism (Fuchs, 2001).

3.3.2 HYBRID₂

“*The classification of the sciences orders them in a space and the history of sciences arranges them in a time, as if we knew, in advance of the sciences themselves, what space and time mean*” (Serres, 1980: 23).

Hybrid₂ is not restricted to ANT; the condition/approach (albeit under various guises), is evident in much literature and/or theory, for example: the study of ‘*science*’ (Serres, 2007; Latour, 2005) artificial intelligence (Haraway, 1991), semiotic-rhizome (Law, 2009); the history of systems of knowledge (Foucault, 2002); or nameless science (Derrida, 1987). Deleuze and Guattari (2004) describe the condition of hybridity₂ as a ‘*machinic assemblage*’; these are the “*intermingling of bodies in a society, including all the attractions and repulsions, sympathies, and antipathies, alterations, amalgamations, penetrations, and expansions that affect bodies of all kinds in their relations to one another*” (2004:99). This description is akin to a network of actors, intermediaries and inter-relations.

Knowledge of urban space has been extended, augmented and/or hypertrophied through the re-interpretation of various academic disciplines and different non-academic practices (Hubbard et al, 2004). Latour (1993a: 2) describes this form of hybridity as “*imbroglios of science, politics, economy, law, religion, technology, fiction*”. The application of these multifarious and heterogeneous disciplines onto the study of the spatial has produced a highly complex conception of ‘*space*’. Furthermore, approaches such as ANT further extend the

reconceptualisation of space; whereby space itself has become merely one actor in a complex web of inter-relationships (as opposed to the principle actor or framing context). Hybridity₂ is the shift away from *a priori* classification systems, particularly from the (isolated) fields of academic traditions⁷ (Latour, 1993a). Hybrid₂ could be considered a paradoxical classificatory system; of that which does not fit into classifications anywhere else. It is thus inherently *anti-*, *post-* or *trans-*disciplinary knowledge.

Hybridity₂ also refers to a philosophical conceptualisation of process/product; being/becoming or agency/structure (Mol, 1999). This interpretation is described as philosophical as it is the least empirical/most abstract usage and is epistemologically and ontologically focused. In philosophy the notion of ‘*being*’ is often related to truth, essence, eternal and real; whereas ‘*becoming*’ connotes: appearance, existence, illusion and false⁸ (Velasque, 2011; Morris Engel et al, 2008). However, this is contested within hybridity₂; “*modernistic binary thinking fails to account for the complexity of these assemblages and the capacities they create*” (Barratt, 2011:398). Rather than posing process and product as binary opposites; they are conceived as an amalgamated collective; hybridity is unfinished or incomplete (Jons, 2006). Hybridisation is metamorphic and processual. Hall describes this double-meaning “*as a ‘production’ which is never complete, always in process,*” (1993:392). Hybrid₂ defines the *knowledge* of an entity a posteriori through ‘*following the actors*’.

3.3.3 HYBRID₃

Hybrid₃ refers to the implementation of transdisciplinary methods and (or methodologies), i.e. to the ‘*practice*’ of research. This is part of an emerging transdisciplinary research practice domain that is specifically directed towards the carrying out of research and knowledge production outside of disciplinary silos (Wicksona et al 2006). There is a call for greater adoption of methods and practices across disciplines and the removal of barriers to such transdisciplinary methods (Kristeva, 1997; Rendell, 2004; AAA/Peprav, 2007).

⁷ This is not to say that one frame of view is necessarily more correct or valid than another; merely that attempts to investigate phenomenon are situated within different epistemological and ontological systems.

⁸ This is a very broad generalisation of these terms.

Hybrid₃ also includes accepting other knowledge producers as part of this process; i.e. rather than the researcher being the source of all knowledge and single-authored researcher, knowledge is more dialogic and multi-authored⁹. Frayling (1994) stresses how important hybrid₃ practice is as an integral part of research. This has necessitated the use of a methods and research practices from myriad domains, as well as hybrid₁ variations thereof (Leavy, 2011).

This research uses a relatively large range of methods in order to access various forms of data and information from the case-study (Seago & Dunne, 1999). Some data is empirical, i.e. derived from observation of the site or via the experiences of the users of the site; but part of the data derives from interpretations of the site from the field of semiotics aesthetics and other fields of study. Haraway (1991: 212) describes this as “*text, machine body and metaphor – all theorized and engaged in practice in terms of communications*”. This situates hybridity₃ across heterogeneous worlds: real and virtual, contemporary and ancient, semiotic “*quasi-objects, quasi subjects*” (Serres, 2007:227-228). Hybrid₃ is ‘*animate*’ – it is performed/performative, practices/practiced. This hybridised practice is not exclusive to ANT, although it is highly pertinent to much of the practice of actor-network research methods. Hybrid₃ concerns a transdisciplinary *practice* of research/knowledge.

3.3.4 Summary of hybridity

Hybridity forms an important part of the intellectual framing of this research puzzle and the basis upon which the approach to the empirical work is established. Hybridity is used in three different approaches. Hybrid₁: describes the production of new entities, practices or materials through the blending, breeding, merging, eliding of different heterogeneous worlds. Hybrid₂ refers to a trans-disciplinary approach to the production of knowledge (or practices). This can be from the transgression of academic disciplines or from practices and activities outside of academic, or combinations thereof. Hybrid₃ describes the practice(s) of knowledge production from the perspective of transdisciplinary

⁹ The examination requirements for a PhD somewhat curtail this aspect of research practice as PhD’s are predicted on the single-authored work (despite subsequent publications being multiply authored).

and heterogeneous methods, methodologies and research paradigms. The literature reviewed on the production of space describes and incorporates all three of these hybrids. The following chapters (methodology and two findings chapters) build upon this hybrid triumvirate that links back and forth from the literature to the fieldwork. Hybridity facilitates a trans-academic approach to the investigation, and understanding, of a complex heterogeneous domain of research.

3.4 Translation and Actor-Network Theory

“Translation is more effective if it anticipates the responses and reactions of the materials to be translated.” (Law, 1992:3)

Translation is one of the main theoretical frameworks of actor-network theory and is used here to examine the production of informal spaces. Translation involves the production or reproduction of meaning, identity and/or knowledge. Translation is a multi-stage process by which actors and networks establish, evolve and maintain (or lose) power (Latour, 1988; Callon 1986, and Law, 1986). This power *“results from the actions of a chain of agents each of whom “translates” it in accordance with his/her own projects”* (Latour, 1986a: 264). Agents (or actors) can be from both social and non-social worlds within a system, organisation or situation. Translation was originally used for *“the study of the role played by science and technology in structuring power relationships”* (Callon 1986:196). Translation has subsequently been used to explore power relationships in a much wider variety of contexts than science and technology, and have explored: pop music (Hennion, 1989), *‘things’* (Preda, 1999), museums (Star & Griesemer, 1989), sustainability (Rice, 2011b) and ecology (Lee & Roth, 2001). Translation is the process of creating a network *“which generates ordering effects such as devices, agents, institutions, or organizations”* (Law, 1992). Translation is a process, not an outcome, by which actors pass through a number of stages that transform the identity through which actors and networks are modified and identities altered in the pursuit of a collective network (Bardini, 1997: 20). Translation describes how social and non-social reality is a temporal condition, one that must be performed repeatedly and respond to a changing context. Translation can be understood as a dual process: the first, translation

moves from a theoretical position to action or practice. The second translation process is the shift from uncertainty to stabilized specificity. This involves the shift from indefinite questions such as ‘*what is this space?*’ into a specific statement, such as ‘*this space is...*’

Translation is broken down into distinct sections described as four moments: ‘*problematization*’, ‘*interessement*’, ‘*enrolment*’ and ‘*mobilisation*’; there is a fifth counter-moment which can occur during any of the moments, described as ‘*dissidence*’ (Callon, 1986:211). Each of these moments can overlap with each other and be repeated several times within translation, however their description allows the power relationships to be examined in specific contexts. The process of translation is present in the informal space case study examined in the UK case-study city. In this site there is evidence of power struggles by different actors, groups and networks (social and non-social) to either exert control, maintain power or evolve some form of power over other actors in the space where “*the central cooperative task of social worlds which share the same space but different perspectives is the ‘translation’ of each others’ perspectives*” (Star and Griesemer, 1989:412). The research is limited by a geographic space, within which there are many actors and multiple networks. The relationships between the actors are complex; some of these actors are working together and sometimes they are in conflict, and sometimes the relationship shifts across both positions through time, and sometimes actors are partly conflictual and partly consensual. The precise nature and detail of these actor-networks is not known at the outset: some are very shy, rare, cautious and/or paranoid. Identifying these actors is an important part of the research and is undertaken by adopting Latour’s (2005:68) maxim to “*follow the actors!*”

3.4.1 Problematization Identification and Obligatory Passage Point

Problematization involves two processes: first is where the identity of actors are defined and/or redefined and second how certain actors establish themselves as indispensable to the network. The first step towards problematization is the need to resolve who are the actors by “*establishing their identities and the links*

between them” (Callon, 1986:202). The identities of the actors are not immutable; they can be modified or appropriated through the process of identification.

Identification involves the mapping of a complex network of actors: “*imbroglios of science, politics, economy law, religion, technology, fiction*” (Latour, 1993a: 3). The research involves classifying these actors from social and non-social domains, however the critical part of the problematisation process is the establishment of certain actors crucial to the network and this is done through the creation of an ‘*obligatory passage point*’.

An obligatory passage point is created when a network imposes a condition or mandatory situation through which actors must pass. Callon and Law (1982:620) describe this obligatory passage point as a “*funnel of interests*”. An obligatory passage point is a method by which an actor (or actors) manages “*to become indispensable*” (Callon, 1986:202). Actors must change their action, identity or intentions to conform to the requirements of the obligatory passage point (Singleton & Michael, 1993). The construction of an obligatory passage point is performed via a number of different worlds: semiotic, real, political, social and/or technical. Obligatory passage points can exist as theoretical ideas – early on during translation, but if the process of translation is successful then the obligatory passage point must become a reality.

3.4.2 Interessement

“To interest other actors is to build devices which can be placed between them and all other entities who want to define their identities otherwise. A interests B by cutting or weakening all the links between B and... C, D, E”. Callon (1986: 205)

The second moment of translation is ‘*interessement*’ and involves a process of enlisting actors to accept identities, relationships and roles as defined in the problematisation. Interessement is an ongoing process of convincing other actors of the need for the obligatory passage point. Interessement attempts “*to impose and stabilize the identity... to the other elements of the network and to attract*

them into the program, at the same time blocking other possible alignments” (Magnani, 2012:133). Interessement concerns the *intended* relationships between actors; i.e. the strategies, tactics, mechanisms and devices proposed to enact or facilitate the translation. The etymology of this word is relevant “*as the name ‘inter-esse’ indicates, ‘interests’ are what lie **in between** actors and their goals*” (Latour, 1987:109 emphasis in original); interessement is a way of adding intermediaries in the network. An important part of this process is an exertion of power through the silencing of other actors and networks (Callon & Law, 1982). Callon (1986: 209) describes “*interessement devices*” as apparatus that can help “*trap*” actors into a network, in Callon’s example, cages placed into the sea are devices to interesse scallops into breeding, but “*texts and conversations*” are devices used to interesse human actors.

3.4.3 Enrolment

“Without the enrolment of many other people, without the subtle tactics that symmetrically adjust human and non-human resources, the rhetoric... is powerless.” Latour (1987:145)

Whilst interessement occurs, there is uncertainty that these actors will form stable relationships; they need to be enrolled (Star, 1991; Callon & Law, 1982). Enrolment thus “*designates the device by which a set of interrelated roles is defined and attributed to actors who accept them*” (Callon, 1986: 206). Enrolment is successful if the various interests and identities of actors are organized around the obligatory passage point. This is also the moment when actors begin to invest resources such as time, money, energy and expertise. Enrolment requires action; it is the part of translation when actors carry out their roles as per the problematisation. If interessement is successful, enrolment occurs.

3.4.4 Mobilisation

“Who speaks in the name of whom? Who represents whom? These crucial questions must be answered if the project... is to succeed. ...as with the description of interessement and enrolment, only a few rare individuals are involved.” (Callon, 1986:208)

There are two conditions to mobilisation. The first is the presentation, or more accurately perhaps the *re*-presentation, of the translation process. This concerns how the myriad actors involved in the translation are portrayed and their identities rendered. For example, how is an '*informal space*' re-presented, or how does an '*informal space*' speak? This is difficult to answer, as many actors have no voice of their own; it has to be spoken for by others. Some actors are willing to act on behalf of others, some are forced to act on behalf of others whilst some are forbidden to speak at all (Law, 1999). Re-presentation is implicated as a mode of power relations. Informal spaces are represented by different actors and networks (and this is referred to as mobilisation). In the process of re-presentation there is a process of othering, editing and over-statement of the many actor's voices.

A second condition of mobilisation is displacement – how the many are represented by the few (Latour, 1986b). "*Diverse populations have been mobilised. That is, they have been displaced*" (Callon, 1986:218). Mobilisation is a process of displacement: many silent and silenced actors are displaced. Those who do '*speak*' do so on behalf of many others. Equivalences are used in lieu of the many representing themselves in their multitudes (Latour, 1986b). Callon (1986: 211) describes how "*a handful of researchers discuss a few diagrams and a few tables with numbers in a closed room. But these discussions commit uncountable populations of silent actors: scallops, fishermen, and specialists who are all represented at Brest by a few spokesmen.*" A series of intermediaries are used to facilitate this mobilisation, for example, texts and documents are used to replace conversations and meetings; complex relationships can be displaced through simple graphs and diagrams; a sign can replace entire networks. Mobilisation calls into action a hybrid network of the physical, social and semiological (Farias & Bender, 2010).

(Note: Myriad actors have simultaneously been (silenced, enrolled, interessed and) '*mobilised*' into this thesis, with each tap on this keyboard there is a further translation of the actors from the real world problem of the informal space into a stabilized, defined, classified and certain document).

3.4.5 Dissidence

The moments of translation are relatively unstable and might not perform as intended. Actors in each network “*are always rebellious*” (Latour, 1988: 198) and are able to break allegiance and drift away from the network. Actors cannot always be forced or compelled to perform at any cost, particularly in informal spaces. The point when alliances break, allies revolt, relationships dissolve and identities change is what Callon (1986: 211) calls ‘*dissidence*’. What constitutes a dissident actor is myriad: Sloterdijk (2009:86) even refers to wealthy tourists jetting off for their holidays as ‘*weather dissidents*’ and through this notion incorporates the environment, clouds, temperature, airplanes, tourism, suntans and climate-change. There are myriad conflicts, power struggles and acts of dissent inherent within many of the forms of production operating in informal spaces.

3.5 Summary of chapter

This chapter establishes a research framework that can facilitate the investigation of themes established in the literature review whilst informing and generating an appropriate methodological structure with which to situate and conduct the empirical studies. Actor-Network Theory is the intellectual framework that is adopted for the empirical stage of the research, using specifically the ANT approach of translation. ANT is described as a hybrid epistemology and ontology and is an appropriate research approach for answering the research question. This framework is used to structure and frame the methodology, the strategy towards data collection and the subsequent analysis of empirical data. The next chapter, ‘*methodology, research methods and approach*’, is established using ANT whilst also drawing on the key themes of the literature review.

3.6 A note on notes

In various parts of this research there is the numeration of various categories, for example in this chapter: hybrid₁, hybrid₂, hybrid₃ and in later sections: nature₁, nature₂, nature₃ and community₁, community₂, community₃. There are three purposes for this enumeration. Firstly it is merely a pragmatic way of coding

and/or categorising. Secondly, it is a purposive way of highlighting the proliferation of multiple interpretations and perspectives of what are often ostensibly single entities, terms and/or meanings. Thirdly, this removes the need to develop even more words to describe the original word, which might add to yet further proliferation of terminology. The first iteration limited this sequentiality to hybrids₁₂₃; yet as the research progressed combined with a desire to treat all actors symmetrically, the same privileges (or sacrifices) were given to the categorisation of other actors in the research (even when the actor is a word in a text).

4 CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY, RESEARCH METHODS AND APPROACH

4.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the decision making process of the design of the research and examines the methods and methodology of the research strategy. A methodology is the “*science or study of methods*” (Payne & Payne, 2004: 150) and as such describes or appraises the qualities of the methods chosen, their applicability to the research project and also their limitations. The research strategy was principally designed to address and answer the research question ‘*How is an informal space produced?*’ The research design sought methods that were appropriate to, and capable of, investigating the focus of the research inquiry. The key concern in relation to the design of the research was to develop an approach that allowed the investigation of the myriad actors (human and non-human) that are involved in the production process. Latour (2005:68) describes the need for researchers to “*follow the actors*” which implies a requirement for a flexible, responsive and contingent research strategy. The review of literature pointed towards a research design that would be resilient enough to capture all aspects of the production in action.

The initial subsection examines and situates the research questions in detail. The next subsection explores the use of a case study approach. The next subsection then sets out, in turn, the individual research methods used as part of the case study fieldwork. Throughout the subsections, there are justifications of the research strategy and methods used, and consideration of some of the alternatives that were also considered (but rejected) are evaluated and presented as part of the approach to the research design. There are reflexions on both the design of the research methods and methodology, both as a theoretical model, in terms of limitations and conflicts; and reflexions on some of the conflicts and issues that occurred during the fieldwork in practice. There is then a sub-section that examines the approach to analysis and coding of the data collected. (The subsection on coding is not strictly part of a methodology, and as such this chapter is

also referred to as a research ‘*approach*’ as it remains germane to the ‘*method*’ by which the empirical data is processed and analysed).

Each sub-section concludes with a reflexive piece, and at the end of the chapter, there is a broader reflexion on the research process overall and the role of the researcher within this.

4.1 Research Questions

The overall aim of this research is to examine the production of informal space in England. In order to achieve this, the research addressed the following principal research question: *How is an informal space produced?* The research explores the theory and practice in relation to this question as well as undertaking new empirical work. As part of the broader principal research question, there are three research sub-questions to be addressed: (i) *how do actor-networks operate in the production of space;* (ii) *what (or who) produces informal space;* and (iii) *how are power-relations structured in an informal actor-network.* The principal research-question and sub-questions involve an examination of the associations and chain of relations between actors involved in the production of informal spaces. Much of the literature concerning themes of power, capitalism, resistance and informality is often relatively abstract or general; this research connects these themes more specifically with empirical evidence. These questions are explored using an in-depth case study in the UK.

This research examines and reconstructs how (and to some extent why) these networks form. As part of this investigation, relationships between networks are also examined when networks form *in relation to* others. During this investigation of networks and associations, the identity of actors is not static, they too are changed, altered and/or produced during this process. As such, the study describes the power-relationships qua transformations between actors: social and non-social. The examination of power uses the ANT analytical framework of ‘*translation*’ that theorises how actors enact and/or maintain power relationships. How actors interact with each other; defines both themselves and others through this process of translation (if it is successful). The structure of the PhD is focused on the three concepts described here; “*with respect to the forms*

of ... power engendered by things, three concepts are key: networks, hybrids, and translations.” (Preda 1999:349). The networks of actors in informal spaces are described above, hybrids refer to the (re)classification of actors and networks and translations are the process by which the former are generated. Production occurs as power relations through these networks, hybrids and translation.

4.2 Epistemology and ontology

The previous chapter established the analytical framework for this research. This methodology consolidates this approach in the specificities of the research methods and research practice. The intention is to develop a research approach that is situated within an ANT epistemology and ontology. The research is transdisciplinary and adopts number of different methods and practices as part of that strategy; likewise the context in which the fieldwork is undertaken also involves a hybrid of material, non-material, social and non-social domains. Without recourse to reiterating the previous chapter, it is germane to orient this chapter with this brief note regarding the analytical basis for this research.

4.3 Introducing a case-study approach

The aim of the research is to answer the research question and develop a detailed understanding of the production of informal space in the UK. A suitable research strategy that could facilitate this is the use of a case-study. The case-study approach is considered an appropriate research strategy for the in-depth investigation of a contemporary phenomenon in its real life context (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, a case-study enables a focus on the dynamics within a single setting to provide a richly detail account. ANT accounts involve a high number of variables and/or actors and complicated inter-relationships between them. A research strategy such as a case study enables the researcher to explore the many interactions and (often, hard to find) actors (Simons, 2010). The case study concerns understanding and/or revealing a system of actions and/or understanding process (or both). Case studies enable the use of a range other methods of data capture within this overall approach. Case-studies are the most common approach used in ANT research (Smith, 2010). The main criticism of a case study approach is the lack of generalizability (Payne & Payne, 2004). This

is indeed true for some approaches to case study research, but is neither applicable to all forms of case study, nor necessarily pertinent to all strategies of case study research. Accordingly, a case study approach is proposed to investigate the research question.

4.3.1 The single case study

A single case-study has been chosen as the focus of the research for a number of reasons. A single case study enables a much deeper investigation than multiple sites (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Case studies focus effort on those cases that are theoretically useful, rather than, for example, using a random sample (Yin, 2009). The site has not been chosen at random; rather the choice of this case study site is based on a number of factors that make it appropriate theoretically and meet a number of logistical requirements. Eisenhardt (2002:13) suggests that a carefully chosen case-study site can make the area of concern for the researcher “*transparently observable*”. This perhaps overstates the ease with which one can gain data, but it does support the validity of the use of a single case-study as an appropriate research strategy. As the aim of the research is to obtain a ‘*thick*’ account of the phenomenon, a single, perhaps extreme, case can reveal more information than multiple sites (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Latour (1987:258) suggests that, as researchers, “*We have to be as undecided as the various actors we follow ...and make the list, no matter how long and heterogeneous, of those who do the work.*” With such a potentially long list of actors and agents involved or implicated in any single site, there is logic for focusing on the detailed understanding of a single, suitably chosen case-study.

The single case study is often used to understand extreme or unusual instances, and in this case the criticism of generalizability is less relevant (Yin, 2009). A single case study can allow or facilitate access to a phenomenon that is previously or relatively inaccessible. The use of a single case study in this instance is not an attempt to generalize to an entire population but rather to understand the whole of this study area and to achieve some degree of internal validity to the research (Yin, 2009). If any form of generalizability is to be attempted (by others) from this single case-study, then it is from the theoretical inter-relationships between actors that some form of extrapolation might be

developed. Flyvbjerg (1998) suggests that the single-case study can be used successfully as a synecdoche of other situations; he references Machiavelli's *'The Prince'* – an examination of a Florentine principality which is a single case study, but which acts to describe power relations in other locations and other contexts. The term paradigmatic can also be used for this form of a single case study (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Given the specifics of the production of informal space, a single paradigmatic case-study is considered an appropriate research strategy in order to answer the research question.

4.3.2 The choice of case study area.

The site chosen is through a process described by Flyvbjerg (2001:79) as *"information-oriented selection"* as the case is *"selected on the basis of expectations about their information content."* The proposed site has been chosen primarily because it qualifies in that it is *'informal'* and in the process of being *'produced'* (and it is *'spatial'*). The choice has also been made for more pragmatic reasons such as the availability of existing networks and contacts established amongst the relevant communities, organisations and individuals.

The choosing of a case study area for this research area in general is relatively problematic for ethical and safety issues. Informal spaces necessarily involve people using space that does not belong to them; thus there is often some degree of illegality or at least ambiguity in relation to legislation. At one end of the spectrum of activities manifest in informal spaces, literature revealed a range of activities that are definitely illegal; drug-dealing, sex-workers, public recreational sex and trafficking (Aminzadeh & Afshar, 2004; Hubbard, 1997; Leap, 2004; Skeggs, 1999). At this extreme end of the spectrum of activities there is a relatively higher degree of personal risk in attempting to access or even observe these activities. Within the restrictions of the University and Departmental ethical codes and practices, these forms of activities and hence these informal spaces were not practicable locations for the case study. Above and beyond these restrictive reasons for the rejection of these informal spaces due to illegality and safety concerns; these spaces also fell outside a broader ambition based on the remit of the research question. Whilst these more extreme activities are interesting and valid domains of interest for research, they remain

relatively isolated and esoteric in their range and applicability. An ambition of the research is to examine the production of space that might be relatively more germane to the broader UK population (Simons, 2010). That is not say to say the research is therefore applicable or expandable to an entire population; rather, the range of activities manifest in the chosen case-study are neither (too) extreme, nor overtly illegal, nor particularly dangerous. The users of this space include and involve a relatively wide spectrum of the UK population in terms of age and socio-economic ranges.

In terms of the researcher, accessing the field of research (both literally and metaphorically) was also an important consideration. The chosen case-study site is in a location where the researcher felt relatively comfortable and safe. This was partly down to the researchers familiarity with the area and partly as it was clear that the researcher might '*fit in*' relatively easily as an observer (a position that would be less likely if the researcher were, for example, to study sex-workers or drug-dealers). Finally, as most of the activities in the space were not overtly illegal, the process of observation was made considerably easier than attempting to access more covert activities. The users of the space were not paranoid nor overly guarded about their activities, which facilitated access to more '*natural*' behaviour and responses from people.

The researcher was relatively familiar with this site prior to the inception of the PhD process and had already been visiting this specific case-study site for a number of years (i.e. from late 2005). The formal period of research, specifically associated with this PhD, covers the timescale from the middle of 2010 until the end of 2013. Having already visited the site a number of times prior to the formal research process, the researcher was familiar with many of the actors present in the space. Familiarity with the human actors was beneficial in that it made access to these actors for interviews and observations relatively easy to facilitate and to carry out. However this familiarity also affected the scene prior to the research process, as some aspects of the context were already 'known' or perceived in a certain light. It was important to be reflexive and critical during the research process to ensure this prior familiarity did not deleteriously affect and/or prejudice the research process and findings.

4.3.3 Reflexions on the case-study approach

The name of the location has been made anonymous, for a number of reasons, partly as some of the information is potentially problematic as we shall see in the writing up of the study, there are complex legal wrangles that the findings of this research might undermine. In support of this primary reason, by declaring the location of the space, it would implicate by association, many of the human actors in this study all of whom have been kept confidential for ethical reasons.

The single case study captured a certain demographic and was restricted to some degree by that. However, the single-case study did involve a wide range of ages and socio-economic groups, even if there was asymmetry or a disproportionate accounting for certain socio-economic groups. However, the research is necessarily UK specific, and it would be interesting to repeat the approach in different locations, particularly in the declining areas of America and Europe where there is an increasing amount of informal space (partly as the result of the global restructuring of manufacturing). A global perspective on this issue would have added value to this study, but it would have been too large a piece of work to manage within the constraints of a PhD.

4.4 Multiple-method Case Study Inquiry

The case-study research strategy can provide a rich and detailed account of the many actors and one of the justifications for using this approach is that multiple methods can be used. *“A major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to use many different sources of evidence”* (Yin, 2009:96). The research question and literature review point to the necessity of building up a richly detailed account of the context which requires gathering data from a number of sources (Georg, & Tryggestad, 2009). The case study is an approach that facilitates and supports this strategy. The aim of these will be for *“participating, overtly or covertly, in people’s daily lives for an extended period of time, listening to what is said, asking questions – in fact, collecting whatever data are available”* (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:1) In order to answer the

research question, within the case study area, multiple methods were employed to produce primary data through: interviews and participant observation; along with secondary data that was gathered through: local authority archives, community groups' minutes and other publications (both online and paper format) from relevant groups, websites and fora. This relatively wide range of methods and qualitative data "*provides stronger substantiation of constructs and hypotheses*" (Eisenhardt, 2002:14) which can give a greater degree of confidence of validity.

An advantage of multiple methods is their flexibility, which allowed the researcher to access a wide range of data rather than being limited to one method of access (Robson, 2002). The use of multiple methods also fits in with the epistemology and ontology adopted for this research paradigm (Blaikie, 2000). In order to answer the research question, the collection of data required the capture and examination of all the emerging issues, actors and events, regardless of their status or constitution. As Latour (2005:68) put it, one must "*follow the actors*" which required a flexible and fairly open approach to the methods available to the researcher. This flexibility was particularly relevant to the handling of interviews and observations in this contingent domain. The nature of the activities (many of) the actors were engaged in, required both flexibility for the researcher, and myriad contingent approaches to capturing data. "*Walter Benjamin commended as a theoretically productive...procedure the reading of the highest spiritual products of a culture alongside its common, prosaic, worldly products*" (Zizek, 1992:vii). This recommendation to examine all of a cultural phenomenon; its high points and low points, the exciting and the dull, the ideological/theoretical and the material/physical as an ensemble, accords with an ANT methodology. There is no material or actor that is avoided or ignored *a priori*; nor are aspects of a phenomenon removed as they are not sufficiently social for sociology, nor physical for geography.

4.4.1 Critique of the use of multiple methods

One of the potential drawbacks of the design of the research strategy is that the adoption of a multi-method approach spread resources too thinly (Yin, 2009). There was a risk that using many approaches of inquiry risked either

overcomplicating the work required by the researcher or that each method skims over material rather than being able to drill down into the key issues. In contrast, it is claimed that the use of a single method of inquiry can enable a greater depth of understanding of an issue (Ritchie, 2006). In response to these concerns, the most germane issue is whether the design of the research strategy is appropriate and capable of answering the research question. This is the salient issue in terms of the choice of method(s) and it is this concern that has led to the approach of using multiple methods. This can be justified for a number of reasons. Firstly, the use of a single method does not necessarily lead to a deeper understanding of an issue; as it depends on a number of factors, and a single method might simply repeat the same findings over and over. Secondly, at a certain point the data becomes '*saturated*', that is, the data does not lead to more depth of understanding, rather, more data simply confirms the previous findings. Based on the review of literature, particularly on similar ANT studies, plus preliminary field work investigations, the multiple methods approach seemed to be capable of adequately answering the research question, and that any perceived benefits of a single method, or a smaller range of methods would not necessarily improve nor strengthen the findings. Thirdly, the use of the variety of methods incorporated in the design of this research was developed partly in response to the use of a case study methodology. The size, location and choice of case study site were partly determined in relationship to the choice of research methods as part of a coherent research design. The design of the research strategy was progressed with all of these issues in consideration, so that the case study was neither too large for a single researcher to be able to cope with, nor too large to be written up within the word count and remit of a PhD study. Fourthly, the use of multiple methods is frequently used in ANT approaches, particularly in collaboration with a single case study approach. There are numerous examples of this methodology being used successfully in the review of literature.

4.4.2 Triangulation of multiple methods

One of the chief aims of adopting a multi-method approach such as this is to triangulate between data sets to make sure accounts are consistent and to ensure that there is not over-reliance on one form of data (Denzin, 1970; Mason, 2002).

Triangulation is a way of checking across different data sources as a mechanism by which such data might be corroborated. It can be defined as “*the use of different methods and sources to check the integrity of, or extend, inferences drawn from the data*” (Ritchie, 2006:43). There are a variety of modes of triangulation which according to Denzin (1984) can be categorized into four basic types: ‘*data-source, investigator, theory and methodological*’. ‘*Data-source*’ concerns research where different sources of data confirm the same information. ‘*Investigator*’ triangulation is when the same phenomenon or data is found by different researchers independent of each other. ‘*Theory*’ triangulation requires theorists or researchers investigating the same problem, but from different perspectives, epistemological or ontological frameworks. ‘*Methodological*’ triangulation involves using method after method to increase the degree of confidence in the findings. For this research approach and in order to answer the research question, the modes of triangulation that fit closest to Denzin’s (1984) are ‘*methodological*’ and ‘*data-source*’ triangulation; as a multi-method approach is used to attempt to corroborate findings across a multitude of different approaches to data collection and using heterogeneous sources of data. Triangulation is supported as a suitable way of interrogating a research context, specifically for a case-study approach (Yin, 2009).

Triangulation occurred across the three principal sets of data: interviews, observations and documentary materials. Codes used were investigated from each of the three sets of data where possible. For example: establishing the actors who form the network community₂ required comparison between the interview data, observations of the site and documentary material to build up a coherent and accurate actor-network.

4.5 Interviews

This section begins with a description of the role of interviews within the research strategy. It then examines and justifies the various different modes of interview formats and processes. The section concludes with a reflexion on the interview fieldwork.

Interviews formed a key source of information for the case study research. Interviews are used in this context to examine in detail, both the issues and themes raised during the literature review and those arising from events on the site (Simons, 2010). Interviews are one of the most important qualitative research methods, particularly for discovering the perspectives and views of the interviewed subject (Legard et al, 2006). The insights gleaned from interviews can include a range of material such as: “*biographies, experiences, opinions, values, aspirations, attitudes and feelings*” (May, 2001: 120). The insights are not limited exclusively to verbal communication; there is also a range of non-verbal information that can be significant and insightful (Silverman, 2005).

There is a need for the researcher to be mindful of the limitations of interviews and to try to be aware of the dynamics of the situation; trying to keep a conversation germane, whilst allowing the interview to head into greater depth when appropriate (Flick, 2009). One of the intentions of the interviews is to enable ‘*progressive focusing*’ (Mason, 2002) of key issues. This is to some degree contingent on what the researcher chooses to establish as the important issues, plus the amenability of the interviewee to expand on these issues. The interview allows key areas of interest to be examined through iteratively focused discussion on single issues, sometimes from different perspectives and from comparisons across the different interviewees on similar issues. The format of interviews varied considerably, dependent upon the nature of material sought and the subject(s) who were interviewed. Different interview formats were used to access the different individuals who used the informal space.

In order to answer the research question ‘*how are informal spaces produced?*’ there is a need to be flexible and to “*follow the actors*” (Latour, 2005:68) and allow the various actors to respond and react to their contexts. There are a range of types of interviews; from structured interviews which have a pre-determined set of questions, often leading to a relatively limited range of answers; through to unstructured and ethnographic interviews where there are no set questions and no restrictions on the scope of answers (Robson, 2002). All of these modes of interviews have their pros and cons in terms of the data they produce and their

appropriateness to the research. Much of the fieldwork was in the form of unstructured or semi-structured interviews.

4.5.1 Locating the interviews

One strategy for holding interviews is to invite interviewees to the University for an interview to be held in an interview room. This is a pragmatic option in terms of: ease of recording, taking notes, a convenient location for the interviewer and a ‘*neutral*’ environment for all of the conversations (Flick, 2009). However the limitations of this approach are that the interviewees would be in unknown and unfamiliar environs, in a room that is somewhat cold, sterile and potentially ‘*formal*’ seeming; with the possibility that the interviewees might be reticent in their answers, overly guarded and likely to behave in a different manner to their behaviour and answers elsewhere, such as on-site (Legard et al, 2006).

Partly as a result of this, plus the increased probability of holding interviews at the interviewees’ convenience (rather than the interviewer’s), led to the decision to hold interviews in situ: either in or nearby the informal space or at a location that was preferred by the interviewee (Simons, 2010). Some of the interviews were held in “*semi-natural settings*” (Blaikie 2000:187) mostly the living rooms of the local residents (often the same living rooms where the Neighbourhood Watch meetings took place). This enabled the interviewee to be relatively relaxed and at ease during the interview by being in familiar surroundings. Some interviews were held on site in “*natural social settings*” (Blaikie 2000:187) and sometimes involved the researcher engaged in the activity of the interviewee. There is a mode of interview that involves the interviewer being deliberately engaged in the activities of the interviewee, for example the ‘*go-along*’ method (Kusenbach, 2003) or the ‘*wandering*’ interview (Anderson, 2004). In this research, it became clear that when interviewing, for example a gardener, it was easier to be involved in the process of gardening (or to put it another way, it was often not possible to carry out the interview in situ, without being handed a trowel or some seeds or a plant to deal with). The approach to interviews was modified by the researcher to remain flexible and reflexive to the contingencies of each interview. The engagement of the interviewer in an activity whilst also carrying out the interview could have been problematic if the activities were

more difficult to perform by the researcher; however, the activities did not conflict with the demands of carrying out the interview (Kusenbach, 2003). Furthermore, once the interviewer was engaged in a similar process to the interviewee, the interviewee often seemed to relax which aided the interview process. All of the interviews in natural settings were somewhat dependent on the weather and time of year, and some site-based interviews had to be postponed due to poor weather. An anonymised list of interviewees, with their respective gender and age groups is included in appendix 24.

4.5.2 Approach to sampling

In this research area many of the actors are *'elusive'* and often difficult to access (May, 2011). The research design adopted a purposive form of sampling in order to access these actors. This is referred to as the snowball method and is when one contact leads to another contact, which leads to another and another etc, all of whom share similar traits, interests or activities (Flick, 2009). Snowballing is appropriate to focus on certain groups or people with specific traits; it is a form of *"purposive sampling"*, i.e. sample for a purpose, rather than for example: random or quota sampling (Payne & Payne, 2004:210). May (2001) points out that snowballing samples are not generalizable, as it is not possible to know the size of the population. Snowballing in this instance allowed the capture of those who use the informal space; contact with people involved in the production of informal space lead to others involved in these activities and/or using informal space. Prior to snowballing, there was the need to access the initial contact, this was done mostly through frequent visits to the space and lengthy observations; where over time, contact was made with a number of visitors and users of the space.

4.5.3 Who was interviewed (and who was *not*)?

Focal actors were examined using semi-structured and/or unstructured interviews for a number of reasons. Firstly the information sought was relatively focused around certain themes (that were also progressively focused); nonetheless part of the interview was deliberately open-ended to enable deeper interpretation from the subjects' perspective (Silverman, 2005). These individuals sought were not

engaged in illegal activities and were not difficult to access. Indeed they were often already '*accessible*' and very keen to share their views on the neighbourhood or the community garden.

Actors such as the local authority employees were a form of '*expert interview*' (Flick, 2009:165). In these instances, the subjects were not primarily part of the field, nor perhaps even direct participants of the space, however they had important roles to play in the life of those spaces and the actions occurring within the case-study area. The interviews attempted to seek information on their specific field of activity (or expertise). These interviews provide orientation of the case-study context from a particular perspective. The data from these were considered inherently biased or skewed in a certain direction due to the restrictions within which those interviewees must speak. The interviewees have constraints on what they can talk about, how they can talk about issues, confidentiality regulations, concerns over their relationship to the institution they are representing and potential conflicts therein (Flick, 2009). There were thus ethical issues to resolve over both confidentiality and methodological concerns about the interviewee's ability to speak freely when situated within an institution. Whilst all interview material was approached critically and with caution about the validity of the content, this was particularly so with the interviews with persons who are known to have to respond in accordance with (or affected by) institutional or professional constraints.

In the process of interviewing, it became clear that one of the most important concerns for the research was '*who is not being researched?*' There was a relatively good response from users of the space, and persons related to the production of the space in terms of the take-up of interview requests. Relatively few people declined the opportunity for an interview. However it was evident that some users were notably absent from the process. Children were the main group of absentees. This was partly due to the extremely cautious approach to restrictions placed on accessing the consents required to interview children, imposed by the University's best practice guidance to carry out research to the

highest ethical standards¹⁰. The requirement to gain permission from parents and/or carers plus the consent of the children is considered the minimum in terms of consent. In discussions with an advisor from the University's ethical committee, even this was considered insufficient, as (*from the University's ethics advisor's perspective*) children are too young and vulnerable to really give 'their' consent, and that they are still, to a large degree, imposed upon by the parents/carers decision regarding consent. These ethical considerations effectively removed children from being interviewees. This is regrettable as children are a significant part of the population and in the process of 'protecting' children's rights; the same process also removes children from voicing their views and opinions. There is arguably a paradox as a result of the mechanism of ethical procedures as children are effectively silenced through this process and their views remain absent. In a perhaps perverse process, children often approached the researcher and spoke to the researcher, yet these words were excluded from the reporting of the research as their 'consent' was not given in the form of writing in a series of quasi-legal documents (note: children on the site were invariably accompanied by their parents).

There were other absent voices from the programme of interviews. There were the late-night drunks and revellers who sometimes staggered into or through the informal space. None of these were interviewed at the time of their participation in the space. None of the interviewees mentioned, nor admitted to, being users of the space whilst intoxicated on the way back from the pub (or other drinking establishment). Whether it would have been possible to interview heavily intoxicated people is a moot point. Nonetheless, these were a group of users of the space who were not interviewed, and their 'presence' in the research is solely in the evidence of their (mostly petty vandalistic) activities left the morning after, or in the form of complaints from neighbours in their interviews. Similarly there was intermittent evidence of small-scale vandalism, mostly in the form of tagging (graffiti where the individual writes their name on surfaces, or posts stickers with their name 'tag' on it). This was not observed in action at any point. Perhaps the presence of the observer may have prevented this activity, but it also

¹⁰ This is not to imply any criticism of the Ethics Committee of the University; rather the comments are made purely in relation to the practice of gathering data for this specific research project.

meant that it was not possible to access these users of the space. Their voices are absent from the research other than the effect their graffiti or vandalism made on others behaviour or attitudes.

4.5.4 Reflexion on the interview process

With the interviews that did occur, the gaining of consent was sometimes non-conducive to ‘normal’ behaviour in the space. Having to read out from a legal-looking document and asking people to sign made the beginning of interviews somewhat forced. Many of the interviewees seemed concerned about the role of the ‘University’ as a large official institution and also concerned about what the material would be used for (regardless of clear information as to the purpose of the research). As a result the beginnings of each interview were designed to contain discussions that were neither particularly difficult nor contentious, in order to ease the interviewee; which is a widely used strategy from interviews (Simons, 2010). In practice it only took a relatively short time for the interviewees to relax into the interview process and forgo their concerns about the gaining of written consent.

4.6 Observations

“It becomes a philosopher and an analyst of his (sic) time to go out and use his feet now and again” Bauman (1992:155).

In this quote above, Bauman supports the value of the researcher to actively seek out the opportunity to watch, listen, observe and experience first hand¹¹. The use of observation is a widely used approach to research, and specifically social research (Sanger, 1996). In particular the Chicago School (Kurtz, 1984) of social research developed the use of observation in the fields of urbanism, crime and deviance and had a domain of concern broadly germane to this research.

Observations are appropriate to research areas where firm assumptions about what is important are not yet made, or at least, the researcher is flexible in their approach to determining what is important; often within a remit of progressively focusing on discovering the key issues (Mason, 2002). Observation as a method

¹¹ Bauman refers here to male philosophers, but presumably this is applicable to females too?

is commensurate with the epistemological paradigm within which this research is situated (Blaikie, 2000). The research process involved a thorough review of literature that established many (but not all) important issues to be examined yet the research approach retained a strategy that supported an open attitude to emergent domains of interest; observation facilitated and supported this (partially) exploratory research approach. The researcher is “*one who reflects upon being immersed in social events*” (Sanger, 1996:15) and the immersion (in this case) is predominantly through the process of observations undertaken within the case study area and reflexion on these experiences. Observation facilitates an “*emphatic understanding of a social scene*” (May, 2001: 150) to which one could add the notions of a ‘*natural scene*’ and/or a ‘*biological scene*’ also. The researcher is situated in this complex milieu in order to begin to understand and detect the processes, systems and actions that occur. Over time, and with repeated familiarity with that site, the researcher can understand the context in greater depth using observations (Robson, 2002).

Observations allow an external perspective on the field of study, which is most appropriate in public spaces (Sanger, 1996). This approach is particularly relevant where the users of that space are not limited in their access or egress from the space or where contact with individuals cannot always be made (Simons, 2010). All of the case-study area observed was ‘*open*’ space; that is, effectively or practicably open, public and accessible to all. As such the field could be relatively easily observed and entered. This was positive as “*the more public and unstructured the field is, the easier it will be to take a role that is not conspicuous and does not influence the field*” (Flick, 2009, 224). Observation is most appropriate when the observer least influences the phenomenon he or she is attempting to examine (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). The iterative nature of the observations over an extended period also leads to the familiarisation of the researcher with many of the actors in the case study. This had both advantages and disadvantages. Actors who become familiarised and habituated to the researcher’s presence are more likely to lose their inhibitions and act less guardedly, the corollary of which means the researcher is less conspicuous and influences the field to a lesser extent (Robson, 2002). The disadvantage is that the researcher, in turn, can become over familiarised with the context and begin

to observe less critically, ignoring aspects or action that are common. It is imperative that the researcher attempts to remain reflexive throughout the process, and to keep their observations attentive and critical. The meticulous use of notebook and logbooks can help in this process; by requiring the recording of more of the available data, rather than a limited or constrained selection (Latour, 2005).

Part of the value of observation in contrast to, for example, interviews is the ability to compare across the differences and similarities between the words and actions of the human and non-human actors. Observation also allows a wide range of non-verbal modalities of human communication or signification: modes of behaviour, deportment, dispositions and habits that can be examined both in the immediate context, and also allowing comparison across temporal passages (Sanger, 1996). The use of digital (video) recording can be instrumental in allowing the detection of gradual shifts in behaviour and the development of habitual behaviour. Photographs and some video were taken to document the activities occurring in the space and to record the changes occurring over time (Collier, 2003). All of these methods were carried out in accordance with the University's code of conduct and ethical best practice.

4.6.1 Observations and ANT

Observation is a central practice of ANT and is used in a wide range of research projects (Latour, 1992; Latour & Woolgar, 1986; Callon, 1986; Law, 2004; de Laet and Mol, 2000). ANT recommends observation in the field where possible, as it enables direct, unmediated access to actors and action (Latour, 1987). This approach is considered a particularly appropriate form of research as *“observation offers the opportunity to record and analyse behaviour and interactions as they occur”* (Ritchie, 2006:35). The notion of capturing data and events *‘as they occur’* is critical for answering the research question for a number of reasons, firstly the research is focused towards capturing *‘production’* as it occurs. Secondly ANT in particular recommends research that is *‘in action’* as it enables more direct access to data rather than solely on the subsequent recounting of events (Latour, 1987). Thirdly, the opportunity to see production in progress allows the researcher to access data that is relatively unmediated in any

particular way (other than the researcher's own biases and prejudices). Data has passed through fewer '*lenses*' or intermediaries before it arrives with the researcher. It is this lack of intermediaries that is considered important in ANT approaches to research (and beyond) (Ritchie, 2006). Observation allows direct access in the sense that it is not mediated by other actors or interpreted by an actor nor distorted through faulty memories, history etc. That is not to say that it is entirely '*direct*', the information's still has to pass through the bias (intended or otherwise) personal preferences, psychology and peculiarities of the researcher. The researcher is always liable to interpret data in the research project, but this is a potential issue for any of the forms of data (Blaikie, 2000).

4.6.2 Types of observations

A number of forms of observation are possible, the choice of which is part of the research design strategy in relation to the role of the researcher in the field (Payne and Payne, 2004). Two forms of observation were used for this research: the first approach is primarily that of a pure or complete observer (Simons, 2010). In this role, there is no interaction with other users of the space, although it is accepted, that the presence of the researcher in the space will affect other users (Sanger, 1996). A variety of differing social contexts were experienced, some of which, for example when the space was busy were less problematic whereas quieter times heightened the awareness of other actors to the presence of the observer. The ethical implications of observing activities in an open and '*public*' space are examined in more detail in the ethical review.

The second format for observation that was adopted was the role of "*observer as participant*" where the researcher observes whilst also partially involved in certain activities (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). In this approach, the research begins to engage a little more in the field, sometimes interacting more with other actors, or partaking in some activities. The principle benefit of this mode of observation is that the researcher "*can blend in*" (Payne & Payne, 2004:166) and thus avoid what is described as the Hawthorne Effect where the presence of the researcher disrupts the phenomenon he or she is studying (May, 2010). The Hawthorne Effect was mitigated against through repetition of observation and triangulation across methods. Numerous observations were conducted in the case

study site across a number of years. Over time many of the more frequent actors became familiarised to the presence of an observer and over time began to ignore the researcher.

4.6.3 Limitations to observation

Observation is limited in its capacity to access only the external signs of activity. It is not possible through observation alone to delve deeper into the thoughts or attitudes of those involved in activity to find out their motivations and interests. An example of the limitations due to this phenomenon is illustrated in Geertz's (1973) thick description that points to the myriad possibilities that can be signified by one action. It is incumbent on the researcher to be wary of ascribing particular meanings to an action, as there are multiple possible accounts, if there are no mechanisms to determine which is the correct version. The use of multiple methods is an established way to avoid or mitigate against this limitation of observation.

4.6.4 Reflexions on observations

The process of being observed is well known to change that which is being observed, so one of the key challenges in the design of a research project was to attempt to minimise that effect. In this case study area, the appearance of the researcher as a white, middle-aged male observer did not appear particularly unusual or out-of-place in this context. (This was one of the many considerations when the location of case study area was decided upon). Whilst it might be preferable to have a variety of observers with different characteristics, it was not deemed possible within the restrictions of this research project (due mostly to time and resourcing issues).

The observations points were at various locations across the site; although a bench at one corner of the site provided a very good vantage point as well as another seating area at the other far corner. Each observation session involved field notes, which were either written *in situ* or written up shortly afterwards. The notations of each of the observations included the physical environment, the human and non-human actors and any of the activities that occurred at that time.

At the beginning of the process there were more in-depth descriptions of the physical environment which as time passed became much briefer as this changed considerably less than the human and non-human actors in the space. However as it was important to keep a record of the more gradual changes and for the researcher to not become inured to the everyday and normal scene, a careful and detailed account of the physical environment was made at several stages throughout the research process, regardless of any apparent alterations to the physical environment. This was particularly helpful in tracking the changes to the space that occur as part of the seasonal variations and the relationship of this to users. Plus this process of recording more longitudinal change aided in revealing modes of production that take place gradually but are not evident on an individual observation session. Along with the written text a number of other notes were made in the form of: doodles, diagrams, drawings and sketches. Any doodles or sketches made on paper were scanned in electronically and kept with the textual account, so that all of the material could be accessed simultaneously. All of these reflexive field notes were filed electronically and tagged chronologically.

4.7 Mediated data

“Strategies of using mediated data are becoming more and more relevant in qualitative research” (Flick, 2009:282)

Mediated data covers a wide range of possible forms of data: the first is that which is predominantly visual (Emmison & Smith, 2002). Secondly, data is ‘*mediated*’ in the sense of it being a form of *media*: often films or photographs from the internet (Flick, 2009). Thirdly, in the sense of being mediated, i.e. *“involving an intermediate person, thing or action”* (OED, 1993:1729) particularly in that the films or photographs have been taken by a person or group who have intervened or acted in the production of data. Mediated data does not need to fulfil all three of those criteria and it might be a mixture of two. Mediated data does not imply nor correspond to a particular mode of analysis, evaluation, excavation or interpretation of the content of that data. However, in the context of this research, the primary approach for using mediated data that is

mainly of illustrative or visual (i.e. not containing words, text or discourse) content.

Visual data has been increasingly used in the social sciences and accepted as a valid form of inquiry (Emmison and Smith, 2002; Banks, 2001; Rose, 2000). The shift towards the visual has also been referred to as the pictorial or iconic turn (Moxey, 2008). The importance of visual data in qualitative research is connected with increasing availability of visual material from the internet through sites such as flicker, YouTube and Facebook, which Flick (2009:282) refers to as “*virtual ethnography*”. Videos and photographs provide a platform for observation into contexts where the presence of the observer is less problematic, both methodologically and ethically. Some of the actors of informal spaces, such as skaters, activists, bmxers and artists and graffiti-artists have well-developed visual and filmic practices that are specific to their sub-culture (Borden, 2001; Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung, 2007). The content of this media, particularly film, also provides additional verbal material in the form of monologues, dialogues, group discussions or mass events (Chesters & Welsh, 2006). Similarly, for example, images on Flickr often have comments, discussion and blogs related to the image or event represented. These form aspects of the mediated data that will be part of the contemporary information for the examination of production of informal spaces. The research will use the content of the images and the associated text or dialogue in a similar process of coding and analysis as the interview and observation material. For the processing of this material, field notes can be used equally well for mediated data, and “*provide an opportunity to record what researchers see and hear outside the immediate context*” (Arthur and Nazroo, 2006:133) as an extension to traditional ethnographic and observation practice. There are a plethora of digital software packages that enable notes and comments to be added to images or videos.

Care must be taken when considering the content and validity of this data, as it has already been mediated either by the author of the film/photograph and/or by the event within the image and by the devices used, such as: traditional cameras, mobile-phone cameras or even CCTV cameras (Flick, 2009). The images that are captured, curated or framed within the data only reveal partial data to the

researcher. This editing process, whether a deliberate act by the producer, must be considered when analysing the content. The benefit of such material is that it enables the researcher to access material that might otherwise be restricted, either because it involves an illicit or illegal act, or the risk of danger for the researcher or due to the effect of the researcher within the observation first-hand, or for events that are fleeting, rare or ephemeral and would require the researcher to be ever-present in the field in all locations simultaneously (Payne and Payne, 2004). The activities and actors of informal spaces are a mixture of legal and accessible through to illegal and inaccessible. Thus the adoption of mediated data is likely to enable a wider range of material and a richer depth of data.

4.8 Documentary evidence

Documentary evidence is the entirety of written (either literally or through some form of electronic method) material related to the research question that can be used as evidence in order to add further data or enrich the understanding of other material (Yin, 2009). This is a form of secondary data and has been mediated in some way and so caution should be paid when interpreting or using this material, as it has already been processed, altered or coded by others (Payne & Payne, 2004). There are a number of approaches to evaluating, appraising and analysing this material, which is explored in more detail in the sub-section entitled: *'Analysis and Coding'*.

Documentary evidence sometimes constitutes part of the case-study site –literally in some cases: with the large community sign, plus the various posters and notices that are intermittently erected. The documentation also forms part of a wider contextualisation of the site, in legal documents related to the site and byelaws. Documentary evidence is also connected to the modality of communication related to activity in the space, for example, as a means of gathering people into action to produce or modify the space. Documentary evidence has a relationship to the galvanising and organising of human actors in the field. The documentary material is useful for contextualising the material, and in some cases can be used as a form of triangulation (Richie, 2006). Whilst the production of informal space is not primarily a document-based activity (most of the time) it can nonetheless be important, particularly when users of

those spaces attempt to contact, or come into contact with, formal institutions and/or the legal system.

Documentary data covers a wide range of formats, including legal documentation, local authority policy documents, police reports and publications by non-governmental organisations. It is not only these *'formal'* documents that should be examined as “*other forms of documents are a fruitful way to approach everyday lives and institutional routines across the traces these lives and routines produce and leave records*” (Flick, 2009:282). *'Informal'* documents such as: miscellaneous notes, adverts and posters generated by the local Neighbourhood Watch committee and community group as well as graffiti, stickers or tags made by other individuals or groups were also included as part of the research data. Documents can also include formats such as film, photos, drawings, adverts, tickets, (some forms of) litter and/or internet pages. Each document can be considered as site or field of research (Prior, 2003) or as an *'event'* in its own right (Latour, 1993b). In the approach taken in this research, all of these modes of documentary material were used as part of the data collection process. (A list of the documentary sources used are included in appendix 24).

Documents are not neutral containers of information; they contain information in the way they are formatted, how they are set up and laid out, the font and/or images they contain as well as the information contained within the written text (Prior, 2003). Informal spaces have multiple forms of documentation that are present in the actual space, and each has its own format, set-up, materials, durability and message: street signs, adverts, tags, stickers, graffiti, posters, exhibitions, art-work, safety warnings, legal notices. When analysing such documents, Flick (2009:259) recommends that a researcher “*should always ask yourself: who has produced this document and for what purpose?*” In addition to these questions, an ANT approach might also ask *'on whom does this document act?'* i.e. the research will need to follow actors to and from the document (Latour, 1993b). The purpose of the document might have consequences or actions that were unintended by the original authors. This research intends to examine the combination of the author's perspective (or authors' perspectives), with the researcher's perspective and the perspective of other actors in the field.

4.8.1 Documentary evidence and ANT

The notion of ‘*document*’ in this research will be that defined by Prior (2003:2) “*we have to move away from a consideration of them (documents) as stable, static and pre-defined artefacts. Instead we must consider them in terms of fields, frames and networks of action*”. This notion of ‘*networks of action*’ resonates with the ambitions of ANT to examine both how actors affect networks and how information is unstable and liable to change. In traditional sociological approaches to understanding or describing this documentary material there is a clear separation between this material and that of human actors. However within an ANT approach, this distinction of action is obfuscated; ANT accounts sometimes evidence an overlapping or blurred distinction between these forms of data (Callon, 1986; de Laet & Mol, 2000; Latour 1992; Mol, 1999; Star & Griesemer, 1989; Tryggestad & Georg, 2011). Accordingly, documents can be ‘*read*’ or understood as both an actor and part of the background documentary materials, depending on the role it plays. (The determination of the role of materials and documents is explored in greater detail in the subsection on ‘*coding*’). Documents are produced in social and spatial contexts and can be considered as actors in socio-spatial production.

4.9 Ethical considerations

There were a number of ethical issues that were considered as part of research practice. Payne and Payne (2004: 66) define ethical practice as “*a moral stance that involves conducting research to achieve not just high professional standards of technical procedures but also respect and protection for the people actively consenting to be studied.*” In close connection with best practice and guidance from the University’s ethics committee, an ethical research strategy was devised and conducted throughout the entire process.

Data collected from interviews were made anonymous and confidential (each interview is denoted by the acronym AA (which stands for ‘*Anonymised Actor*’) plus a random number (01,02,03...) followed by the date of the interview, e.g. AA07, 2012). Each interviewee was advised of the purpose of the research along with a description of the research with guidance on their role and their

right to withdraw from the research and assurances regarding their confidentiality. Another document was also given to each interviewee to sign, thereby giving written consent for the interview to be recorded and any material from the interview disseminated. (A copy of the documents used in the interview procedure is in Appendix 1). Health and safety issues were considered beforehand with a risk assessment made for case-study visits and access. The choice of case study location was also determined partly through this ethical and safety review process. Photographic recording required permission of those involved beforehand, this was done through the practice of setting up notices at various locations on the routes into the case study area informing individuals about filming or recording taking place. Best practice for documenting and recording participants was also administered; with anonymity and confidentiality preserved throughout.

4.10 Analysis and coding

The fieldwork research produced a large amount of information and data. This included the content from interviews, observations, documentary evidence and mediated data. This material required some form of analysis, evaluation and/or understanding in order to answer the research question (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2005). The research had adopted a number of (mostly) qualitative methods of inquiry where, according to Marshall and Rossman (2001:207), “*qualitative data analysis is a search for general statements about relationships and underlying themes*” in order to bring “*order, structure, and interpretation to the mass of collected data.*” The data collected provided the raw material from which these relationships and themes were generated through analysis. The analysis of raw data was through a process referred to as ‘*coding*’ (Robson, 2002). Coding “*has the aim of categorizing and/or theory development*” (Flick, 2009:306). It was the process by which the material collected in interviews, observations and documentation was broken down, conceptualised and reconceptualised. This process can lead to the development of new theories, hypotheses, refined research questions and/or thick descriptions (Payne & Payne, 2004).

4.10.1 The process of coding

The terminology that refers to coding differs somewhat across texts but each describes a relatively similar process of coding. Codes or concepts are assigned to the empirical data, initially in a relatively loose approach and these are subsequently refined into both a more focused and selective set of categories (or generic concepts) and for formulating relationships between concepts/generic concepts (Flick, 2009; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2005; Marshall & Rossman, 2010). The process of coding, from open to progressively selective, results in the codes used becoming more abstract (Spencer et al, 2006). The first stage is ‘*open coding*’ and it is where initial concepts, taken from a range of sources are associated with actors and/or networks. Initial concepts emerging from literature on informal spaces, for example, included: actor’s roles, social groups, recurring beliefs, media, activities, shared interests, spaces, signs and material objects. At the early stages of the research, the coding process was embryonic and developed as more data was gathered through interviews, further observation and related documentary material. Rather than “*imposing a pre-established grid of analysis*” (Callon, 1986:201) on the data, some of these concepts developed as the research progressed and were elaborated into more selective concepts. Some of the initial concepts emerged from both the literature review and from on-going observations and documentary evidence of informal spaces. There were some ideas of concepts and codes to be examined that emerged from the literature review, but these were augmented through the findings of the fieldwork stage (see appendix 24 for observational categories used). The coding was repeatedly focused and clarified as the research progressed. Accordingly, as the research developed, these concepts were further abstracted into more “*generic categories*” and the relationships between them as “*networks of categories*” (Flick, 2009, 307). The interrelationships between codes were a very important part of the establishment of understanding the research context holistically. The networks and categories are merged together as “*method assemblages*” (Law, 2004:42) and form actor-networks. The intention of the coding was to establish and understand the actor-networks in the case study area. The aim was not to use the coding to structure the scene, but to use the coding as part of the process of understanding those actor-networks.

4.10.2 Coding: description and analysis

The coding forms part of the process of understanding, analysing and interpreting the data gathered during the empirical fieldwork. For some modes of enquiry and/or research paradigms, these form separate stages of coding and decoding research questions; whereas for other research perspectives the distinction is less clear (Payne & Payne, 2004). However for qualitative research this is not always the case: “*Don't be surprised if, despite a concerted effort to keep them separate, description and analysis tend to meld as the account unfolds.*” (Wolcott, 1994:34). In qualitative research, description and analysis are often blurred or overlapping processes (Wolcott, 1994). Latour (2005: 137) concurs that “*the opposition between description and explanation is another one of these false dichotomies*” and posits that description and explanation are both parts of analysis. This conception of data analysis is similar to Geertz's (1973) notion of a ‘*thick description*’. In thick description, it is in the process of describing a phenomenon where analysis, explanation and interpretation are involved. Thick description is involved in social anthropological studies and is a (time intensive) approach to understanding a social/cultural/natural context. The benefit of thick description is that it facilitates a rich and detailed understanding of a context (Lewis & Ritchie, 2006). The coding adopted here could partially be considered a form of thick description in the conflation of description, analysis and interpretation. The analytical approach adopted for this research design here is akin to that of description *and* explanation *and* interpretation (referred to henceforth as analysis) whereby all of the stages of description, analysis and interpretation are considered inter-related or hybrid (Latour, 2005).

4.10.3 ANT and analysis

Actor-network accounts differ to a ‘*thick description*’ in that they extend the notion of action to human and non-human actors. Latour (1992) describes a door-hinge as an actor in a context with as much ability to act upon others as much as any of the ‘*human*’ actors. An important aspect of coding following an actor-network approach is to keep analysis ‘*symmetrical*’, i.e. all of the material should be analysed using the same procedures and the same codes, rather than

separating out (for example) social and spatial; or human and non-human worlds (Callon, 1986). Law (2004:102) describes the approach taken for this research “investigators should offer the same kinds of explanations for events in the natural and in the social worlds.” The argument here is that as the spatial and social worlds are co-constitutive, they should not be separated *a priori*; before analysis takes place. A similar argument is also be made for natural, political or other worlds that should also be kept as they are found in situ in the fieldwork rather than attempting to isolate certain aspects (Whatmore, 1999). (Note: this is not to say that this is never an appropriate focus for research, merely, that it was not considered appropriate for answering this specific research question). In the reporting on the actor-network in this research, the coding adopts a symmetrical approach to all actors in the context. This approach towards coding and analysis has ramifications on the writing up of the fieldwork. Callon (1991:154) posits, “the opposition between description and analysis is in a large part undermined by the method I have proposed”; the method proposed being translation. Rather than, for example writing a ‘description’ of the fieldwork and then a section on the ‘analysis’, the fieldwork is reported all together. The ANT interpretation of actors goes beyond a sociological domain and thus an account of such actors differs from a ‘thick description’ in that it does not limit the research exclusively to human actors. The entirety of the case-study work is provided as an actor-network form of thick description; referred to here as a ‘hyper-thick description’¹². The findings chapters are organised accordingly, where the case-study fieldwork is reported as a hybrid of description, analysis and interpretation of all actors: human and non-human.

4.10.4 Critique and reflexions on coding

Documentation, interview transcripts and observation notes were chronologically ordered and filed electronically¹³. Along with the electronic filing of material, thematic coding was done as the project developed; this coding is created internal to the electronic file in the form of notes, comments, appraisals and/or reviews. This follows the guidance of Flick (2009:307) who recommends that

¹² In this context, the prefix *hyper-* denotes the extended field of that which constitutes ‘actors’.

¹³ Using the software: Finder 10.7-10.8.3.

“during this whole process, impressions, associations, questions, ideas, and so on are noted in memos, which complement and explain the codes that were found.” The keeping notebooks or files (electronic or manual) throughout the research process is recommended as an appropriate actor-network approach (Latour, 2005:134) and is the method adopted. The electronic material could be scanned rapidly and easily for content in a number of ways, chronologically, across concepts, codes, memos or keywords. This approach enabled material to be gathered from a wide range of possible sources and allowed considerable depth and richness of material. The cross-referencing available on the Apple PowerBook computer in combination with the memos, notes, fieldnotes embedded within each electronic file allowed a wide range of analysis.

Latour (2005:49) warns against analysis going too far in its transformation of actors' voices, the researcher should only provide *“infra-language, i.e. a reflexive account or thick description rather than a ‘meta-language’* where the researcher embeds the actors within an account that only the researcher can appreciate (as if from some privileged position). The extent to which this occurs is somewhat dependent upon the researcher's interests, biases, experience and interpretation. The researcher attempted to remain reflexive and attempted to avoid removing too much of the original voices of actors through the process of analysis. Care was taken to work reflexively to examine the researcher's motivations during this procedure to eliminate bias as much as possible.

The coding process was presented through the writing of the case study empirical work; as such these narratives were structured around certain events. These events or passages are in themselves part of the codification of the research. The research focuses on several key events within the case study space, for example the production of town-green status. There is a logic as to why this could be understood as a seminal passage (or event) in the production of the informal space. This is where, for example, powerful legislative mechanisms were brought to bear on the condition of the informal space. The transition from *not* town-green to *being* a town-green involved a large amount of human and non-human actors in this process. The event also involved an examination of the importance and inter-connectedness of a wide range of issues *‘acting’* on and through

various forms of production. This transition involved a number of modalities of production, some of which were generated specifically in order to satisfy the classification requirements of town-green legislation. To some extent this could also be understood as an arbitrary event to report. The majority of time that production occurred in this space was not necessarily related to ‘*seminal*’ events. The research could have picked up on almost any part of the history of the site. Likewise, the research could have focused on the forms of production that occurred most of the time rather than focusing on one specific passage that is of significance for its relationship towards a legislative mechanism. Nonetheless, within the events represented or portrayed in the writing up of the research, there is an account of the everyday, the uneventful, the prosaic and the quotidian alongside or within the seminal events. The ambition of the research strategy was to ‘*follow the actors*’ and this is what has led the design of the research and fieldwork. The coding of the case study has captured the findings of this research approach and the choice of seminal passages has been used as a device to help frame the research in an accessible and inclusive structure that reports not just on ‘*big*’ events but also allows ‘*small*’ actors voices to be included. The portrayal of seminal events does not diminish the more innocuous modes of production and the dissemination of the research coding attempts to provide a platform where the multitude of actors involved in the production of informal space can be present(ed).

“Is there any point to which you wish to draw my attention?”

To the curious incident of the dog in the night

The dog did nothing in the night.

That was the curious incident.’ remarked Holmes.”

(Conan Doyle, quoted by Zizek (1992:58).

This dialogue points towards the many silent and inconspicuous actors that are involved in the production of informal spaces. Whether they are human actors or natural or legislative actors, they are often difficult to detect. Sometimes (like Holmes’ dog) it is only in their absence that their prior presence is revealed, or

their absence alters the rest of the context and makes clear their role in a particular system. The data collection during the fieldwork was designed to be sensitive towards the absence of certain actors. The process of reflexion in the writing up of field notes, observations, transcripts and the subsequent coding stages aided in an awareness of the absence of (some) actors. It is perhaps impossible to be entirely mindful of lacunae in the data: whom or what is absent from the research data. However, it is clear that, for example, children are relatively under-portrayed in the research (partly due to the difficulties in accessing children because of stringent ethical practices). Similarly the presence of vandalism evident in the space (but absence of the vandalising actors whilst the researcher was present) points to an absence of certain actors from the observation process leaving voids in the data collection. It had been difficult initially to adopt a symmetrical attitude to all of the material gathered, as much of the existing literature and research strategies tended towards an examination of either the social or the spatial worlds, rather than an examination of them both (Latour, 2005:76). Anecdotally providing a reflexion back on this, it has been partially a tendency of research books to be either social or spatial, rather than a hybrid of the two, that had tended to skew the work asymmetrically. As the research progressed and the methods and methodology developed, the research strategy was more capable of effectively maintaining a symmetrical approach to the material (within an ANT framework). The coding process that developed from the fieldwork also allowed the understanding to be more symmetrical than some of the material from the literature review.

4.11 The relationship of the researcher to the field

The blurring of the relationship of the researcher in the field is in some ways problematic with the neutrality of the researcher often deemed a crucial part of the process of fieldwork (Simons, 2010). There are some research approaches that promote the role of researcher as an agent of change in a situation, such as '*action research*' (Snape & Spencer, 2006: Payne & Payne, 2004) or '*phronetic research*' (Flyvbjerg, 2004) where research is interventionist. During the design stage of this research the role of the researcher as an agent of change was considered (but subsequently rejected). '*Action research*' is one of the strategies

where researchers aim not just to observe or understand a phenomenon, but to also change that situation (Payne & Payne, 2004). Implicit in the design of this approach is the notion that there is a '*problem*' that needs to be solved and that the researcher is the person (or persons) capable of enacting or facilitating change. Action research aims to feedback into the context that was the focus of study, in order to effect, for example a policy change or new procedure.

Another interventionist approach is '*phronetic*' research, put forward by Flyvbjerg (2004:283) as a strategy that posits that the researcher has an ethical duty to effect change "*and to suggest how relations of power and values could be changed*". Phronetic research is less dedicated to effecting material change than action research, where it is not merely an option for a researcher when considering the design of their study, but an obligation. Flyvbjerg (2004) refers mostly to knowledge concerning urban-planning, but by extension, other modes of knowledge and science are involved.

The implications for knowledge are relatively profound, as it shifts the researcher from a position of neutrality (or at least an aspiration of neutrality) to a position that is purposively biased and/or political. There are concerns over such research approaches, namely the politicisation of science and the lack of neutrality that are considered by many to be at the heart of the scientific approach (Payne and Payne, 2004). In the design of the research strategy, these forms of '*action research*' were rejected; partly to avoid the politicisation of the researcher in this field; and partly because it was not perceived that there was a '*problem*' nor that anything needed to be '*solved*'; and most importantly, the research approach undertaken appropriately addressed the research question.

4.12 Reflexion on the role of researcher

"Reflexivity is the practice of researchers being self aware of their own beliefs, values and attitudes and their personal effects on the setting they have studied."
(Payne & Payne, 2004:191)

Reflexivity is a useful practice of the researcher using the process of reflecting back on their own biases and motivations within the research project. The aim of producing entirely neutral research is not deemed possible but reflexion can aid

in removing some of these biases and produce research that is (relatively) more objective and neutral (Snape & Spencer, 2006). The researcher should also be reflexive about their own position throughout the entire research process.

During the fieldwork stage of the research, the presence of the researcher within the *'field'* affected the context itself. The researcher is seen by different groups and individuals in a number of alternative ways: as *'professional'*, as *'expert'*, as *'stranger'*, as *'outsider'* or as part of the *'support'* for particular groups – and each of these perspectives affects the behavior of other actors. Over time, there was another phenomenon that arose through the presence of the researcher in the field as the researcher became (perceived to be) *'attached'* to certain groups. As the research took place over several years, many of the more frequent users often came to become friendly with the researcher, often inviting the researcher to take part in their activities and sometimes even extending to the offer of cakes and coffee. The researcher attempted to minimize their effect on the situation and felt it necessary to turn down a number of invitations to help with certain users ambitions. Throughout the fieldwork, the researcher was mindful of the need to be reflexive of their position in the field, to be aware of becoming embroiled in one groups strategies or tactics and particularly becoming associated with one group as opposed to another.

4.13 Conclusions on the methodology

This chapter provides an examination and justification of the research design. The methodology and research approach is linked to the overall research question, literature review and epistemological and ontological framework. This chapter sets out the decision making process for the design of the research. The logic of the research design was focused on answering the research question: *'How is an informal space produced?'* The use of a case-study approach was much in evidence from the empirical examples reviewed in literature, and particularly the examples from ANT. The logic of a case-study approach also fitted well with the epistemological and ontological framework adopted. Multiple methods are deemed an appropriate and often used system for a case-study approach, and provide a range of opportunities and options for capturing a range of data from the site. Particularly in relation to ANT, the design of the research

methodology incorporated the requirement for a flexible framework within which the contingent and fluxive site conditions and associated users could be accessed. The multiple methods are frequently used within social sciences and are mostly not contentious. However the use of ANT is disputed within social sciences, partly as it is not exclusively concerned with the 'social' but focuses on many other non-social actors. It is important to note that the use of ANT has influenced the range and scope of literature reviewed plus the implementation of the research methods. A range of social and non-social actors are considered here, with no priority given to either *a priori*. Much of this is examined in the previous section on epistemology and ontology, however it is important to note that these have an impact on the methods chosen and how those methods are employed on the site. Whilst there might be other approaches possible that would answer the question; the approach adopted here is a suitable and appropriate framework for investigation. Some of these alternatives have been examined, reviewed and appraised within this chapter. The research design adopted in this instance is appropriate to the aims of the research and to answer the overall intellectual puzzle.

5 FINDINGS CHAPTER A COMMUNITY GARDEN

5.1 Preamble

[Excerpt from observer's notebook]

11.03 A small group of local residents have gathered in the informal space. There are sixteen adults and seven children of various ages [all children are accompanied by their parents]. They have responded to a recent flyer posted through resident's letterboxes to attend a "gardening/maintenance" session. Three of the adults appear to be in control and are giving instructions to the other adults and children.

11.08 Five adults are pruning back various shrubs, bushes and flowers with secateurs, or digging out weeds (and various bits of unwanted debris) from the flowerbeds with a small trowel, three adults are mostly supervising the others (and chatting), one adult is cleaning a sign at the entrance to the space, two adults are fixing up some form of brackets on a wall to support climbing plants, one adult is clearing up leaves and twigs etc. from the space and two adults and their two children are asked to varnish the fence. Two elderly ladies are sat on the bench chatting (*inaudibly*). The remaining children are not given specific tasks.

11.12 Most of the adults who have been given tasks seem to be familiar with what they need to be doing and chat among themselves as they carry out their activities.

The two adults who have to fix a bracket have gone home and returned with a box of tools and a cordless drill. One suggests to the other, "*A six mill brad point 'll do it?*" [a 6 millimetre drill bit designed for drilling into masonry walls] and the other adult nods in agreement.

The children without tasks are playing just at the edge of the space in a more overgrown area, hiding amidst ivy and a thicket of trees.

11.43 The varnishing of the fence is complete. The children have varnish on their clothes.

11.48 An organising adult returns from her nearby house with two very large thermos flasks, another adult helps carry some plastic beakers and a plate of home made cakes and wanders around the volunteers offering cakes for “*the workers*”. The children are offered something to drink. One of the organising adults returns to their house to get some cordial for the children.

Much of the gardening session is interrupted by the refreshments, only three people continue with their work, all the others chat, eat and/or drink. Some will return to their duties, others drift off (away from the space) after this break.

12. 51 The last two volunteers finish their weeding for the day – ‘*Oh we’ve got a lot more to do, we’ve barely even started*’ sighs one adults. “*Yes, we’ve still got to... get all those... the bulbs in...*” the other responds, and as they walk away one adds, “*...We need to organise another session really...*”

[End of Excerpt]

This short, somewhat mundane excerpt captures a rather typical series of events or activities that occur in the *informal space* (the site for the empirical case-study). In many ways these activities are fairly commonplace occurrences; perhaps the only difference or unusual aspect is that they are all being carried out on ‘*land to which the occupants have no legal claim*’. Every person involved in this observation is trespassing on the land. This excerpt captures some of the issues to be explored in the following two chapters. Firstly this evidences an instance of ‘*guerrilla gardening*’ and highlights the needs to have not only *human* actors but also the necessary *material* domain of spades, secateurs, paintbrushes, varnish and power-tools. There is *dirt* all around: gardeners with dirt on their hands and on their knees, children covered in varnish, the sign is being wiped down and cleansed; as well as all the discarded materials found within the soil that is being removed and the dead leaves being piled up into a compost. The pests and bugs (eating the flowers) illustrate another form of *dirt*, against which chemical warfare is currently raging. One of the residents is discussing how important all the bio-diversity in the garden is for the ‘*environment*’. Whilst all this occurs, tea and cakes are being supplied to *bribe*

the human actors into performing these tasks. There is *exclusion*; the adults occupy the garden area and (most of) the children are playing in the un-tended wilder area parts of the informal space (the exclusion is social in the separation of adults from children and also in the segregation of (types of *nature*) wilderness versus cultivated). The *sign* at the entrance to the space registers the space as a garden for the whole community (semiotics). There is a *political* intent to this as gardening session has been organised to tidy the space because some officials from the local government will shortly be paying a visit. The observation excerpt is an illustration of Latour's dictate to '*follow the actors*' – whereby all of the actors are followed, examined and understood as part of the production of informal space (the elderly ladies' inaudible conversation points to the limits of the ability to follow all actors all of the time).

5.2 Preface to findings chapters

The findings are organised into two chapters, yet both relate to one case-study site. The first findings chapter is subtitled '*communitygarden*' and the second chapter '*town-green*' to help differentiate the two parts of the empirical work. This findings chapter is organised in two principle sections. The first sub-section is a basic description of the site and context. This is a relatively short piece that situates the informal space in its immediate context. This description is applicable to both chapters, but is not repeated in the second for brevity. Both of these chapters presents the findings of the research in the form of a kind of '*hyper-thick description*' as outlined in the methodology section which takes up the bulk of these chapters.

5.3 Introduction to findings

This case-study is principally organized around the ANT approach '*translation*' and explores how an informal space in the UK was translated into a community garden (and similarly into a town-green). ANT is particularly suited to the examination of a '*hybrid*' entity such as a '*communitygarden*'. The research question '*how is an informal space produced?*' will be answered using this approach to the case-study empirical work. Translation is made up of four

principle parts; problematisation, interessement, enrolment and mobilisation, but comes with a fifth phase (that can occur during any of these parts) dissidence.

The first findings chapter portrays the translation of an urban wasteland into a *community garden*. Throughout this process the space retains the definition of being an informal space whilst it undergoes this transformation. The first findings chapter examines how translation was achieved; in this empirical case-study it required the seeming unification of two isolated domains: nature (garden) and society (community) into a hybrid (*communitygarden*). In practice, the translation is not so clear or straightforward; nor is the translation of the space total.

For clarity the words community and garden are elided in the writing up of this research as '*communitygarden*' to make clear in writing that it is this hybrid entity that is being referred to. None of the users of the space use this elision; but the neologism is used purely for the purpose of clarity in the writing up of the case study, partly to differentiate the communitygarden from the separate (or quotidian interpretation of) the domains '*community*' and '*garden*', and to make clear that the research is describing a specific case-study *communitygarden*.

5.4 Part One: Case Study Area

5.4.1 Site context

This is a brief contextual introduction to the history of the site. Whilst the site has its own specific qualities and particularities that make it unique – it has shared the fate of many inner-city/suburbs in the UK (Echenique & Homewood, 2003). The aim of this introduction is to describe in broad terms the character of the area whilst simultaneously situating this specific site within the wider context of UK residential areas. This is necessarily a broad-brush approach, and the aim is to illustrate the everydayness of the site, and a history that is shared by millions of houses in urban and suburban regions of the UK. This contextualization also describes how the site is typical of prevalent urban decay processes.

5.4.2 Description of site

The area in which the case study is located, is characterized by rows of tall, narrow, terraced housing on a fairly steep hillside. The terraces are from two to four storeys in height and form narrow streets with on-street parking. There are few if any front gardens to the houses and generally the rear gardens are very small compared to the UK average (Smith et al, 2011). The area is almost exclusively residential in character with few other uses, although there is one public house almost adjacent. The area is within walking distance of two local shopping centres that have a limited amount of small office spaces. The site is two miles from a city centre and there are some post-industrial areas and residential areas that lie between the centre and the site. The area is a mixture of socio-economic groups although the recent trend is towards gentrification. The area is thus similar to many of the ‘*historic*’ UK suburbs in terms of house type, function, layout, density and urban grain.

The site of the informal space itself is an irregular shape (and dimensions given are approximate) but the front of the space, adjacent to the public footpath, is 30 metres (see appendix 20 for images of the site and appendix 17 for an annotated site plan). The rear of the site extends to over 100 metres and the depth varies but is, on average, 15 metres. There is a slight gradient to the first 10 metres of the space and the rear 5 metres are much steeper, rising away from the public footpath. The rear of the site is bounded by a large, two metre high, stone wall. The City Council described the site in 1986 as “*untidy except for a small garden which has been laid out by private local initiative*” (Appendix 2: City Council Draft Planning Brief 1986, Section 3.2). The extent of the garden has increased since this description, and is now approximately double the extent. The southern portion of the site is now the garden area and the northern parts of the site are much more informal or in a derelict condition.

5.4.3 Site history

The housing in the area was mostly built during the Industrial Revolution to provide housing for a mixture of middle and working class families in close proximity to the industrial areas of the city (Foyle, 2004). At its inception the

housing was relatively popular and the area was mostly ‘*respectable*’ and affluent. This interval of stability lasted for approximately one hundred years. The period during and after the Second World War saw a significant change of fortunes.

The case-study site that is now an informal space was a row of terraced houses that were bomb damaged during the Second World War (Appendix 13). The bombings occurred in 1941, the destruction of the houses was collateral damage from bombing raids; the site was in close proximity to industrial sites and it was these that were the target of the Luftwaffe (Stops & Barnes, 2005). The houses were badly burned during this event and remained mostly as rubble walls. A 1986 City Council Draft Planning Brief avers, “*the site abuts the temporarily repaired end of XXX Road which sustained war damage*” (Appendix 2: City Council Draft Planning Brief 1986, Section 3.2). Some of the elderly local residents still remember fragments of the damaged housing remaining “*there were [sic] a lot of bomb damage around ere*” [AA16:2012]; “*it was a dump. It had been a bombsite, there was a row of houses along the back* [gestures to back of informal space] [AA02: 2011]. Approximately 30 houses were destroyed in total and this was spread across a number of terraced streets forming a new space in the midst of this tightly packed housing area.

For the next few decades after the war, the residential area underwent a period of decline, this was partly related to the decline of the adjacent manufacturing area and loss of employment. Planning blight also affected the area with intentions of the inner ring-road close to the site affecting the desirability of the area (Larkham and Barrett, 1998). As part of the planned highway, some of the houses in the locality were earmarked for demolition. This resulted in homeowners neglecting properties they anticipated would be demolished. Much of the area was considered little more than a slum. The City Council described the area, which mostly includes the informal space thus “*the site is derelict and untidy*” [Appendix 2: City Council Draft Planning Brief 1986, Section 3.4]. The value of housing was relatively low during this period with vacant and derelict houses left untouched for decades. Many of the properties were left to deteriorate further and were condemned to demolition.

It was not until the tail end of the 1970's and into the 1980's that the area began to change trajectory becoming a more desirable and wealthy area. The intention for an inner-ring road was finally abandoned and with it the planning blight that had affected the area was lifted. Owner-occupiers began to invest financially in their properties based on the security over the future of this area. New owner-occupier residents moved in, signaling the first wave of gentrification to the area (CHIS, 2012). Both owner-occupiers and landlords renovated the properties and restored many of the dilapidated buildings of the area. The industrial areas nearby did not recover economically and after a period of decline, which peaked in the early 1970s, much of the post-industrial areas were also left derelict. It was not until the 1980s that the first of the derelict industrial sites were regenerated to any extent – lagging somewhat behind the regeneration of the residential areas. Many employment sites and former industrial sites in the vicinity were subsequently converted to residential use (a process that is still ongoing).

The local authority cleared the site of the remains of the bombed housing and removed the rubble walls left extant from the bombing raid. A few garages were erected on part of this now informal space, occupying approximately one-third of the available space. Other than these relatively minor interventions in addressing the physical state of the space – there were no more formal changes made. The space was largely left to '*nature*', i.e. it was rarely used by adults and became overgrown by plants, weeds and pests, although some local residents did intervene and cut back some of the plants if they grew out onto the footpath.

5.4.4 Social context of site

The majority of human users during the post-war period were children who adopted it as a play area. The site was heavily used by children in the 1950s though to the 1970s but there was nonetheless a gradual decline over this period. The prevalence of children playing unsupervised has dropped generally in the UK since the 1970s. This is partly due to changing attitudes to child safety from '*strangers*' and partly due to risk aversion, particularly in a location such as a derelict space (Gray, 2011). There is a greater prevalence for working class children to perform outdoor, unsupervised, informal play than middle-class (who tend to do more supervised, organised leisure activities) and the increasing

gentrification further exacerbates the dwindling tendency for children to use the derelict space (Lareau, 2003). Part of the space (approximately 15 square metres) was used by a resident, initially as ad hoc off-street parking, and subsequently for minor repairs to his vehicle. One resident recalled it thus, “*and this was being used by a guy, a guy who actually... um... a guy who was a second-hand scrap car dealer and he used to keep his cars here! ... and there were rats here! Um er... it was a rubbish tip...*” (AA02: 2011). This resulted in car parts, engines, panels and wheels lying on the site for many years. An elderly resident (AA08, 2012) also remembers this period from over thirty years prior “*oh yeah, that was [name omitted] he was a bit of a tear-away (laughs), he was a character*”. The ‘*car-repair enthusiast*’ resident eventually left the area (in approximately mid-1980s) “*eventually he moved off and did something somewhere else*” (AA02: 2011) and the site was no longer used for this purpose. “*I had a mate who worked in ‘bins’ at the local authority, who er... well said er... look I’ll come and get rid of the cars* (ibid). The council cleared the majority of the disposed car parts from the site, following requests and complaints by local residents.

According to the literature reviewed, one of the most significant defining qualities of informal space is related to the ownership of the land. The informal space is mostly part of a residential area; there were some houses on part of the site which was subsequently bombed. It has not been possible to determine the current ownership of the land. None of the local or elderly residents can remember the original families (nor if they survived the bombing raid). There have been a number of searches for the owners of this land. In 1986, the local council, as part of a ‘*City Council Draft Planning Brief*’, attempted to determine the ownership. In their findings they concluded, “*the site is in a number of fragmented private ownerships, in some cases unknown.*” [Appendix 2: City Council Draft Planning Brief, 1986. *Sub-Appendix A*; Section 6.1]. A land registry search made in 2006 also corroborates the innominate ownership/s. Land Registry (Appendix 3: Land Registry Search, 2006) Certificate Ref: 227/161EAFB states “*No registered estate, caution against first registration or application ...is shown on the index map in relation to the Property*”. The uncertainty regarding the ownership of the space is substantiated in the application for town-green where in the application documentation; the

applicants determine that “*despite extensive enquiries, it has not been possible to establish who owns the land*” (Appendix 4: Town-Green Committee Report, 2009:3). It is clear that there would have been multiple owners of parcels of land, as these pertained to the former residential curtilages. Despite the bomb destruction, the legal owners of this land would (in theory) be the descendants of the former owners (assuming there are surviving descendants). It is clear that the human users of the space during the empirical work were not the owners of the space, and thus the case study meets one of the key defining qualities of informal space.

5.5 CASE STUDY 1: COMMUNITYGARDEN

5.6 Problematisation

Problematisation involves the identifying of actors and their links (or absence thereof) in the network. The generation of a communitygarden is an imprecise term that has no specific or legal meaning; nor even a broadly accepted cultural interpretation. Indeed, as we will see, the term is interpreted and understood differently by various actors throughout the process. Nonetheless, across all of these differences there is a degree of similarity in that the *communitygarden* consists of two separate domains: nature (i.e. a garden) and society (i.e. humans); these obviously have a spatial relationship as a garden is a spatial entity. This is still rather imprecise as both nature and society are broad terms, yet, for the moment they will suffice, as greater detail will be added as the account progresses.

Society+nature = communitygarden

Society *and* nature must unite for the production of a communitygarden. At this point the alliance is tentative and speculative and forms an obligatory passage point as the question ‘*is the space a communitygarden?*’ As a derelict space there is almost no relationship between human actors and nature. These entities have their own identities, actions and networks. There are very few inter-relationships between the two. The process of translation did not begin at one particular point, or with any seminal event; rather it was a very gradual process, as one resident recalls, “*er... it just sorted of evolved really...*” (AA01: 2011). The account begins with the emergence of the ‘*idea*’ of the communitygarden which is partly related to the increased practice of gardening in the area but also the departure of the resident who used the space as a junk yard for broken cars. Translation traces the increasing inter-relationships between nature and society and the emergence of a new hybrid entity qua *communitygarden*.

The original informal space, which was a tangle of brambles, weeds, slugs, snails, ants, wasps, bees, mice, rats, trees, ivy, mushrooms, lichens, moths and nettles, is referred to here as *nature*₁. This was a relatively rich source of bio-diversity and

hence fits many definitions of ‘*nature*’; but it is unsightly and not what might be described as a garden in the UK (there was a lot of brown mud and ‘*weeds*’ visible). Nature₁ had to become (mostly) an expanse of grass, ideally with some flowers in order to be describable as a ‘*garden*’; this is referred to here as *nature*₂. It is clear that the nature that existed before translation: brambles and weeds (i.e. nature₁) which grew there ‘*naturally*’ – needed to be replaced by a form of nature that fitted in with the socially accepted version of nature qua *garden* (nature₂). Nature₂ had to be produced and maintained by humans however, as it was (ironically) not as natural as nature₁.

The informal space was rarely used by many of the local (adult) residents, but a few vocal and active residents wished to “*develop more of a community spirit*” [AA01: 2011] and saw this area as a focus for developing this community. If there is to be a community; there needs to be a communal space. The initial community, before the problematisation, includes all of the residents, regardless of their interest and engagement with the space and is referred to as community₁. Community₂ is that proposed during the problematisation; those residents who will form the alliance as an active part of the communitygarden. This problematisation forces the two to act together: nature and society “*are fettered: they cannot attain what they want by themselves*” (Callon 1986:206). It was in the new nature, i.e. nature₂’s interest to be allied with the community₂ – because then community₂ would help propagate nature₂ at the cost of nature₁. As we shall see, it was also in (most of) the community₂’s interest to maintain nature₂ rather than have nature₁.

5.6.1 Problematisation: obligatory passage point

Interviewer: ‘*How did you arrive at the idea of a Community Garden?*’

Interviewee (AA02: 2011) “*Well we didn’t really, um... we... we sort of got there by accident at first. I wanted to clear up the rubbish a bit, and [name omitted] and I had a stab at... uh [inaudible] it... [name omitted] and [name omitted] planted a Mimosa [decorative species of tree] around that time.*”

The obligatory passage point in this case-study is the acceptance that the informal space will become a community garden. However, there is no inherent need or requirement, in or of itself, for this space to be considered as a community garden. The space has been informal for decades without any particular problems or issues raised by council officials, landowners or any other institutions. The informal space could have been left as it was and not changed it at all. Had this been the case, then arguably, the translation might not have occurred and nature₁ would have remained intact.

Before the translation, the derelict space was perceived by some of the local residents as messy – it was ‘*dirt*’. The informal space could be said to be acting semiotically in this way. The informal space’s tangle of weeds and overgrown plants was interpreted by local residents as a ‘*sign*’ of neglect and of waste “*it was a bit of a mess*” (AA13, 2012). “*You know. We were really oh... er really keen to... really keen to do something with the [community garden], there was a lot of bomb damage, it was really overgrown... we really wanted to get stuck into it*” [AA16:2012]. From the perspective of these local residents, something had to be done. Pursuing a (*hypothetical*) proposition that some form of translation would take place; a number of different options or outcomes for the informal space could have occurred. For example, a number of ‘*built*’ options are possible: new housing to replace the destroyed houses (this is desperately needed in the area), more car-parking (this too is desperately needed in the area), storage, offices, workshops or perhaps a community centre. Alternatively the informal space could have remained ‘*unbuilt*’ to some extent i.e. remaining with a function that is ‘*natural*’; the space could have become an eco-park, biodiversity site, or a wilderness, woodland, an orchard, a formal park or a private garden. However none of these alternatives nor any other options were explored. Instead a community garden was acted upon.

The attractions of the garden being a community garden, rather than merely a garden are manifold. The first benefit is that the task of gardening can be spread amongst more people; thus distributing the burden of labour. The second benefit is that the garden becomes a ‘*sign*’ of the community; it “*represents what we are about*” (AA03, 2011). In a reverse process, nature in a certain form/format (i.e.

nature₂) semiologically becomes a community. The existence of the communitygarden inherently implies the presence of a (mostly invisible or absent) community that maintains such a form of nature. Thirdly, the collocation of the word *community* widens the network (in theory, even if not in practice) of the ownership and governance of the space. This makes it '*belong*' more to the residents than, perhaps the park, which although publicly owned is too remote for local residents to feel ownership or belonging with (AA03, 2011; AA13, 2012). Lastly, the word *community* also denotes, in and of itself, a quality deemed worthwhile (or at least worthy) and desirable by many of the local residents. The focal actors did not devise all of these reasons for using the word community at the outset of the translation. There was not a seminal meeting or congregation where all of these issues were raised and strategically considered. Rather these notions developed over time and became more distinct throughout the process of translation. Not all of the local residents were aware of these interpretations of community. The term '*community*' is used by various actors in the field as a general byword and is synonymous with local residents.

The obligatory passage point requires that, if nature₂ wants to survive and community₂ hopes to develop and communitygarden is to endure, an alliance must be made that benefits each of them. Firstly there are all of the extant or original actors of the informal space: plants have colonized the space; children have been using it as a place to play; soil has covered over the previous ground surfaces; some of the space has been used for parking/dumping/repairing old cars and minor other uses, such as: vandalism, minor graffiti, some alcoholics using the space for drinking and a den for urban foxes. The key actors prior to translation are: *weeds, soil, children and cars*. Then there are the '*new*' or modified actors of the communitygarden. In the translation of the space there is a change of actors; there will be still be some plants and children (although their future presence is a moot point, but for the moment we shall describe them as being part of the communitygarden) and added to this are adults from the local area. The communitygarden will also receive more signs and signage than previously. There are other new actors, such as Christmas trees, nightlights, seating, fencing, Halloween decorations and other intermittent paraphernalia for parties and events. There will be losers: there will be no more cars and no more

junk. Soil will remain, but only as the (hidden) substrate for other actors: grass and flowers. Most of the original plants (i.e. weeds) will also be removed and replaced/augmented by grass and flowers but some of the trees will remain throughout the translation. The key actors subsequent to translation are: *flowers, grass, adults and signs*. This is an oversimplification of the actors in the network, but it is nonetheless useful as a brief (and impermanent) categorisation. The identity and constituency of the networks and actors will be fleshed out more accurately throughout the findings chapters. However, it is yet to be seen, if the translation is possible. “*Problematization describes a system of alliances, or associations, between entities, thereby defining the identity and what they ‘want’*” (Callon, 1986:206). The obligatory passage point is problematised by a few focal actors (community₂ representatives); as it is organized this way round, the obligatory passage point is largely controlled by the focal actors, it is they who set about (re)creating the identities and intentions of the relevant actors (Singleton & Michael, 1993).

5.7 INTERESSEMENT

“*Interessement is the group of actions by which an entity ... attempts to impose and stabilize the identity of the other actors it defines through its problematization. Different devices are used to implement these actions.*” (Callon, 1986:207-208). The focal actors attempt to impose the identity of other actors through their problematisation of the informal space qua communitygarden. A wide number of interessement devices are adopted; with additional and varied devices employed as the process develops.

Interessement devices are used to allie¹⁴ certain entities closer and to act together, and/or to break prior links that may have existed. Non-social interessement devices are intended to operate on or in the ‘*natural*’ world. The existing ‘*natural*’ aspects of the space was a mixture of: trees, ivy, (patches of) grass, wild flowers, brambles, weeds and some bare earth. Some of these entities did not fit the definition of ‘*garden*’ within a UK context particularly the: ivy, brambles, weeds, bare earth and ‘*patchy*’ grass. In order for nature₁ to be

¹⁴ The French form of the verb ‘*allie*’ is used in this dissertation rather than the English ally version.

transformed into nature₂ a number of approaches and devices for interessement were used. The network of actors qua nature₂ were interested partly through the use of interessement devices. These interessement devices need to bring the allies to act together *and* break unwanted links or associations. A similar series of interessement devices were used to act upon community₁ and community₂ both to forge new alliances and to destroy others. Interessement accommodates an almost endless range of tactics, strategies and apparatus, however it is at this stage interessement is the attempt or aspiration to create a specific network; the outcome at this stage is not yet known nor guaranteed.

5.7.1 The Interessement of nature₂

As it transpired it was quite difficult to break links with existing nature₁ and build new alliances with ‘good’ nature (*nature₂*). A wide array of heterogeneous interessement devices was employed in order to enrol the various actors into the requisite organisation. A complex array of materials, entities, actors and constituents were deployed. Initially an alliance between adult humans and various ‘*gardening*’ materials was used, for example, metal spades and trowels were to be used (in alliance with a member of the community) to remove certain actors - particularly bracken and weeds. Secateurs were to be used on the ivy, as ivy depends structurally on another entity to survive (usually a nearby tree), along with a connection to the ground for water and nutrients. This cutting of links using secateurs operates in two directions to not only cut ties with the ground but cuts the tie with the tree as support.

This interessement of nature₂ was, to some extent, successful; community₂ mowed the grass, trimmed its edges, planted flowers and removed tenacious weeds that tried to return and the gardening implements performed their required roles relatively well for the vast majority of tasks designated. However all this was fairly intermittent activity; it was rare anyone could be encouraged to do this more than once a week, in practice a monthly gardening session was carried out. The implements and material objects could not operate without human assistance. The cutting of ties with weeds needed to be performed more frequently. Additional interessement devices were required to act on a different temporal range, actors that would work more frequently, day and night if possible (i.e. not

humans and/or without any much human intervention). Those parts of nature₂ that needed to become stronger allies also needed additional interessement devices. For example, flowers are too easily attacked by slugs and other predatory fauna so flowerbeds were used as an interessement device to help strengthen the floral network favourably (Appendix 20: Photographs of flowerbed configurations). This is still not quite enough, as the soil in the flowerbeds was rather poor and infertile. Not only were the flowers put into delineated flowerbeds, the biological interessement device of manure and chemical fertilizers were added to strengthen the alliances with those flowers deemed 'nature₂'. The aim was for this manure to act across a temporal landscape, working day and night, for weeks on end to maintain alliances to enrol the necessary flora of nature₂. Phosphorous and nitrogen seeps into the soil and chemically alters the constituency of the soil to make it more favourable to sustain certain species of plants. This altered chemical state is not a guarantee of success, flowers will not definitely grow there, but the additional presence of nitrogen and phosphorous contribute to a soil that is itself an interessement device. In a reverse process, herbicides are poured onto weeds and other unwanted plants; the interessement device of herbicide is used to attempt to shift the balance of power in the direction of nature₂ and away from nature₁. Flowers are encouraged (i.e. forced) to grow where they are supposed to (and not where they are not); ditto grass is encouraged and required to grow in certain spatial locations (and not elsewhere). Flowerbeds, fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, spades, trowels, secateurs a number of other (nature₂) semiotic devices were deployed: trellises to facilitate certain climbing plants, talking to the plants to make them grow (biopsychology?) and even occasionally a plea to God for assistance.

The specificity of this arrangement of flowering plants almost defies logic: there must be bare earth surrounding and between the flowers, but not amidst the grassed area, there must be grass between the flower beds but not between the flowers themselves; nor should unwanted plants (even if they are wild-flowers) grow between flowers either. The '*language*¹⁵' of the garden, that is the knowledge or comprehension of this organisation, is only shared by some adults

¹⁵ (Note: the term '*language*' is used here in a descriptive, but not literal, sense).

of the community. The specificity of this garden language is not understood by children, animals, wildflowers (or indeed any plants) nor by some members of the wider community.

5.7.2 **The Interesement of community₂**

Community₂ plays a double role; first it is required to help in the production of nature₂ and secondly it is also necessary, in and of itself, as evidence of a community. A number of interesement devices were required to enrol the human community - but different interesement devices to those for nature₂. Although notably and perhaps serendipitously – the garden itself became an interesement device for the community – operatively enrolling them into activities that both maintained nature₂ and simultaneously produced and maintained community₂.

Community₂ needed to be enrolled – this was done using a variety of interesement devices. At the outset it was not known whether this was possible, community₁ was a disorganized or unorganized mix of individuals, families, friends, strangers, enemies, adults, children etc. Translation required this milieu of human actors (community₁) into a much more organised network with a more stable, solid set of identities and relationships (community₂). One of the key translations was to encourage the human actors (i.e. mostly local residents) to accept the identity of ‘community’. Such a community is described in ANT terms by Lee & Roth (2001: 322) where “*a community becomes a place defined by partial connections that exist and are established between sites, situations, and stories*”. The concept of community is a much examined sociological concern: from Tönnies’ notions of *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (associations) through to contemporary research concerning geographic and neighbourhood communities and/or communities of shared interests (Giddens, 2009). However, for the focal actors, ‘community’ is a rather loose term that is not used specifically or in relation to the long history of academic work on the concept; community₂ denotes nothing more than “*the local residents*” (AA01, 2011; AA06, 2012). As well as including ‘local residents’ in its constituency, community₂ also comprises: visitors to the area, friends and relatives of local residents and passers-by.

Some of the local residents and other individuals already felt part of a community; so the important action in their case was to make sure they were allied to the ‘*right*’ community. For example there were a number of different community groups, neighbourhood groups, resident associations, Neighbourhood Watch schemes and local societies in existence. The focal actors needed to allie those existing communities with community₂; and if possible, cut existing links between individuals and ‘*other*’ communities or prior communities. *How did they do this?* In a number of ways: firstly, *with words*; initially through conversations - they went around to residents’ associations and drummed up support, and changed the direction of existing community groups so that they too were problematised and interessed into the fulfillment of the obligatory passage point. Cakes, croissants, coffee and cups of tea were also promised to coax community₂ into action (Appendices 8 & 15). The resident groups themselves acted as interessement devices; the living rooms of nearby residents provided the perfect device to interesse actors into this network. The implied promise of comfortable sofas, soft upholstered armchairs warm rugs, carpeted floors all warmed via central heating systems adorned with attractive and sometimes tasteful décor (*not to mention the prospect of being able to have a nose around other peoples houses*) are a complex but effective community₂ interessement device. The invitation to attend a meeting in a living room and eat free cakes is far easier to sell than digging out weeds in the rain, even if the living room is merely an interstitial device that ultimately coaxes you towards the garden at some later date. Furthermore the minutes from these meetings also act as an interessement device. Callon (1986:211) describes “*text and graphs*” as devices to create a “*favourable balance of power*” – it is these community “*texts and conversations which lure*” the local residents into being a community, and perhaps more importantly the right type of community (one that might later act as proxy for ‘*town*’ in the town-green application) i.e. community₂.

5.7.2.1 *Semiotic Interessement Devices*

The interessement of community₂ included a number of semiotic interessement devices. There were many leaflets, posters and notices posted through letterboxes of nearby residents, pinned to the trees in the informal space or to nearby

telegraph poles. In one calendar year there were seventeen different paper based notes or leaflets that referred to, or encouraged involvement with, the community garden, that were posted through residents' letterboxes. These signs were intended to act upon the local residents, for example these excerpts from the documentary material: "*October Garden working party to prepare for the winter and to complete some outstanding tasks*" (Appendix 5: A5 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 03.09.2012). Not a particularly interesting note, other than evidence of the need for ongoing gardening (i.e. the temporal quality of space). "*You are invited to an Autumn session of gardening, tidying, planting... followed by the usual coffee and croissants... Do bring bulbs and trowels and clippers to cut back growth etc*" (Appendix 8: A4 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 2004). Another example: "*COFFEE MORNING In aid of the Community Gardens... AT [address omitted] Coffee, tea & cakes £2.50 + Sale of books & cakes*" (Appendix 6: A5 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 10.11.2010) evidences the production of the community garden not solely in the space of the garden, but distributed to the living rooms of local residents' houses, and through the process of the generation of funds for the works occurring in the garden, and the re-enforcement of the community₂. Coincidentally this note evidences one of the first explicit connections between (financial) capital and the production of the community garden. The local residents must raise money in order to produce the community garden. Cakes and books can become transformed into flowers and fertilizer through the medium of financial capital. Contained within these semiotic interestment devices is a form of discursive apparatus. There are many pleas for help made to the human actors of community₂. Leaflets and notices include comments such as "*Please bring*" (1994: Appendix 9.1); "*Please join us...*" (1997: Appendix 9.2) "*bring*" (2000: Appendix 9.5); "*please bring*" (1999: Appendix 9.4) and "*please could you help*" (Appendix 7). This begging for help is designed to act on the emotions of community₂ for help, whether through feelings of guilt for not helping, or perhaps potential satisfaction from helping someone in need or relying on religious commands to help thy neighbor. This discourse is all in written in the *future imperative* form of the verb; this is contingent, interestment (i.e. action) has yet to happen.

There has been an increasing use of technology related to the production of semiotic interessement devices and more generally as an actor in the empirical case-study. The production of leaflets, minutes, posters and notices early on in the case-study were often done by hand (Appendices 9.1; 9.2; 9.3; 9.4; 9.5; 9.7; 9.8; 9.9). One of the local residents would write down the information to produce one original document concerning an event, for example the annual spring gardening session, from which multiple copies were made. This actor took the original document to his place of employment and created multiple copies on his office's photocopier. This action extends the informal actor-network out into the office space of this resident and simultaneously into the mechanics of the *Canon IR6000* photocopier. Whilst hand-written notes and leaflets are still used and photocopied in this way; digital and electronic technologies are increasingly part of the network. These telecommunications have been appropriated to write, print and disseminate information. For example there is the emergence of the use of home computers for online publishing of webpages for Community Association minutes and leaflets are typed electronically and printed at home (Appendix 10). Technologies of reproduction such as this play an important part in disseminating information. Repetitious reproduction is the specific action that these technologies perform best (an action that humans are generally bad at). Systematically reproducing the same leaflet hundreds of times as a way of repeating the same information.

5.7.3 Additive and subtractive interessement devices

Interessement devices principally work in two ways, they can create or destroy. Networks can be formed by attracting other actors through additions, or they can cut links with unwanted actors to enact a different network configuration. Regardless of whether they are acting on humans, animals, flowers, materials, spaces, politics or dirt; interessement devices can be categorized in terms of what their effect is on a network or networks. The next sub-sections explore further these two themes: *additive* and *subtractive* interessement devices.

5.7.3.1 Additive interessement devices

“URGENT! Help NEEDED AT COMMUNITY GARDEN (JUNCTION OF [Address omitted] AND [Address omitted]) Sunday 20th November 10:00 AM to NOON Coffee and croissants to follow” (Appendix 7: A6 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 16.11.2011).

“Autumn Gardening/Clearing Planting Session 2012 A REMINDER! You are invited to an Autumn clearing and gardening session on Saturday Oct 20th at 9.30-12.30 followed by coffee and croissants at [address omitted]” (Appendix 8: A4 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 13.10.2012). These show the attempt at a dual process of community₂ production, firstly the process of communal gardening in the space and secondly at a local resident’s house (not connected to the physical space).

“... Bring: ... iv) A song to sing if you would like to, and a pot of yoghurt to eat with honey if that's what you 'ld (sic) like!” (Appendix 8: 2012).

The residents must bring themselves along i.e. community₂. Food should be brought to help nourish the concept of community₂ and songs to sing as a way of reinforcing the social group. Most of the leaflets and posters advertise the interessement devices of food and drink, usually a coffee and a cake of some sort. The nexus of nature and community is made through the intermediary of coffee and croissants, which are not directly related to either domain. These leaflets are interessement devices for the community; they are designed to manoeuvre the different actors into the configuration of the problematisation. Force and coercion cannot be applied so encouragement, inducement and rewards are used. In a similar way to cakes being offered to human to feed community₂; fertilizer and manure is added to the soil in the garden in an attempt to feed certain flowering plants qua nature₂. These interessement devices are ‘additive’ in the sense that they are designed to make networks by joining, assembling, merging, eliding and/or gluing actors/networks together.

5.7.3.2 *Subtractive interessement devices*

Additive interessement devices are deployed to create and sustain specific networks, for example to encourage the creation of community₂ through drinking free coffee or providing a bench for people to sit and chat in the public realm. However, interessement also concerns how links with other actors and networks are cut; these are simultaneously ‘*subtractive*’ devices. In the examples above, it is not expressed overtly, but the intention or implication is about actors (local residents) using their time, e.g. on Sunday mornings to go to the communitygarden rather than use their Sunday mornings to do other activities or spend time with other groups. It is also notable that Sundays are chosen for the communitygarden sessions rather than other days of the week: i.e. the ‘*working week*’ or Saturday. This is not in itself a surprising choice, it is a pragmatic response to the absence of many residents due to work commitments (or school attendance) during the working week, and for Saturday being the primary day for shopping. Nonetheless, through this pragmatism emerges a relationship between the time spent in the communitygarden and ‘*not*’ time spent at a place of work or spaces of commerce/shopping. The communitygarden inadvertently or coincidentally becomes more associated with rest, repose and less related to work and consumerism through this process.

The interessement becomes relatively sophisticated and in its techniques and mechanisms and incorporate many of the social, fun or carnivalesque events of the year such as: Christmas, Easter, Halloween, birthdays and Midsummer (Appendices 5 and 22). *Saturday September 22nd ... 6.30 PM: The community barbeque¹⁶ will be fired up for another sociable evening*, “*Decorate a Christmas tree on the Green*”, “*January – A mid-winter celebration*” (Appendix 5: A5 sized leaflet posted through local residents door: 03.09.2012), “*We have... a Christmas Tree (sic). ...Please join us to decorate it on Sunday (11th December) at 10.00 AM. Bring some baubles and solar lights if you have any to spare*” (Appendix 11). The evening is a ‘*sociable*’ event; the community is effectively being asked to make links with this community rather than other social communities on this evening (and many other evenings). A barbeque is

¹⁶ Note: Temporary barbeques, borrowed from local residents’ houses had been used for several years for social events in this space, but a permanent barbeque was eventually built.

used for a number of social events, “*Halloween October 31st Community barbeque 6:00 PL: Fancy dress optional but scarier the better. Mulled wine and hot dogs on sale. Trick or treaters welcome.*” (Appendix 5: A5 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 03.09.2012). This Halloween social event is described during one of the interviews; “*...you know we’re doing the Halloween barbeque? Yeah yeah! A Halloween evening. Six o’clock; sausages and stuff (laughs)*” (AA11: 2012). In the course of the interview, which is mostly about the gardening activities of a local resident, this invitation to the social event was proposed. The sausages of the barbeque are interessement devices to be used to attract and interest a number of residents from the area. Through the device of the sausages (and other multifarious devices) the residents become (unwittingly) part of the problematisation equation. This is not a conscious or deliberate plan by any of the residents as part of interessement strategy. (It is speculative to state, but arguably this reflects more generally a trend towards the entanglement of social, festive occasions into otherwise unrelated events, particularly in relation to ‘*fundraising*’ for ‘*good causes*’). The inclusion of carnivalesque events was not part of the strategy for the earlier years of the development of the communitygarden, the leaflets and posters do not mention such events, it has increased incrementally in the last five years. These festive events operate as interessement devices in a number of ways: they embroil local residents into the network community₂; secondly the corollary of this production of a network is the absence of those residents at alternative events or activities, i.e. this process cuts ties with other networks; and thirdly, these events provide a mechanism through which to derive financial benefit from this device (which in turn facilitates further community₂ network building); lastly these events have symbolic capital as ‘*fun, festive and carnivalesque*’ and potentially some connection between these words and/or activities and the space itself might be made i.e. some form of resonance connecting the communitygarden with enjoyable activities and positive memories.

5.7.4 Interessement summary

The informal space included a heterogeneous diversity of interessement devices: material objects (trowels, spades): spatial interventions (flowerbeds, benches,

wooden edging to grass); chemical (fertilizers, pesticides, coffee); social (parties, barbeques, meetings); capital (sale of cakes and books) and semiotics (signs, texts and leaflets). Many of these devices work on multiple entities simultaneously or involve the simultaneous alliance of several actors, for example a garden spade cannot act in isolation: it requires an operator (i.e. a human) it needs a domain in which to operate (i.e. soil) it needs a target (i.e. weeds or manure) not to mention that the spade must itself be manufactured, tendered for sale, purchased with finance and stored in-between gardening sessions. The use of an interessement device can require the involvement of many actors if it is to be successful. Interessement devices are used to either attract actors together or destroy existing networks.

5.8 ENROLMENT

Enrolment is the successful implementation of interessement; i.e. all the actors accept their roles and inter-relationships. If nature₂ is to be enroled, it must be willing to perform as desired. The (good) plants must actually grow in accordance with the culturally accepted parameters of a UK 'garden'. Whilst the 'idea' of weeding the garden pertains to interessement; it is the actual 'performance' of weeding that is carried out as enrolment. The question '*is this space a communitygarden?*' needs to be transformed into a statement '*this space is a communitygarden*'.

[Extract from observation notebook: June, 2012]

Gardener (AA07) carries out gardening activities. She is wearing a pair of protective gloves; made from a green fabric with additional rubber padding on the palm and finger area and a protective green overall/apron on top of her other clothes. She has her equipment ready; she has a plastic basket-like container, a small gardening implement and a thin, padded mat.

10.27 She drops the padded mat onto the floor adjacent to where she wants to dig, and kicks it gently into place. Somewhat struggling with her joints/muscles, she bends down onto her knees and settles onto the pad. She places the plastic

receptacle next to her and removes the small gardening device. Whilst she is doing this, gardener AA07 advises the researcher not to simply pull out the plant from the top – *‘or the weeds will just come back’*.

10.28 AA07 takes her small hand held implement – shaped rather like a little trowel, it has a rounded wooden handle with three metal spikes protruding out of one end (the device is called a *‘cultivator’*). The cultivator is used to poke into the ground next to the weed, and a series of stabbing motions and repeated prods into the ground surround the plant making a temporary ditch around the weed (*part of a strategic attempt to remove the extensive weed rhizome*). With the other hand, AA07 reaches for the base of the root, closest to the ground, and with a gentle pulling motion, combined with a slight wiggle - the weed is gently removed from the ground. After the weed is removed, there is another shake of the plant to allow mud to drop from the root system, before the weed is thrown into a collecting device (in this case the small, rectilinear plastic basket). The receptacle slowly fills with weeds as gardener AA07 proceeds with their task.

10.41 Once the discarded weeds begin to overflow their container, AA07 stands up (struggling to her knees) and picks up the container and then walks over to a pile of other dead weeds which are located at the rear of the site (out of sight¹⁷ from the public footpath) and throws the recently collected weeds on top.

AA07 informs the interviewer that she *“must make this trip several times”* if all the weeds are to be removed. This pile of dead weeds is kept behind a wall. The leaves are not composted nor put into a composting bin, they are just piled on top of older weeds. There was an earlier attempt at composting, but the quantity was too much for a regular composter, so they abandoned that approach and now pile dead plant on top of dead plant.

Gardener AA07 continues in this way for some time. AA07 begins her weeding in the largest flowerbed and once that is completed she continues along smaller, linear flowerbeds that run near to the back edge of the space.

¹⁷ Note: the weeds are located out of sight; there is a spatiality to this (conception of) *‘dirt’*.

11.11 A fellow resident (and prospective gardener) arrives, they have a brief chat exchanging niceties, and then begin to discuss the gardening, and agree that the second gardener will come back in an hour's time to do the spraying.

11.14 The second gardener (AA12) wanders back to their house and remains there until the hour is up.

11.45 Gardener AA07 begins to plant some small flowers in the beds she has previously weeded. The new flowers are contained in small plastic punnets with 24 indents to house 24 plants. Each of these new flowers is placed into a little hole AA07 makes in the flowerbeds.

12. 08 Gardener AA12 arrives back armed with a green-coloured, plastic device – approximately the same size as a vacuum cleaner. He fiddles with this device for a while; it is a large plastic tub where one pours weedkiller liquid; it has a handle for carrying and a pipe protruding out of the top with a pump handle and a small trigger that allows the user to turn the spray on and off. This contraption is a form of '*Pump-n-go*' weedkiller dispenser and is a commonly available product at many gardening or DIY stores. The nozzle on the end has two settings, one for '*direct spray or a broadcast mist*¹⁸'. This allows direct targeting of an individual weed or more indiscriminate dissemination of the spray.

12.12 Gardener AA07 stops planting and stands and watches gardener AA12 as they begin to spray various plants with herbicide.

12.28 AA12 completes their pesticide spraying activities. AA07 and AA12 talk briefly about the garden, mostly trite comments on weeds and the garden.

12.29 AA07 picks up their gardening equipment and carries them back to their home. AA12 carries the weedkiller device back to their house.

[End of extract]

¹⁸ Instruction information label on side of product.

5.8.1 The enrolment of nature₂

Nature₂ must be almost constantly reminded, prodded, cut, trimmed, weeded, removed, planted and maintained in order to achieve a static condition of garden. Posters advertising ‘*Spring Planting*’ asks the local community to “*Please bring plants and bulbs, forks and ~~trowels~~ (sic) trowels*” (Appendix 9.7: A4 leaflet posted through local residents door, 2001) and “*Do bring ... trowels and clippers to cut back growth etc*” (Appendix 9.10: A4 leaflet posted through local residents door, 2004). These requests make evident that it is not sufficient to succeed in bringing the local residents together on the site, nor merely gain their willingness to do some gardening, but that there is also a need for the community to provide the tools with which to carry out these activities is required. This also points to the need for more than purely societal influences on the site – they must come with tools to complete the task. A garden cannot be produced by people working solely with their bare hands, one cannot realistically dig holes, trim branches, remove brambles and nettles without any material tools or implements. There are repeated requests for material and non-material action:

“*...Bring: i) Grass seed to spread around. ii) Bulbs and trowels to dig them in around the area...*” (Appendix 8: A4 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 13.10.2012).

“*...Please could you help to spread the compost and to plant the bulbs. Please bring a spade, trowel or wheelbarrow if possible...*” (Appendix 7: A6 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 16.11.2011).

“*URGENT! HELP NEEDED AT COMMUNITY GARDEN.... Please could you help...*” (Appendix 7: emphasis in original document).

If there is any relenting, then the weeds, brambles and ivy come back. In practice the enrolment of nature₂ is difficult to do; there are other actors who cannot be enrolled; slugs and certain insects eat the wrong types of plants and are a constant menace to the preservation of the garden; they are signs of the wrong type of nature – the wrong type of green-ness and the possibility that nature₂ re-translates space back into a ‘*wasteland*’ (nature₁). The garden-forks and trowels

are only some of the interessement devices used to enrol nature₁ into nature₂. The community is required to adopt and incorporate further interessement measures to enrol nature₂. The existing links the weeds had with the soil was stronger than could be cut with a secateurs or dug with a spade. The roots systems and rhizomes of these weeds were too deep (literally). Other interessement devices had to be enrolled to further break those ties and identities that were unwanted. The extract above highlights the enrolment of a bio-weapon: the herbicide ‘*Weedol*’. This weed-killer¹⁹ was effective in cutting the alliance between the weeds and the soil (which is the primary datum of the space). Weed-killer also has the advantage of working on unwanted alliances for an extended period of time, and not just when a community member can be convinced to go and weed with a spade on a sunny afternoon. The weed-killer kept on cutting unwanted links day and night for weeks and weeks (until effectively all traces of unwanted weed alliances were cut). The gardeners have a choice about their enrolment and can elect to not be part of the community garden; Weedol however was enrolled into the network without, as it were, consultation. In some ways Weedol was a more powerful actor in the informal space than many of the human actors as it remained active for weeks and months, day and night; whereas the human gardeners were considerably more intermittent in their activities.

5.8.2 The enrolment of community₂

There is evidence of enrolment, rather than merely interessement in various leaflets, posters, newsletters, in interviews and during observations i.e. of the interessement devices working in practice.

“[Address omitted] *The little garden at this junction... was the scene of frenetic activity in November as a band of local people, masterminded by [name omitted] and [name omitted], descended on it to clear weeds and plant bulbs. It will look superb in the coming Spring.*” (Appendix 10: A4 sized Community Association publication (8 pages long) posted through local resident’s door 11.11.2012).

¹⁹ The presence of weedkiller is itself part of a very complex network. It is not merely some liquid; this liquid needs to be in a bottle; the bottle needs to be in a shop, the shop is accessed (in this instance) by car, which needs roads, etc. The liquid itself needs a petro-chemical industry; itself comprised of scientists, biologists, chemists. All of this needs regulation, legislation, advertising, marketing, distribution, manufacturing plants etc.

“Thank you everyone who helped with bulb planting; it was a marvelous community effort! ... Please let me know if you are interested in joining a ‘Friends of the Garden Group’” [Appendix 11: A6 sized leaflet posted through local resident’s door 02.12.2011]

“We have been given a ton of compost and 1000 woodland bulbs by [name of business omitted] and Neighbourhood Partnership to enhance our garden.” (Appendix 7: A6 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 16.11.2011).

“Well we have to plant some more bulbs... we were given 200 bulbs by... er ... the er... the Council. So we have to get them into the ground. We’ve planted about 50 of them. We’ve got another... we’ve got most of them to push in the soil, so we’ll try and do that tomorrow... there, there, there’s already... we already planted a thousand bulbs here last years... so there’s already um a lot of bulbs already here, you know amongst the beds and everything” (AA09, 2012).

These notes and comments point towards a successful enrolment of multiple actors to accept their new identities. Local residents have been enrolled into being gardeners; tools, seeds, trowels, rakes and other materials have become part of the problematisation of the obligatory passage point. These notes about the success of the garden are written in the past tense, unlike those of interessement that are in the future tense. The different tenses mark two different stages of translation and tend to deal with different ‘actors’. Notably there are no comments about coffee or croissants in these documents or interviews; they are restricted to the themes of either community or garden. The role of the coffee and cakes has been removed from this history of the site, despite it being such an important part of the interessement stage. Indeed, the success has even been apportioned to a “*mastermind*” (Appendix 10: A4 sized Community Association publication posted through local resident’s door 11.11.2012) even though coffee has (arguably) been more influential in getting the individuals to form community₂.

5.8.3 Enrolment through discourse

Enrolment occurred on/with the community via “*conversations which lure*” (Callon, 1986:211) and were used to enrol the community into acting the roles and identities assigned them. In practice the conversations and discussions made for turning the derelict space into a community garden was mostly made along the lines of increasing safety. For example, in a residents’ meeting (13.12.2010) the ‘*broken windows*’ theory (Wilson and Kelling, 1982) was used, by one of the focal actors, to convince the local residents to support the production of a ‘*communitygarden*’. Broken window theory is the concept that criminal activity is attracted to signs of dilapidation and decay. In brief this theory proposes that if a person sees a broken window they feel it is a ‘*sign*²⁰’ that it is acceptable to break another window. In this context, it was argued that the derelict land (informal space) was a ‘*sign*’ that it was okay to throw away rubbish or dump waste in the neighbourhood. This would be bad in and of itself, however it might also attract other unwanted, criminal behavior, such as perhaps, car crime or burglary. These arguments were used to try to ensure that the previous use for this space was made to fail, and the communitygarden was made to succeed. The conversations from these meetings were minuted, and these documented minutes acted as further devices to enrol the community into the network. The minutes only describe, “*clear up rubbish and waste material*” rather than reference to broken windows theory or the effect the waste might have on the impression of the area (Note: emphasis added by author).

“*Those Local Residents and others who have begun to clear the Garden Ground...have found a quantity of broken glass and bricks and metal objects*” (Appendix 12: Extract from poster pinned to tree at entrance to informal space 13.08.2012). Note: emphasis added by author.

“*a band of local people ... descended on it to clear the weeds*” (Appendix 10: A4 sized Community Association publication (8 pages long) posted through local resident’s door 11.11.2012.). Note: emphasis added by author.

²⁰ Broken windows are a ‘*sign*’ of dirt. The local resident’s describe the theory of vandalism like an organism; that somehow (magically?) replicates itself.

“We had help in clearing some of the most obvious rubbish and in clearing paths.” (Appendix 13: Excerpt from Community Newsletter posted through residents’ letterboxes: 16. 06. 2008). Note: emphasis added by author.

These notices posted on the site points to the ongoing requirement to ‘*clear*’ the rubbish from the ground; several incursions have been made to do so over the last few years. This notice simultaneously points to the successful enrolment of local residents; the obligatory passage point is also successful; residents have come out from their homes and performed their role of community simultaneously with the practice of removing debris from the space to transform it into nature₂. These excerpts also point to the exclusion of certain actors that might be considered ‘*dirty*’, “*there were rats here! Um er... it was a rubbish tip...*” [AA02: 2011]. The loose term “*obvious rubbish*” and more targeted descriptions “*broken glass*”, “*rubbish tip*” “*bricks*” and “*metal objects*” denote those which do not align with the descriptors of a communitygarden (ibid). Variations of the verb ‘*clear*’ are used repeatedly: “*begun to clear*”, “*help in*” and “*clearing paths*”, which also denote the production of a clean ‘*formal*’ network, and the production of an-other dirty ‘*informal*’ network.

5.8.4 The limits of enrolment

There are limits to enrolment in this case-study and so two different mechanisms of enrolment are deployed. The first mode of enrolment is ‘*direct*’ and is through the direct participation in the communitygarden by a number of actors. The second mode of enrolment is ‘*indirect*’ and this involves the purchasing or financing of certain goods and services to form part of the communitygarden network.

5.8.4.1 ‘Voluntary’ enrolment

Early community notices focused on donated goods and voluntary services: “*Please bring*” (1994: Appendix 9.1), “*Please join us...*” (1997: Appendix 9.2), “*please*” (2001: Appendix 9.8), “*please bring*” (2002: Appendix 9.9) and “*please ... help*” (Appendix 7). The first iteration of enrolment occurs exclusively through this voluntary process. Fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides

need to be purchased (although some are borrowed from local gardens or donated by residents) but some of the local residents are willing to pay directly for these themselves. Most of the tools and gardening implements are borrowed rather than bought specifically. Most, but not all, of the tidying, clearing and planting has occurred through voluntary interventions by various actors. Voluntary enrolment was relatively successful in achieving many of the requirements of a community garden. However, not all aspects of the community garden could be encouraged or coerced into the requisite roles; and specifically some goods and services could not be procured in this way.

5.8.4.2 'Involuntary' enrolment

There are faults with voluntary enrolment, for example, the desire to have benches, a community sign, a decorative '*wishing-well*' feature or a barbeque all require significant financial costs. For example, one issue that emerged was that the larger trees tended to die (*or to put it another way, fungi and bacteria continued to act on the large trees in the informal garden causing them to become diseased and ultimately kill them*) which was contrary to the desires of many of the human actors (*and contrary to the interests of the trees themselves*). The felling of these trees is complicated and requires expertise and machinery that none of the actors in the community garden could provide. The production of the garden could not be procured through volunteering and/or donations alone.

Many actors had to be enrolled *involuntarily*, and quite often this was through some form of financial or economic process. All of the earliest calls for help in community notices (via semiotic interestment devices) adopted the approach of '*voluntary*' enrolment (and this approach continued to be used in later notices) (Appendices 7 & 9.1; 9.2; 9.4; 9.5; 9.6; 9.7; 9.8; 9.9) However, some of the later notices also add explicit calls for fund-raising mechanisms: "*September 22nd [2012] Community barbeque ... hot-dogs £1.50*" and "*Halloween October 31st ... Mulled wine and hot dogs on sale*" (Appendix 5, 2012); "*If you have any novels or books for children that you would like to donate for sale, bring them along*" (Appendix 6, 2011). This shift in emphasis can be attributed partly to the need for involuntary enrolment to achieve certain (expensive) constituents of the community garden.

5.8.5 The costs of enrolment

There is a cost, an economic cost associated with a community garden. This is not necessarily a factor for a more informal space (for example when the space was in a more derelict condition (the '*Debris*') there was no accompanying financial costs). There are relatively large costs for the felling and pruning of trees, as these cannot be done safely by the local residents. Tree surgeons can cost several hundreds of pounds per tree. The community garden sign, construction of flowerbed walls, cement, concrete, fencing, petunias, marigolds, benches, table, varnish, paint and woodchips all must be paid for. The costs are not huge, but nonetheless, they still must be accounted for and generated. The work of tree surgeons, building a barbeque or creating a community sign can neither be produced by local residents as they lack the skills and/or materials, nor are the costs attributed to these so minimal that an individual resident might pay for it. These items require an alternative mode of enrolment, and the one that is deployed is involuntary enrolment via financial capital.

5.8.6 Financing involuntary enrolment

Community₂ must raise funds for economic outgoings and they do so in a number of ways. Events such as barbeques, Halloween events and Christmas parties are exploited. Books are donated to be re-sold and cakes are baked, ready to be sold at coffee mornings at the Residents Association meetings (Appendices 5 and 6). The price of alcohol and food, at events such as Halloween barbeques, is priced higher than the cost of producing it so as to make a profit (Appendices 5 and 22). These actions are devised to produce a financial surplus to pay for the garden's costs (and simultaneously produce and nurture community₂). These financial gains are made directly through the local residents paying for goods and/or services.

There are other means of raising the necessary capital. Garden centres '*donate*' certain products to the community garden on the proviso that they are mentioned in the newsletter (Appendices 7 & 11). "*Decorate a Christmas tree on the Green. [Name omitted] Forestry will provide an 8 foot (Christmas) tree*" (Appendix 5, 2012). These donations are made with a proviso that the garden centres are

explicitly mentioned in various documents such as: Residents Meetings notes, posters and leaflets. This arrangement could be considered a form of advertising or corporate sponsorship for the community garden, i.e. a commodification of the space.

Finance is also provided by the state (████████ Council, 2012). The local authority have a tranche of money dedicated to *“build stronger and safe communities”* (████████ Partnership, 2012a) through Neighbourhood Partnerships. The aim of Neighbourhood Partnerships is to *“bring public sector decision making to a local level where local residents can influence how they would like to see their neighbourhood improve”* (████████ Partnership, 2012b). This requires a coalition of *“local councilors, neighbourhood police teams, community groups and local residents”* to determine where to spend money locally (████████ Council, 2012). Whilst it is theoretically possible for local residents to direct where money might go, it is not quite that straightforward. Due to the financial regulations that the local authority work under (to avoid fraud and embezzlement), it is not possible for funding to be given to ‘any’ local residents. *“Each partnership must also comply with the Neighbourhood Partnership financial operating framework”* (████████ Partnership, 2012). Local residents must form into groups that are financially accountable and can be formally audited in line with the requirements of local authority accounting procedures. In practice, community₂ cannot receive the money directly as they are too ‘*informal*’ and have little financial organisation. In order to access the Neighbourhood Partnership funds, community₂ are forced to make an alliance with a more formally organised group who operate financial accounting and regulation (and are hence financially compatible with the local authority). In this instance, community₂ joins allies itself with the local Residents Association who meet the financial requirements of the local authority. Whilst there are overlaps between the Residents Association and community₂, they are not coterminous/identical, there is a need for the actors of community₂ to persuade the Residents Association to agree to the funding being targeted at the community garden (and therefore not to other worthy projects). This instance portrays degrees of in/formality in relation to officialdom, and specifically financial regulations. It also exemplifies the necessity of network building and the production of temporary alliances in order

to access these funds. It could be stated the other way; the capital/funding become a temporary part of the communitygarden network. The network of actors is a fluctuating constellation throughout the process, moulding itself or transforming its identity according to necessity (where possible). The network that constitutes community₂ becomes extended at times to include the Residents Association and thence to include the Local Authority and the Neighbourhood Partnerships. Equally it could be said that through this funding initiative, and its concomitant dispersal of power, the local authority acts out its part of the communitygarden.

The sources of money required for the upkeep of the garden come from three principle sources: private funds (mostly from local residents fund-raising activities) public funds (from alliances made with the Residents association, and in turn to the local authority) and corporate funding (garden centres using donated products as a mode of corporate sponsorship). Whilst the role of raising capital is a minor part of the production of the communitygarden, it is nonetheless an actor, or perhaps more accurately, capital²¹ problematises, interests and enrolls a number of new and/or previously unrelated actors into the network.

5.8.7 Summary of voluntary and involuntary enrolment

The actors engaged in '*voluntary*' enrolment have a close relationship in the production of the communitygarden. This might include digging out rubble from the soil, butterflies germinating flowers or children consuming hotdogs from the barbeque. This is perhaps a kind of sweat equity whereby the volunteers own toil contributes to their sense of ownership and reward. However there is another form of enrolment that is much more oblique if not asymptotic. The actors engaged in '*involuntary*' enrolment are connected to each other, not so much by the inherent characteristics of the actors involved, but related by economic connections. This enrolment involves a much less direct relationship between actors and the communitygarden. Some of the actors are so remote that they

²¹ It is also important to point out that whilst the term capitalism is used, there is considerable difference between the role of capital at this scale and magnitude, to that of global capitalism (which is the form of capital-*ism* critiqued in much literature).

might no longer be aware that they are part of this specific community garden. The cashiers at the garden centre selling marigolds or sign manufacturers in a remote industrial shed assembling the community notice board form part of this translation, but are invisible actors in the community garden network.

5.8.8 Summary of enrolment

Enrolment has been successful in that many actors have adopted or accepted their new roles and identities in alignment with the problematisation. Many of the individual residents have acted as required to form community₂; lured by the interessement devices such as coffee and cakes, they come to the informal space and perform the tasks of gardening, cleaning, building and planting to simultaneously produce nature₂. Nature₂ is also enrolled, it plays its part, the grass and flowers grow with the help of fertilizer, flowerbeds and other devices; whilst the weeds and pests of nature₁ are destroyed through digging, snipping, herbicides and pesticides.

The partition of entities into nature₂ and community₂ is an oversimplification of the situation. Enrolment has required many hybrids; it is difficult to separate the social world of humans (and their community₂) from the material world of spades, rakes, hoes, diggers and their interaction with the natural world (nature₂) that they are used to dig, weed, aerate and cultivate and the capital(*ism*) of donations, cake sales, commodification and local government funding (and thence political world) to the complex semiotics that permeates all these domains. The assemblage of social (humans) with material (tools), natural (flowers), economic (capital) and semiotic (signs) domains is inextricable at this point; they have passed through the obligatory passage point successfully.

5.9 MOBILISATION

5.9.1 Mobilisation of nature₂

At the end of translation, the informal space must be a garden (or at least it must be accepted as a garden). Who makes this decision, who will represent nature₂? The grass itself can say nothing directly, but arguably does have its own form of representation. Rather like a form of direct democracy with each individual

human showing their support by raising their hand in the air, ready to be counted; each blade of grass ‘acts’ in effect like a voting system; each blade of grass that can stand up and be counted are in effect being counted. If the attempt to replace the bare earth with swathes of grass was unsuccessful, then this could be considered a ‘no’ vote. The presence of each blade of grass is the equivalence of a ‘yes’ vote (perhaps akin to voting with one’s feet). The translation of the community garden required sufficient numbers of blades of grass (and flowers and trees) to represent a majority ‘yes’ vote. That the community₂ accepts there is indeed a garden is confirmation of this vote. Nature₂ is represented by the presence of the correct type of organic matter. In a reverse trajectory, this form of representation applies equally to the lack of representation of the wrong type of nature (nature₁). If there was the presence of weeds in the grassed areas or flowerbeds, then their presence could have been considered a vote against this being a garden. That weeds could not ‘vote’ by their absence is perhaps as important as the positive voting of grass and flowers. Nature₂ has been mobilised in this instance through a form of direct democracy.

In the empirical study, there is a degree of spatiality to mobilisation. Nature₂ is located at the ‘front’ of the informal space in the most highly visible area. Nature₁ is still present, but is located at the marginal and peripheral parts of the informal space. The highly visible presence of nature₂ dominates the space, and so, even though there are roughly equal amounts of nature₁/nature₂; their representation is not equal. Nature₂ is over-represented through this process. Being located in a prime spot situates nature₂ into a more favourable position. (Some) space has more power than other (space/s). Space mobilises by representing one entity more favourably, vocally, or visually than another.

5.9.2 Mobilisation of community₂

“[Address omitted] *Community Garden*

[Address omitted] *residents have applied to make the Community Garden (at the junction of [Address omitted] with [Address omitted]) a Town Green. The application went to [Address omitted] Council on 30 November... ”*

(Appendix 14: Excerpt from Community Newsletter posted through residents letterboxes: 02.07.2008).

Mobilisation is how the many are represented by the few. In the minutes of the local Neighbourhood Watch, the few focal actors represent the many of the community and nature itself. These few actors, mostly one or two vocal individuals who were part of the problematisation, inform the other attendees of the residents’ meetings. A single author in the local Newsletters (as in the extract above) writes the article on behalf of the many, and in residents meetings, it is only one or two actors who often represent the communitygarden. In contrast, for example, there is no-one acting on behalf of the informal space in any of these forums. There are no debates or discussion of what constitutes a garden or what a community means. Despite the attendance of less than twenty persons at any of the residents meetings, the issue of the hundreds of absent residents is not raised. The (*mis*)representation of the many by the few is not considered a concern for these meetings. In interviews with attendees and those who hold the meetings, there is a broadly held view that they represent the opinions of the majority. Again this is despite no survey or knowledge gathering process of residents other than these meetings and occasional conversations in the street. This is not to denigrate the actions of these actors, only to state that the majority is not fully consulted for their views, and reflects perhaps that the majority does not respond to calls for consultation.

5.9.3 The mobilisation of semiotics

A sign is placed towards the front of the communitygarden, adjacent to the footpath. The sign is comprised of a wooden frame approximately fifty centimetres by eighty centimeters in size, standing on two galvanized metal pillars, about thirty centimeters from the ground (Appendix 18). On the plaque is

mounted a gloss-finish, laminated picture (printed professionally) with a mixture of words and pictures on it. The image has the title “[Name omitted] *Community Garden*” (which takes up almost a third of the entire space) and that the communitygarden has been “*tended, improved and maintained by the local Residents*” (Appendix, 18). The main image is a depiction of the garden in a naïve, semi-realistic birds-eye view of the space. Key elements of the garden are annotated in the image along with the date of the arrival of that element, for example: “*apple tree 1980*”, “*willow arch 2003*”, “*grassed area 1991*”, “*snaking stone wall 1987*”, “*post and rail fence 1981*”. The key image has two oversized birds represented amidst a periphery of indeterminate green-coloured background. There are no representations of humans in the image. The image was drawn some time ago, and the communitygarden has changed somewhat from this representation. The original text (which was hand-drawn in a naïve font) has been amended later (with a different electronic/typed font) with the words “*Now Common Land and a Public Open Space registered as a Town Green 2009*” (Appendix 18). The image has not been updated or revised to reflect any of the physical changes that have occurred.

The existence of the communitygarden sign is in some ways paradoxical. It serves almost no functional or practical purpose, yet some actors went to considerable effort to produce it. It required more forward planning than most community₂ activities: a brief was required for the artist, an artist was commissioned, there was a significant financial cost connected with printing the sign onto a weatherproof material (plus the costs of framing and mounting it), a location for the sign was needed and the erection of the sign (including vandal-proofing the support/frame so it could not be stolen by pranksters). The image reveals little more than is evident by simply looking at, or being in, the space itself. The features described in the illustration: the willow arch, grassed area, stone wall and apple trees are self-evident; anyone looking at the sign (reference) can simultaneously see the ‘*reality*’ (referent) in the communitygarden. There is arguably no need for a sign to be produced to illustrate that which is already visible. The users of the space do not need to know any of this in order to appreciate the space, nor does the image serve as some form of ‘*map*’ as the space is not large or complex enough to require such a navigational aid.

The purpose of the communitygarden sign is ambivalent: is it an advert, a notice, a territorial marker, a guide, map, marketing, a statement of fact, an instance of Lefebvre's '*representational space*' or none/all of these? The principal '*author*' of this sign (predominantly orchestrated by one local resident) intended the sign to operate as a statement of ownership "*I thought we'd put our own sign up ... to say it [the space] is ours*" (AA02: 2011). Although this resident did not draw the picture, he did communicate with the artist (a nearby resident) about it, and on the wording for it. The styling of the sign was "*to look official, like (laughs)*" (ibid). It replicates the style of sign one might find at, for example, a National Trust property, and the actor who instigated the production of this sign intended it to look '*official*' whilst being "*attractive*" (ibid). This sign is acting less in any functional or pragmatic role, but arguably at a semiotic level. Through the '*quality*' of print and framing and the artistic technique, the sign captures the cultural capital of official, corporate signage. That the sign exists at all in this location might also act as a signal that this space is indeed a communitygarden and that the sign is erected by the owners of the space (*which paradoxically it is not as the owners of the space are the descendants of those who had their house bombed*). The sign (potentially) quashes much of the ambiguity regarding the space as it has circumvents any questions about what this space might be by asserting that this space is a "*Community Garden*" (Appendix 18).

5.9.4 The Mobilisation of Children

[Extract from observation notebook 20.07.2011]

13.15 A representative of '[name of city omitted] *in Bloom*' arrives by car one afternoon (parking the car on the pavement). There are some brief (inaudible) conversations between the 'In-Bloom' representative and the representative of the communitygarden. "*Its great to see children here – could we have a photograph of them for the newsletter?*"

13.18 The children are ushered over to one of the flowerbeds "*over there by those trees*" and the children duly head over to the trees as they were ordered.

13.19 On the journey to *'over there'* the children, two young girls aged perhaps seven and nine years, trample through a flowerbed to get to the trees. A number of the adults see this and call out *"oh no, no, no – not there"* calls one woman *"not in the flowers"* says another in an admonishing tone and a man informs the children that *"you're standing on the flowers"*.

13.20 The children press on with their accessing the tree – the children have been told to pose in front of the tree (that was their parents' instruction) and despite the protestations of the adults, there is not yet an instruction *NOT* to get to the tree. This counter-instruction is issued shortly to the two young girls *"No not next to the tree, come back around, and we'll take the photograph somewhere else"*.

13.21 Following this instruction, a few of the other adults who are on-looker also proffer more instructions and advice to the young girls regarding their retreat back through the flower bed: *"careful there"*, *"mind that flower"*, *"come back straight, that's it - go back the way you entered"*.

13.22 Two female adults continue to give advice. The children are watched by approximately a dozen adults, with varying degrees of (apparent) interest or concern.

[It is worth noting that the children had not damaged the flowers, they relatively carefully tip-toed through the flower bed, treading only on the space between the flowers, which is covered in wood-chippings that overlays the soil (*a technique for reducing the amount of weeding required*). The claims made by the adults regarding the children damaging the flowers was not based on the reality of the event or what was actually happening. The adults had not expressed their concern that the children *'might'* damage the flowers, but that the children *'were'* in the process of damaging the flowers].

13.22 The children finally retreat from the flowerbed whereupon the previously vocal adult male instructs them to come over to the bench *"Here girls... (in a raised but calm voice), come over here... if you sit... just here, then we can get the flowers in the background"*. Simultaneously to the man calling out the

instruction to the girls to come and sit on the bench, two of the vocal adults begin to talk quietly between themselves, (rather than directly to the girls) at this point.

13.23 “*Can you believe it – just marching on into it like that*” to which the other responds, “*Yes, I know...*” and both ladies smile and do a small (rather fake seeming) laugh.

13.24 The lady from ‘[name of city omitted] in Bloom’ takes her photos of the children, who also instructs the children to ‘*Smile!*’

13.26 When the photos are completed, the children go off and leave the main community garden area and head for a wilder, relatively inaccessible patch of brambles and ivy to go and have a discussion (*that is inaudible to the observer and all the other adults*).

The children remain within sight, but not earshot, of the adults and their parents. The location they sit is between two trees, draped with ivy, at the top of a very steep slope, that none of the adults have so far accessed during this gathering.

[*End of excerpt from observation notebook.*]

This extract from the observation notebook describes the typical inter-relationship between adults and children in the community garden. Adults ostensibly welcome children into the space but then effectively exclude the children from the space. This subsection examines how children have been mobilised to represent an important part of the community; yet in practice, children have largely been excluded from the space. This is a contentious and paradoxical situation. In all interviews with members of community₂ (note that these members of the community are all adults) the belief or understanding is that children are part of the community and that the garden is for children and adults alike. All of the actors interviewed were clear in their view that the community garden was for people of all ages: adults and children. In some of the documentary material related to the community garden there is reported evidence that children are an important and integral part of the concept of community. The

space was used (among other activities) for “...*children playing, adults playing together with children... playing conkers... Easter egg hunts*” (Appendix 15: Town-Green Application Form, 2008: 8). Furthermore, some of the interviewees go further and describe how the communitygarden is designed “*for children*” (AA02, 2011; AA04, 2012). There is even a description of a specific children’s play area, “*Bring: i) Grass seed to spread around. ii) Bulbs and trowels to dig them in around the area (including Childrens (sic) Playground area)*” (Appendix 8: A4 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 13.10.2012). This account of a ‘*children’s playground area*’ is particularly disputable (or incorrect) as there is not a children’s playground area in the communitygarden. Nonetheless it accords with the overall perception by adults (an recorded in leaflets, posters, minutes and local government records) that children are (catered for and) part of community₂.

The stated intention of community₂ is not to remove children, quite the opposite; a community implies the presence of all members of a society. Therefore, community₂ requires an equivalence for the presence of children in the informal space. The presence of a few children accompanied by their parents in the communitygarden is considered evidence of the desired community₂. There are fewer children playing in the communitygarden compared to the many children who previously played in the ‘*Debris*’. The reality is that children are mostly absent; however the desired reality is that children are present and form part of community₂. This sub-section explores the aporia concerning the representation of children in relation to the informal space.

5.9.4.1 *Socio-physical displacement of children*

The communitygarden has been modified physically to house miniature walls to acts as flowerbeds. These, in combination with the control of grassed areas, and the planting of flowers have so organized the informal space, as to make a playable space for children all but impossible (in practice). The grassed areas been so partitioned by flowers beds as to prohibit ball games or running around generally. The flowers are fragile and cannot withstand children walking on them. In practice this has lead partially to a lack of children in the communitygarden. When there are children in the vicinity, or when accompanied by parents to the

area, the children are asked to ‘*Go off and play!*’ (Observation note, 2010) and head away from the flowers and the parts of the informal space that are most intensely gardened, and go away towards, and into, the wilder, un-gardened areas (though still within earshot of parents). The effect of this material and spatial re-organisation of the informal space is to exclude children; for example: flowers are anti-child. This physical form of production serves, in practice, to facilitate the disappearance of children as social production. The appearance and practices of adults in the informal garden has mostly extirpated the presence of children. This new (or modified) network in action corresponds with a different material and spatial organisation.

The extirpation of children (via social and physical apparatus) is partially enacted through the differing ‘*garden habitus*’ of adults and children. In a garden there is a need to behave in a certain way, to be disciplined into acting in specific patterns and practices. It is not a necessarily ‘*natural*’ or obvious mode of behaving, only some of the adults attain it. For example, one cannot run around or be too vigorous or violent in a garden (as flowers are delicate). One needs to be more docile: to sit down “*resting on benches*” (Appendix 15) or sit still “*relaxing*” (Appendix 23) in order to ‘*enjoy*’ the space. There are many other dispositions, habits, practices, deportment and mannerisms specific to an English garden. These are rarely understood or followed by children who are frequently too lively and whose preferences might be to make a den, kick a ball, climb a tree or break sticks (rather than sit still or do some gardening). Children are sometimes unaware of their surroundings or perhaps not interested and/or capable of attaining a garden habitus. This is not to say that it is impossible for adults and children to share a social-space; rather that this is the current outcome for the specific configuration of this empirical study.

5.9.4.2 *The displacement of children’s play*

More children used the informal space before, rather than after, its translation into a community garden. In interviews with residents who remember the space whilst it was derelict, and particularly after the bomb damage, the space was most mostly referred to as a place for children to play.

Interview with older resident (AA08, 2012)

AA08: “*we ’z used to play ’ere as kids*”

Interviewer: “*Was there a playground here?*”

AA08: “*...(laughs) No, no... this wuz uh bombsite – we ’z jus ’ mucked about in them derelic ’ ouses.*”

The informal space was used by children in the area as an ad hoc play area. This initially involved the children playing amongst the rubble of the bomb damaged housing. In a letter, used as evidence for the town-green application, one of the elderly residents remembers the prior use of the informal space “*I’ve been a resident for fifty one years in [adjacent street]. I’ve seen it used a several uses over the years, my children when very young made their ‘dens’, used it as an adventure play area. It was known as the ‘Debris’ scattered wreckage strewn across the piece of waste ground which had been a bomb site*” (Appendix 16: Town-Green Application Residents Letter, 2007) This suggests the previous use was by children and the description of the site in a more derelict state. In response to Question 10 of the town-green application questionnaire (Appendix 23) “*During the time you used the land has your pattern of use remained basically the same?*” respondents are directed towards giving a “Yes/No” answer. However one of the respondents selected the ‘no’ option. This evidences a distinct change of identity of the space and its users. The same respondent added the comment “*My children played on it in the [19]60’s70’s*” (ibid). This indicates a shift in usage from the informal space as one used predominantly by children towards one rarely used by children. This shift is also stated in the town-green application documents in the ‘*brief history*’ timeline which describes the space: “*1950s Used as a play area by local children, when it was known as ‘the debris’*” (Appendix 15: 7). This document then describes the shift in uses and physical changes over time, however this is the only mention of children using the space in the ‘*brief history*’ timeline (Appendix 15: 7-8).

The area was not a formal playground with, for example, swings and slides but was an informal space with a variety of potential playable spaces, objects or material within. ‘*Mucking about*’ captures some of the notion of wasting time

and unproductive time connected to this mode of children's' play. Not that play did not also occur in formal spaces, but the human activity in the informal space at that time (i.e. when it was most derelict) was for playful purposes by children. This is not to make a correlation between waste-space and waste-time; merely to state that in this instance there was a relationship.

Interview with older resident (AA10, 2012):

Interviewer "Can I talk to you about what this used to be like years ago?"

AA10 "Oh do you mean the playground (winks) – we used to play there"

Interviewer "Were you allowed to play here – did your parents know?"

AA10 (smiling) "no, our parents did not know"

The informal space was referred to as the "*Debris*" and used as a play area for children, prior to its conversion into a community garden (Appendix 15: page 8 and Appendix 23). The informal space was used by children without the permission or consent of their parents or guardians. The children who used the '*Debris*' as a play area were attracted to this space, according to residents of the area who played there, partly as a result of the opportunity for playful behavior and "*adventure*" (Appendix 19) and partly to be out of sight of parents, residents and/or adults.

5.9.4.3 Emergence of Risk

There was a degree of danger in the use of this area as a play area. The '*Debris*' was a relatively dangerous place to play in the sense of there being broken glass, sharp objects and other hazardous materials in the space. "*Everyone should be aware, however, that this was a local bomb site from the last war and then a refuse dump and as such will inevitably have all sorts of items in the soil*" (Appendix 12). Contemporary attitudes towards Health and Safety, particularly in relation to children's' play have changed considerably over the past few decades (Play England, 2011). Whether the '*Debris*' was, in practice, a dangerous place to play is a moot point; however, it is certain that attitudes to where and how children should play have changed in the past few decades. It is

likely that parents would no longer allow their children to play in the ‘*Debris*’ area if it was still extant in this condition (although this is speculation). There are fewer children playing unsupervised than in previous years in the UK (Cole-Hamilton, 2011). This points partly to the shift in attitudes towards parental care, as today most children are kept under surveillance by parents, rather than allowed to access the streets as freely as the previous generation did (Gleave, 2009).

There is an elevated element of risk in the community garden and this is explicitly acknowledged by community₂. “*Local Residents and others who have begun to clear the Garden Ground...have found a quantity of broken glass and bricks and metal objects*” (Appendix 12: Extract from poster pinned to tree at entrance to informal space 13.08.2012). This is still a relatively dangerous location for children to be in, compared to the nearby park with its protective matting, fencing and carefully designed play equipment (all compliant with stringent safety regulations). The ambiguity over responsibility over ownership and liability for the community garden is leading to an emergence of warning signs on community notices for social events. “*NO CHILDREN UNDER 12 years, should be in the Barbeque area*” ... “*PLEASE KINDLY NOTE that PARENTS must be fully RESPONSIBLE for Their CHILDREN at all TIMES...*” (Appendix 12: Extract from poster pinned to tree at entrance to informal space 13.08.2012). There is an emergent separation of children from adults here, (which is neither a surprising nor unusual process) and indicates the shifting towards controlled management concerning the use of the informal space. The addition of this advice indicates the pervading presence of perceived responsibility or liability for ‘*other*’ users of the space by one group over another, particularly for organised social events; as Beck (1992:28) suggests, risks “*must always be imagined, implied to be true, believed. In this sense too, risks are invisible*”. With this arrival of a risk aware *and* risk averse community, there is an exclusory effect on children: children are restricted from using the space unsupervised by their parents; and, during social events, the children are placed under additional scrutiny by parents *and* other adults. This is not to argue these are not advisable or sage actions, merely to illustrate the emergence of a different set of restrictions and disciplines acting on children. This makes the space less

accessible for children. In practice, children use the space less than previous generations of children and less compared to adults today.

5.9.4.4 *Social displacement of children*

The new socio-spatial organisation of the communitygarden affords the enrolment of social events into the translation. Halloween, Christmas, Easter, Midsummers Day and others become temporal events in the communitygarden. Some of these are designated specifically for children, for example an “*Annual Easter Eggs Hunt!*” with chocolate eggs hidden in the space, for children to find. These encourage and facilitate the presence of children, if albeit in a heavily supervised context. There are many other social events that also serve to exclude children, in contradiction to the objective of the process of community building.

“Halloween October 31st Community barbeque 6:00 PM: Fancy dress optional but scarier the better. Mulled wine and hot dogs on sale. Trick or treaters welcome.” (Appendix 5: A5 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 11.10.2012).

“Saturday September 22nd ... Community barbeque on the town green 6.30 PM: The community barbeque will be fired up for another sociable evening. Hot-dogs £1.50. Bring your own drinks” (Appendix 5: A5 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 03.09.2012).

“Barbeque ...Sunday July7th 6.00pm. Come along and enjoy a hot-dog (or two), £1.50-each. Soft drinks provided. Bring your own alcohol.” (Appendix 22: A5 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 22.06.2013).

In these examples the communitygarden becomes an event space for the production and reproduction of community₂. Food and drink are used as devices to entrap or cajole the community. There is however, an explicit economic aspect for the inclusion in these events. Each of these posters or notices state an economic cost in connection to attendance at these events. These costs are relatively small for a waged adult, but prohibitively expensive for certain sectors of the population, particularly younger children. The economic price for these items is not established to be at the minimum level. Instead the prices are devised

to produce an economic surplus to help contribute for the upkeep of the garden. The hot-dogs are deliberately over-priced in that the price is set at a level way above the actual costs of the sausage, bun, ketchup, labour, charcoal etc. There is an inflation of price to facilitate the production of the community garden. Those who do not have money are thus excluded from the activity (a barbeque); these are principally children, but other users such as the drunks who use the space might also be excluded. Groups of teenagers are also excluded (those not in the presence of their parents at least) by the conditions of this event (perhaps by its lack of interest to them) or by the requirement to pay for over-priced sausages. Exclusion of children is also effected by the provision of alcoholic beverages that can only be consumed by adults (the provision of coffee at many of the events similarly excludes children, as coffee is almost exclusively drunk by adults and not children). Some of the events are too late for the youngest of children. Other activities, such as cooking on a barbeque or lighting the barbeque are deemed too dangerous for children to be involved with, for example “*NO CHILDREN UNDER 12 years should be in the barbeque area, because of the hot charcoal and cooking facilities*” (Appendix 12: emphasis as in original document). Whilst children can and do attend these events, they are principally attended by (and outnumbered by) adults.

5.9.4.5 *The Mediation of children*

The children are mostly represented by others: their parents talk on their behalf, the other residents also do so. Children do not form part of, nor are represented at, any of the many Neighbourhood Watch fora, residents’ association meetings or ‘*Friends of the Garden*’ gatherings. Only adults are present at any of these events, there is never a discussion about the wants, needs or desires of children, nor are children consulted at any point for their views or opinions. These community₂ events are mostly held in the evening, past the bedtime of younger children which also excludes them. Children do not post any leaflets, pin any notices, publish newsletters nor distribute minutes. Equivalences are used so that children become replaced by other actors, who can speak, represent or act on their behalf. Mobilisation is how the few represent the many, for example, how the many hundreds of residents are represented by a few focal (resident) actors. There is a

greater degree of separation with children through mobilisation. Indeed this separation is total, resulting in a strange paradox; children no longer represent children. This is a peculiar and somewhat unexpected result, and will be unpicked over the following sub-sections. There is an almost total absence of any children as representatives. All of the many children are instead represented and/or mediated by a few adults.

Ironically, even the photographs of children that are used in the ‘*[Name of city omitted] in Bloom*’ [as described in the excerpt from the observation extract] are further misrepresentations of children. The evidence of photographic documentation is an artificially produced document. The image of the children is produced as an equivalent of a reality of children ‘*really*’ using this space. Children are brought to the garden by their parents and made to pose by their parents and members of community². The children were not actually playing in the communitygarden; the photographer artificially constructed the scenario of the children with the flowers. The children vacated the garden at the earliest possible moment. Children were used as a representation of the notion of community for the purposes of winning a certain award from ‘*[Name of city omitted] in Bloom*’. Two children are used (among other things) to mobilise the many other children. Despite the (voluntary) presence of twenty-seven adults and (involuntary) presence of only two children, the photograph is framed to portray the *communitygarden* in an artificial and unrepresentative manner. None of the many adults are present, but only the two children – arguably a reverse process to the notion of mobilisation. However, in this image, the presence of the children implies the wider network of the community; it is almost unheard of for such young children to be out on their own, unsupervised; the presence of adults is implicit, despite their visual absence. The children are mediated. In the sense they are manipulated and their meaning mediated by certain actors, such as in the framing of the photograph. The children don’t express themselves in this context; it is their parents and local residents who choose the mode and meaning of their expression. The children act as an intermediary between the notion of community and its representation visually.

The fieldwork example is an illustration of the relationship of children to the informal space. The children are multiply misrepresented: in none of the documents, in none of the residents meetings, in none of my interviews are the children's' views directly expressed. The only official and documented record of children's' voices is expressed through the intermediary of local adults; either reminiscing of their childhood, or speaking generally about children (Appendices 15 & 16).

5.9.4.6 *Summary of mobilisation of children*

There is a double displacement of children in this case-study. Firstly children are actually (*physically*) displaced from the space. The many children of the former Debris have been replaced by the many adults in the space today. Despite the rhetoric that children are welcome in the space and are an integral part of the community; the observations point to a different conclusion; that children are unwelcome and are excluded from the communitygarden. Children are excluded due to a number of factors: the perception of dangers, the relative degree of '*dangerous*' materials on site, the emergence of *risks*; the organisation of residents meetings in the evening (after bedtime); the design of the communitygarden with anti-child features; social events with prohibited/age-restricted substances; social events involving financial costs in order to participate.

Secondly, children are displaced by equivalences in the mode of language (words, dialogues and conversations) documents (minutes, notices and leaflets) and images (photographs). These equivalences are mediated by a few adults. Despite the presence (or otherwise) of children; children have nonetheless been successfully mobilised by a few representatives. These representatives are not children, but adults from community₂. Children are mobilised, not by the actions or words of children. Rather, children are mobilised in the accounts by a few adult community₂ representatives. In archive documents, newsletters, community fora, on notices on site and in conversations with residents: children have become mobilised to form part of the alliance communitygarden. Documentation produced by a few representatives of community₂ acts (regardless of veracity) as equivalence to the presence of many children using the informal space. There is a

semiotic shift from *real* children to their representation as text. In this way mobilisation could be said to be the move from the '*real*' to the '*semiotic*'.

5.9.5 Summary of mobilisation

The problematisation of the informal space involved the requirement for a modification of a once derelict space into the condition of a neat and tidy communitygarden. It could be said that this problematisation was broadly successful as this transformation has occurred, myriad actors have been mobilised. However it is also true that the '*garden*' only extends to approximately half of the overall informal space. It is equally valid therefore to claim that the informal space is *not* a garden, as much as it *is* a garden. The wilder, untouched parts of the informal space are as expansive as the cultivated parts. Yet the translation of nature₁ into nature₂ is deemed a success (*according to the large sign at the entrance to the space* (Appendix 18)). Despite the presence of nature₁ in the informal space, this is displaced by nature₂. Nature₂ has been mobilised to represent all of the nature on the site. Similarly the various residents, children, visitors, passers-by, lost pedestrians and inhabitants of the locality have been successfully mobilised into community₂. Rather than depending on the vagaries and complexities of a real, contingent, changing world; these kinetic systems are displaced with static, unchangeable equivalences, often as words and texts. The question posed at the outset of the problematisation '*is the space a communitygarden?*' has been successfully translated into the statement '*this space is a communitygarden*'. Along with this transformation of uncertainty to certainty; or unknown into fact; a number of identities, relationships and goals of the myriad actors has transformed.

5.10 DISSIDENCE

The outcome of translation is not always successful; along the way there are many events and/or actors that do not perform as intended or desired. Callon (1986) describes this as dissent and is defined when controversy erupts and representation, displacement and enrolment are "*questioned, discussed, negotiated, rejected*". The problematisation of the communitygarden has actors who attempt, or desire, to dissent to this process. Some actors did not play the

part hypothesized in the problematisation and the obligatory passage point was not entirely successful.

5.10.1 Dissent in the communitygarden

Throughout the process of enrolling nature₂ there were many examples of dissent; the unwanted weeds kept coming back to disrupt the process; local residents would not garden as often as necessary; the flowers would not grow without the additional help of fertilizers. It was necessary for minor re-visions of the problematisation, interessement and enrolment in order to keep nature₂ to perform as necessary. The residents needed to be repeatedly reminded to come and frequent the space, carry out gardening chores and to act in this space as community₂ should. Minor cases of vandalism of the garden; tampering with the flower-beds, drunken students damaging the communitygarden sign; children playing inappropriate games and the occasional drunks using the bench were all examples of ‘*social*’ dissent within the network. These acts of dissent are not entirely excluded from the network; they are still ‘*in reality*’ acting in this space, and producing it too. However, they have been omitted from written accounts, in notices, leaflets and minutes.

The communitygarden comprises approximately 50% of the total area of the original extent of the informal space (and the subsequent town-green only approximately 40%). This means that the translation is only partially successful for the case-study area. There are many reasons why sections of the space were left untouched: the left-over areas are those too awkward to use by adults; there were too many trees and these are hard to cut down and/or destroy; the slopes are too steep; the brambles are dense, thorny and difficult to remove. Certain regions of the informal space are resistant to the production of the communitygarden. Translation has only successfully occurred in certain parts of the space; there is dissent in the informal space. The following sub-sections of this findings chapter examine the dissenting actors of the informal space.

5.10.2 Nature dissents

This subsection examines the role of nature in the informal space and how fauna in particular is (often) a dissenter in the translation process. There is relatively little fauna visible or detectable on the informal space. Animals on the site are fairly inconspicuous and their role is ostensibly minimal, they have a presence on the site nonetheless, and as such deserve some mention in the writing up of findings. Furthermore, whilst it is difficult to ‘see’ what they do on the site, many of the mammals perform important biological roles within the ecosystem. Without these fauna, there would be no garden because of their myriad roles they perform as part of the ecosystem. There is a range of relatively small species of mammals, prevalent in the UK, but difficult to see. There are a number of small holes that are the entrances to a few mostly small, nocturnal and shy mammals various burrows and chambers.

The mammals that are visible during several years of observation are: dogs, which are always there when their owners are present; cats which are not there with owners, and might be domesticated or feral (hard to discern either way); urban foxes (which are feral), rats and bats. There are a number of birds that visit and occasionally live in the space. There are myriad insects, gastropods (slugs, snails) and other ‘creepy-crawlies’ that inhabit and transit the space. Below are some observations and field-notes regarding the fauna of the informal space; these are then examined in relation to translation and particularly the notion of *dissidence*.

Dogs

Dogs are mostly on a lead, or controlled quite carefully by their owners. When asked why their dogs are controlled in this way, the owners’ responses are either related to dog excrement or generally uncontrollable pets.

The lack of control of pets relates to owners’ perceptions of their dog, i.e. that once let off the leash, the dog would either run away or run into the road. This is more associated to the vagaries of dog behaviour (or more accurately, dog-owners’ perceptions of dog behaviour) rather than any particularities of the space.

The dog excrement issue (and the control thereof) is connected particularly to the place perceived to be where children play. The notion that children's play-space is an elevated risk for dog excrement is related partly to the carelessness with which children play (in contrast to adults who, for example, tend to be more careful where they tread and what they tread in) and partly to the perception that dogs 'go off' to certain places to excrete that are frequented by children. As one dog owner stated "*If I don't watch her, she'll [the dog] ... be off up there [gestures with arm up to thicket of overgrown bushes] and have done her... business without me knowing*" [AA07, 2012]. A number of dog owners allude to the same point, although never actually mentioning excrement at any point, that their dogs will sneak off and excrete in some corner of the space without the owner being aware. The dog owners also do not explicitly state that these places are also where children play. However, the locations they point out (*and it is notable how often they do literally point with their hand, arm or a movement of a head*) are the same places where children play (and where adults rarely go). The dog excrement sites are often the same relatively inaccessible places that the children use for hide and seek or making dens.

Cats and Birds

[Extract from observation notebook 13.06.2010]

10.21 A cat wanders into the informal space. There are no humans in the area. The cat enters by walking along a ridge of fencing at one edge of the space and then jumps down into one of the flowerbeds.

10.22 The cat spends a few moments gently and carefully edging through the flowers, pushing past the foliage.

10.23 The cat sees a bird (a mostly brown bird, a little smaller than a sparrow) at the other end of the space and heads towards it. Treading tentatively amongst the flowers, the cat stalks very slowly and steadily towards the bird.

10.24 The bird jumps about in the hedge from one stick to another. At this point the cat runs towards the bush with the bird in it, but the bird sees the cat and flies

away. The cat walks back through the flowerbed and then leaves the space entirely.

[End of Extract]

This short description is the extent of the role and activity of cats in this space. Cats are relatively frequent visitors to the site, but rarely staying for any considerable time, nor making much noise or impact on the space. Mostly cats are ignored by humans, the only interaction is when the occasional person stops to stroke one. Cats do not congregate together, nor are present with other cats simultaneously. The brief description simultaneously portrays the presence of many of the birds. They too are frequent visitors to the space, again mostly innocuous visitors that are relatively shy and remain only a fleeting amount of time. The birds have no interaction with the humans. The birds nonetheless play an important part in the ecological well-being of nature². (*Note: Some birds are considered pests and are examined in the section on pests*).

Urban foxes

There are quite a few foxes that visit this site, mostly at dusk or in the evening, although very occasionally they come during the day. These foxes (now pejoratively dubbed ‘*urban foxes*’²²) have a den fairly nearby and use the space to pass through and occasionally as part of their hunting ground. The foxes are very shy and normally eschew human interaction. They occasionally pick apart the food and debris from bin bags and recycling that are left out. The foxes are generally quiet, however around January they make louder crying noises, particularly at night.

²² Urban foxes are a form of *hybrid* nature; no longer perceived as an entirely natural entity because of their close relationship or dependency on humans. This is somewhat paradoxical, the fox is entirely ‘*natural*’ as it is not a cyborg, robot, genetically-modified organism nor synthetically product, nor is it even domesticated. Yet the urban fox inhabits quasi-urban space: the fringes of the spaces used and produced by humans, from parks and woodlands to wastelands and derelict sites. Urban foxes feed partially on what would be their natural prey: small birds and mammals but they also feed on the waste-products of human consumption, i.e. thrown-away food from bins, refuse sites and discarded litter. The urban fox dissents to living in the ‘*wild*’ and instead inhabits urban environments. (Along with the urban fox are other such hybrid fauna as pigeons, seagulls, squirrels and rats).

Bats

There are the occasional pipistrelle bats that come to hunt flies and other airborne insects. They come at dusk and are visible for perhaps one hour per evening. The bats are hard to see or hear but it is possible to notice them at the right time of day. Other fauna are so rare to see as to have no discernible presence on the space. However many of the smaller mammals will be performing important activities (often underground within the soil) as part of the local biological processes.

Pests

There are a number of forms of fauna that are classified as pests according to UK legislation. This legislation is based on evidence regarding the effects of one species on another. However, in practice, gardeners did not act upon this legislation, nor know any of the species listed as pests. This pathologising of nature by gardeners into ‘good’ or ‘bad’ that is not based on any objective criteria or UK legislation, but on individual preferences and prejudices. Gardeners act upon all slugs, flies and insects, as pests to be exterminated. There was no consideration or protection for fauna from most of the gardeners, whether they contributed to biodiversity or not.

5.10.3 Modes of nature₂ dissent

Different fauna play very different roles in the space; these can be categorised by their relationship(s) to human actors. The first category includes domesticated animals (*pets*) particularly dogs which are in some ways treated like children; they are supervised, surveilled²³ and controlled by adults²⁴. Cats are ignored,

²³ The neologism ‘*surveilled*’ –derives from the noun surveillance. The etymology of which derives from a verb (*to watch over*)

²⁴ Arguably there is a connection between dogs and children in relation to surveillance and control. Both are relatively closely *controlled and kept under surveillance* Dogs are on a lead and, even some of the smallest toddlers (under the age of two) are literally kept on leads. Though most children (the majority) are not physically restrained via leashes, there are controls on their movement: either through verbal instructions, holding carers/parents’ hands or physical barriers such as walls and fences. Both dogs and children are kept under surveillance by adults, invariably the ‘*owners*’ of both. i.e. it is the owner of the dog who surveills their dog, and it is the owner of the child (often the parent, but frequently the ‘*legal carer*’ for that child) who surveills the child. It is rare for other adults to provide that surveillance (although this is a moot point as most

welcomed or shunned by humans, depending on the preferences of the individual. The second category encompasses fauna considered to be ‘*pests*’; particularly rats, snails, slugs and flies. Those considered pests are destroyed, killed or extirpated. Action that seems destructive from one perspective is constructive from another; for example, when a pest destroys a tree, it opens up niches for fungi and other species. There are sometimes contradictory reports from the gardeners about what constitutes a pest; insects are sprayed with pesticide by one gardener but are referred to, by a different gardener, as a “*gardener’s friend*” (AA04, 2011) because of their perceived role in reducing pests. The third category is ‘*other*’ fauna. Considered as ‘*natural*’, this comprises of all the fauna that does not fit into the other two categories. The myriad worms, ants, beetles, moths and other living creatures with various zoological taxonomies. This category could also be described as fauna that humans do not notice; it is as if these fauna exist in another world to the humans. Some fauna either have an ambiguous relationship to human actors; or fit into two categories simultaneously. Hybrid fauna such as urban foxes, pigeons, seagulls and squirrels are considered partially domesticated, partly wild and partly pests. For example, some residents try to entice the squirrels to eat from their hands on a number of occasions; whilst others describe the squirrels as ‘*rats with tails*’; and the rest of the time the squirrels are busy playing out their role in the ecology of the space.

These three categories help focus the examination into their relationship to translation, particularly dissent. The first category of fauna (*pets*) is part of the network and successful problematisation; they are controlled or disciplined into acting out their required roles. There is no dissent in the network from domesticated dogs (*although dogs might be dissenters if let off their leads and permitted to dig up the flower beds and excrete on the lawn*), the application of leashes enrol canine pets into the formal actor-network through force. The second category of fauna (*pests*) could be understood as ‘*dissenters*’ within the network. “*Controversy is all the manifestations by which the representativity*

children avoid the space when adults are there – or at least avoid being visible to adults in the communitygarden).

(sic) ... is questioned, discussed, negotiated, rejected, etc.” (Callon 1986:219). Pests are deemed to destroy the flowers, eat the leaves, infect the seeds and generally lay waste to almost all parts of the nature₂ if left unattended. Pests are perceived as part of nature₁ but not part of nature₂. A garden cannot contain these pests or there will be no grass and no flowers; or more accurately not enough grass and flowers, or perhaps worse, the wrong type of flowers. The presence of pests is carefully controlled; fauna is restricted from producing an alternative network to nature₂. For example, there are no wasps’ nests, plagues of mice, colonies of rats or skulks of urban foxes; the conditions in which these might arise are preemptively prevented. Yet pests do dissent against the role(s) that nature is expected to perform in the problematisation of the obligatory passage point. Through the process, there is almost continual dissent from the group of fauna: pests. The third category ‘*other*’ fauna: this is fauna that is irrelevant to the process of translation. That is not to say they are not acting, but these are actors whose identities and actions have no discernible effect on the translation of the communitygarden network.

5.10.4 Soil/dirt dissents

Soil has accumulated over the decades; much of the rubbish and junk that was thrown away or discarded has been covered up by soil. “*You can see the evidence still. When we are digging here you pick up bits of glass and old car bits... er...you know... bits of windscreen wipers...*” (AA15: 2012). This accumulation and production of soil has mostly been produced without any human intervention, but through the ‘*natural*’ chemical, biological, mineral and organic processes of soil (re)production. Soil has been part of the network in a positive way; over the years it has been covering up much of the rubbish, broken glass and other detritus that was scattered over the area when it was perceived partly as a “*refuse dump*” (Appendix 12). This role of the soil has been largely ignored by those attempting to create the communitygarden. The informal space had produced a relatively clean and safe location for humans to use, due to the effect of soil accumulation. Indeed the soil did such a good job of covering up rubbish; that it is only through the digging up by gardeners, that the rubbish is re-appearing once

more. The soil in those areas still untouched by gardeners is home to wild flora and fauna.

The identity of the soil is a moot point. Whilst there is no doubt that there has been soil here for many years, whether it is the *'same'* soil is uncertain. One resident claims that *"er the old soil was riddled with bits of cars"* (AA15: 2012) which points to (a perception of) there being two different soils, rather than one single *'soil'*. There is, according to this gardener, *'old'* soil and *'new'* soil, i.e. it is not the same soil. This is echoed by another gardener *"the soil's much er... much better uh now"* (AA06: 2012). Soil is pathologised; the notion of soils being *'good'*, *'bad'*, *'better'* or *'worse'* is confirmed by other gardeners. The identity of the soil is often commented upon by gardeners. *"The soil is too dry... we need to get more moisture into it"* (AA13: 2012) *"I (sic) got a load of bags [of fertilizer] here... from [name omitted] garden centre... there's a deal on... it'll give 'em plants some juice [laughs]"* (AA11: 2012) *"I've been adding loads of this stuff [points to bag of fertilizer] to try and help the flowers"* (AA04: 2011). Due to the addition of fertilizers and pesticides, the soil is chemically different to previously and due to the removal of rubble and car parts, its constituents are not the same anymore.

The level of the soil has increased over time and spreads out onto the adjacent tarmacked paths. From time to time, local residents dig back the soil to maintain the neat delineation of the tarmac paths. This task takes approximately twenty minutes to complete (depending somewhat on the speed of the individual). The soil continues to spread however, as soon as the edging has finished, the soil recommences its trajectory. Soil, in this sense is dissenting to the problematised role; aided by gravity, the soil continuously spreads out onto the tarmacked area. The soil does not keep to its carefully defined borders. The issue of the soil constantly breaking its boundaries reaches a point where the frequent digging back is no longer deemed acceptable or workable by some resident gardeners. They decide that a more permanent, physical object is required to aid their efforts to maintain boundaries. This physical device is an *interessement* device; targeted at the action of the soil. A wooden edging strip will be dug in along the southern boundary; this should perform three functions: it increases the level before which

the soil will flood over, it will make an even more distinct edge to work to and lastly because it *“looks a bit nicer”* (AA11, 2012). Three people spend over three hours performing this task. Notably, two of the people helping in this task, or rather two people who have been cajoled into doing this by their partners, are not gardeners. One describes himself thus: *“I’m not a gardener”* (ref: interview AA10, 2012). These two have been brought in for their *“muscle-power”* (ref: interview AA09, 2012) rather than their ability to garden. The work with the soil seemingly sits outside the realm of gardening, and is some other un-named or as yet unclassified activity. Through the insertion of the device of the wooden border edging, the dissenting soil has been forced to perform in the role required by the problematisation.

5.10.5 Dissident social actors

Nature and dirt are not the only dissenters in the informal space. There are other actors who do not form part of the problematisation.

[Extract from observation notebook 22.08.2011]

14.23 Two men wander along the street in the early afternoon. Both are male, aged perhaps in their forties or fifties. They are slightly unkempt and have already been drinking alcohol, their walk has a slight stagger to it, and their talking is slightly slurred.

14.24 As they walk along the street, they notice the bench in the communitygarden, and wander over to it. The bench does not appear to have been their original destination, but they stop there for a while. They have a two litre plastic bottle of *‘super-strength’* cider between them [the label reads *“White Lightning Strong White Cider: Extra Strength 25% Extra Free: 7.5% Alcohol”*] that is approximately one-quarter empty.

14.25 For the next forty minutes the two men sit and drink the remains of the bottle, chatting a little between themselves, although they also spend quite a lot of the time in silence, looking along the street or up at the sky (it is a lovely

sunny day). During this time, three separate groups of local residents walk past, one older couple and two family groups; all of whom look at the drunks without talking to them or acknowledging them.

14.07 The remainder of the bottle of cider is finished off.

14.11 The two men get up and wonder off again, in the direction they were originally heading. The empty bottle and its lid are left by the bench.

[End of extract]

There are infrequent visits by people drinking and/or alcoholics to this space; however there are, perhaps on average one visit per three weeks during summer (less during winter). The same groups do not keep coming back again, nor do they become a source of annoyance for the local residents. Their presence is never raised formally in the neighbourhood watch meetings, although occasionally they are mentioned amidst informal conversations. These actors do not form part of the desired community₂. Ironically, the provision of the bench has encouraged and facilitated the increased frequency of drunks using the space. Before the bench was provided, there were fewer drunks using the space. Despite the occasional dissent by the alcohol-drinking adult humans in the forms of: getting drunk, discarding their rubbish on the site, shouting and occasionally singing, using obscene language near children; the alcohol-infused actors do not sufficiently disrupt the communitygarden network for action to be necessary. These actors are not from the local area but are passers-by; the local residents broadly consider these inebriated actors to be undesirable and not part of community₂. At other times, the use of alcohol in this space is permitted and often forms an integral part of many of the social events, for example: mulled wine at Christmas or beer and wine at the barbeques. Alcohol is used for festive events and parties throughout the year by community₂ partly to lubricate social events and partly to raise funds. Alcohol is thus an actor in the informal space for two distinct groups; the drunks who use the bench occasionally and the local residents. Alcohol is an important and sanctioned actor in the community₂ network.

5.10.6 Dissident anti-social actors

After the local pub closes, particularly at the weekend, people wander past the community garden on their way to another destination. The majority of these transitory actors do not enter the park, nor do much other than talk whilst wandering home. According to the residents who live directly adjacent to the space, occasionally there are more drunk people when the new influx of students move into the area and are (presumably) celebrating their new arrival. One of the gardeners informs me during an interview that some of the flowers have been squashed by people running through the flowerbeds. The gardener believes that flowers have been deliberately pulled out and thrown around. Some of these can be replanted, but others are now dead. The gardener is annoyed that their hard work and effort has been destroyed by “*a few mindless idiots*” (AA06, 2012). The frustration by the gardener (a frustration shared by those who regularly garden here) is evident and understandable – they have put lot of work in, and it has been destroyed. Yet this example also illustrates, in the reverse direction, the ‘*right*’ of others who choose to use the garden as they see fit – which involved throwing those flowers at each other. Whether the aim of picking the flowers was to annoy the gardeners or simply as part of a game (or both (or neither)) is a moot point. The action of destroying the flowers was dissension.

This raises the issue of who has the authority to use the garden in a particular way. The gardeners choose to plant flowers, which are immobile, delicate and space-consuming. In acting in this way, the gardeners exclude a number of other users and alternative possible functions. Each gardener takes over space and effectively demands a wide range of other actors to follow a certain set of rules of what to do and where to walk etc. The drunken students arguably do not. Whilst the activity of the students is considered vandalism by the gardeners; it arguably does not preclude a variety of other users (other than gardeners) from using the space; particularly children who are similarly uninterested in flowers. Nonetheless the drunken student/children/dead-flower network does not form a successful alliance.

5.10.7 Semiotic dissent

There is some graffiti in the informal space; small ‘tags’ are written onto the boundary walls and fences and there are some sticker ‘tags’ stuck to the edge of the bench, and on a post that is in the garden. This graffiti considered a form of vandalism by local Residents Association and they place regular bulletins concerning graffiti in the local Community Association notice boards. These bulletins condemn the graffiti and update the local residents on their, and the local authority, actions to remove the graffiti. There is also some evidence of minor vandalism. The ‘*Community Garden*’ sign has been tampered with in the night. Only the frame that holds it remains for the few weeks it takes to get another sign printed. There is some littering of the space intermittently; cans of soft drinks and/or alcoholic drinks are left near the bench, and occasionally the wrappings of fast food/confectionary. All of these are signs and actions of dissent in the community garden. The problematisation was partly based around the concept of improving the space so that the ‘*broken windows theory*’ would not occur. The improvement of the derelict space into a community garden was intended to be a signal that further rubbish would not be thrown and that vandalism would not occur. Through their actions, these actors inadvertently dissent to ‘*broken windows theory*’ simultaneous dissenting to the production of a community garden. These dissenters are not significant enough, i.e. not frequent enough or of such quantity to destroy the notion of a community garden. The tagging is not removed, partly because it requires specialist skills and equipment that the community lack, and partly because it is at a minor scale and not deemed significant. The Local Authority could be called in to cleanse the space, but they have not (yet). Nonetheless there is a threat of dissent; litter is removed and minor vandalism is rectified by local residents relatively quickly.

5.10.7.1 Dissent in the flowerbeds

Excerpt from interview (AA15: 2012).

[AA15: 2012] ““*The primulas will be fine, they’ll be back in the spring... and daffodils too...they are slightly more attractive... uh...um... yes that’s... mostly begonias and geraniums*”

[Interviewer] “*and what are those?*” [interviewer points towards a yellow flower]

[AA15: 2012] “*That’s a Marigold. There are some marigolds... yes, um, er... marigolds are good...*” (AA15: 2012).

[End of Excerpt]

There was dissent amidst community₂ in relation to the choice of flowers. The notion of garden requires the existence of flowers (in the UK at least). All of the community₂ agreed on this principle. Flowers thus act as a sign for a garden. Not all flowers are equal however. The *type* of garden the flowers symbolize is connected to the community (or individuals) that created/planted them. Flowers have long been used to represent different events: poppies to remember war, lilies at funerals and flowers in one’s hair for hippies. It is unlikely, rare or perhaps impossible that a flowerbed in the UK would occur naturally; thus the flowers therein are a sign of the persons that planted them. Different flowers act semiotically on behalf of different social groups.

The grouping of community₂ is formed by all of those local residents and human actors who have gathered at various times to form a network to carry out gardening, clear paths, remove rubbish, cook sausages, build walls, fill in questionnaires, attend certain residents meetings or any of the myriad actions that constitute inclusion in the grouping community₂. Within community₂ there are different factions regarding the choice of flowers. For this subsection, community₂ will be broken down into these smaller factions, These factions are categorized thus: community_{2.1} are those who support ‘*wildflowers*’; community_{2.2} are those who support ‘*naff*’ flowers; community_{2.3} are those who have no opinion, knowledge or preference for either faction.

One community_{2.1} actor AA04 (2011) complained, in relation to the planting/gardening preferences of community_{2.2}, of their “*flowers being naff*”. Embedded in this casual remark about the type of flower is a richer sub-text about cultural values, signification of plants and the meaning of plants in relation to socio-economic class. The same actor also commented that, “*we have to be careful we don’t end up with a load of petunias and marigolds*” (AA04, 2011]. These comments have a touch of age-ism in its subtext. The marigold is synonymous with the elderly; for example it was eponymously referenced in the film ‘*The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*’ as the name of an ‘*old peoples home*’ (Madden, 2012). These flowers: petunia and marigold are often perceived to be the flowers that are associated (in the UK at least) with an elderly population.

“*The flowers in the Community Garden are so not ‘us’ is it ... we’re much more wild flower round here*” (AA06, 2012). It is pertinent to note the use of the word ‘*we*’ in this context – the interviewee was clear in the demarcation of a ‘*we*’ and ‘*them*’ (and perhaps a process of ‘*othering*’). This denotes a cultural division along the lines of floral choice and the process of othering through this. The proposal of wildflowers representing ‘*we*’ connects the natural world with the cultural world. The choice of flowers that has prevailed in the community garden could be described as rather staid and staged (without criticism implied in the use of the words). Ironically this prevalence of flower that is ostensibly anodyne has caused or provoked dissent amongst community_{2.1}. The members of community_{2.2} who are deemed ‘*naff*’ by community_{2.1} are not aware of the criticism by community_{2.1}. The choice of flowers makes some of the community_{2.1} irate with annoyance; yet there is no direct or verbal confrontation with any of the other actors (out of politeness) from community_{2.2}. Community_{2.2} do share their grievances with the interviewer. In conversation about the choice of flowers in various flowerbeds, one of the elderly gardeners (a member of community_{2.2}) describes how “*... personally I’d like to have something a bit more colourful... but its the grey/green subtle people who won out this year (laughs)... maybe next year we’ll get a bit more... a bit more colour? Have one colourful bed and one grey/green bed... I like something more flamboyant (laughs)*” (AA15: 2012). The ‘*grey/green subtle*’ is a general description of less florid planting and refers to parts of the garden that have ‘*wildflowers*’. This

comment reveals a similar process of othering and/or identification of a network formed of flowers and humans. It is clear to this interviewee that the ‘*subtle*’ flowers are part of a different network (community_{2.1}), one to which he does not belong. There is even the hybridisation of people and nature into one category through the use of the term ‘*grey/green subtle people*’; flowers and society become coterminous. The grey/green subtle people are community_{2.1}; the ‘*naff*’ flowers are part of the identity of community_{2.2}. These refer to networks not made exclusively from flora but ones constituted and mobilised partly by social actors and inter-related semiotic flows. This comment is also revealing in that it portrays the process/product as a battle – networks who have ‘*won*’ and presumably those that have been ‘*vanquished*’. This statement describes how community_{2.2} and community_{2.1} are defining themselves through flowers, and in a contra-process how the flowers define them.

The comments were expressed in interviews only, but not at any meetings, events or community fora. The choice of flowers such as petunias and marigolds is a reflection of what community_{2.2} deem an attractive and representative flower. Ironically both community_{2.1} and community_{2.2} both complain that the opposing faction have ‘*won*’ the battle. The communitygarden has flowers seemingly neither faction want. (As an observer from community_{2.3}) it is reasonable to adjudge that the communitygarden does appear to contain more of the flowers of the community_{2.2} network; both in terms of overall numbers of flowers and the visibility/prominence of the flowers. There are more members of the subgroup community_{2.2} and are more frequently active in the gardening. Perhaps because community_{2.2} is comprised of older residents who are now retired and have more time to spend, the choice of flowers is determined not through discussion or debates, but through action. Community_{2.2} plant the flowers they wish to see, and these are ‘*naff*’ flowers such as such as petunias and marigolds. The wildflowers are consigned mostly (but not exclusively) to the peripheries of the space and more remote parts of the informal space. The members of community_{2.1} are restricted to less prominent parts of the garden. Community_{2.3} are oblivious to the semiotic content of flowers or have no interest or affiliation either way. Community_{2.3} do not act at all in this conflict; they play no part in determining the choice of flowers.

5.10.8 Summary of community garden dissidence

The examples of dissent have come from a heterogeneous array of actors. There is dissent from human actors such as drunken students, alcoholics, vandals and careless children. There is dissent within the human actors in relation to the choice of flowers. All of these human dissenters bring the concept of community₂ to be “*questioned, discussed, negotiated, rejected*” by these actors (Callon, 1986 219). There are non-human dissenters in a variety of different guises; there is semiotic dissent with litter, graffiti and rubbish signaling the existence of alternative networks in action. Soil dissents to the boundaries it has been ascribed. Pests and weeds are allied to the nature₁ network and are in confrontation with nature₂. These disrupt the concept of nature₂ qua garden. These natural actors are more successful than the human dissenters in renegotiating the problematisation. The focal actors and community₂ have to go back and repeatedly adopt new tactics and strategies to either combat or re-align these natural actors. Nonetheless the dissent is not sufficient to delay or prevent the creation of a community garden. It might not have been what was intended, nor what all of the residents might want, but it has sufficiently transformed from the original informal space for the translation to be accepted as successful.

5.11 Summary of translation

The hypothetical network indicated during problematisation has been realized into a relatively stable set of identities. It could be argued that it is through translation that the *social* identities of a dispersed network of individuals were transformed to unite into a community (and through this translation the identities of certain individuals shifted from ‘*passive*’ residents into guerilla gardening activists amongst other things). Similarly the translation also fundamentally changed the local *natural* world; the flora and fauna, even the chemical make-up of the soil and *material* world, was altered over this process. During this process of translation there has been the heterogeneous involvement of: politics, painting, playing, environmentalism, dirt, graffiti, marketing, vandalism, photocopying, parties, eating, advertising, gardening, drinking, capital, aesthetics, building, digging, talking, typing and semiotics. It was only when all of these worlds came together simultaneously as this actor-network produced a new social and

natural reality. The transformations in society might have been small and other factors also contributed to these changes; nonetheless the informal space was an agent in this changed identity. The transformations are mutually constitutive; it is the local community and the space that are to some extent '*co-productive*'. There was and is dissent within the network and this stabilized network can be disassembled at any point; there is a need to keep performing this set of inter-relationships to maintain this status. The identities are co-productive rather than co-produced; the specificity of the term is intended to underline the importance of understanding this as a process and not a finished immutable product.

It is worth noting that the communitygarden remains an example of informal space as defined in literature review '*spaces used by individuals or groups who do not own the space*'. There is merely an implied (or performed/enacted) ownership, rather than a legal ownership. The use of the term communitygarden does not preclude it also being an informal space. The two are given seemingly separate identities for clarity in this account.

6 FINDINGS CHAPTER B: TOWN-GREEN

6.1 Preface

The translation in this chapter portrays how the informal space/community garden is translated into a town-green. The findings of this chapter deal with an account of a relatively brief part of the production of the informal space (and hence only accounts for part of the event). In terms of timeframes this is restricted from mid-2007 until 2pm on 19th January 2009. This is also physically restricted to a small part of the larger case-study area (approximately forty percent of the entire space (see Appendix 17 for plan indicating the differing extents)). This excerpt comprises an account of how actors on behalf of the local community attempted to use the Commons Act 2006 (more commonly referred to as the ‘*Town-Green*’ Act)²⁵ to have part of the informal space legally defined as a town-green. Translation into a community garden is not deemed sufficiently robust enough; it is too fragile and unstable a network. The effort required to perform and maintain the community garden network is considerable. A much more durable network is required, and this is the translation of the informal space into a town-green.

6.2 Introduction

This chapter examines this process through all of the moments of translation: problematisation, interestment, enrolment, mobilisation, and dissidence. The chapter establishes the concept of ‘*town-green*’ as defined within UK law, and how such an informal space might become translated into a town-green. In order to do this, this chapter examines how the town green status was achieved. It required the pulling together of two key concepts: ‘*town*’ and ‘*green*’: i.e. a societal entity (the *town*) and environmental or natural entity (the *green*). In practice, the bringing together of such disparate entities, there is a need to consider both terms symmetrically, for it is not sufficient for their status to be wholly town nor wholly green, but a combination of the two.

In many ways this follows a similar problematisation to that of the production of a community garden. Indeed the town-green translation could be considered part

²⁵ This Act is formally referenced as: ‘Great Britain. *Commons Act* (2006)’ but henceforth ‘*Commons Act*’ will be used for brevity.

of this broader translation of the informal space into a communitygarden. The town-green process is more focused and specific than the translation into a communitygarden. The town-green process involves much more interaction with the local authority, legislation and ‘*proof*’ (or evidence) that the informal space is simultaneously a social and natural (and spatial) hybrid.

The process of translation in this empirical study, i.e. from informal space to town-green, could be conceived as the shift from informal to formal. Whilst this is an oversimplification of translation and puts too many conflictual processes and actors neatly into different networks; it is germane to use this as a convenient trope to aid in the explanation of this translation. What might be construed as the ‘*informal actor-network*’: vandals, weeds, dirt, graffiti, pests, litter, drunks, teenagers, soil, rubble, car parts, decay, erosion (and sometimes, arguably, children) form one actor-network. This could be used as the basis against which to counterpoint a ‘*formal actor-network*’. This ‘*formal actor-network*’ is composed of (amongst other actors): the human actors of community₂, a number of their living rooms, the provision of coffee and croissants, spades, Weedol, Local Authority Neighbourhood Partnership funding, trowels, songs, leaflets, the *Canon IR6000* photocopier, Christmas decorations, benches, varnish, £1.50 hot-dogs (*for sale*), bulbs, manure and a glossy communitygarden signpost. This trope ignores the many actors that comprise both networks, or other actors who do not fit into either category. It is (part of) the ‘*formal actor-network*’ that will be translated *qua* town-green (if successful).

6.3 Town-green legislation

Why apply for town-green status? Because at the end of the process it becomes incumbent on the local authority to protect this space: “*The effect of registration would be ... the City Council would have power if it were registered to take steps to protect it, including institution of proceedings for any offence such as encroachment, enclosure or unlawful construction.*” (Commons Act 2006:2) Thus the town-green status allows a degree of legislative protection for the case-study area.

The ‘*Commons Act 2006*’ deals with town-green legislation and defines itself as “*An Act to make provision about common land and town or village greens*”. The Act is a formalization of a multiplicity of ancient byelaws, easements and rights-of-way legislation that had developed in England, into a single coherent legislative Act. Schedule 6 of the Commons Act lists historic Acts and Laws, such as “*Commons Act 1285... the Poor Relief Act 1601... Enclosure Act 1845 ... Union and Parish Property Act 1835*” (2006: Schedule 6: Part three) that have been partly adopted or absorbed into the town-green act; this inter-weaves hundreds of years of legislation into the network. The Commons Act (2006) provides legal protection for an open space to be used for the purposes of a town-green, the corollary of which is that the space cannot be developed or built on. As a result, this Act is currently being used in England for a number of relatively high profile cases of communities attempting to use this legislation to block development of open land (BBC, 2008; Bristol Post Online, 2009; Castle Park Users Group, 2009)

The Act does not define specifically what might be meant by ‘*town*’ nor ‘*green*’; indeed there is no comment made at all for what ‘*green*’ might be; other than it is specifically ‘*land*’ and that it is not developed in any form, i.e. not a building. In terms of ‘*town*’ the definition is a little more specific and relates to a notion of social use, for example “*a significant number of the inhabitants of any locality, or of any neighbourhood within a locality, have indulged as of right in lawful sports and pastimes on the land for a period of at least 20 years*” (Act 2006: Section 15.2). It is up to the Local Authority to determine what those pastimes might be. What this definition also raises is the timeframe for this Act; the town-green must have had the qualities of town-green-ness for at least 20 years. There is therefore a degree of historicity to the interpretation and definition of town-green.

6.3.1.1 Threat of development

The aspiration by local residents for town-green status is due to concern regarding the perceived potential for development of the informal space. There is evidence of a threat of development of the site. In 1986, the City Council prepared a Planning Brief which describes how “*the tendency generally for the*

area has been for all open areas to be infilled with housing developments” (Appendix 2: City Council Draft Planning Brief, 1986: Sub-appendix A; section 3.1). There had been considerable urban development and redevelopment within the area in the previous decades, a process that is still continuing today. *“I moved here in the 1970s; in [name omitted] Road round the corner, then to here a few years later... there was the old [informal] site at the bottom of [name omitted] Street, the two [informal spaces] here, one on the edge of the playground... uh. A lot of the derelict sites just got developed into housing... the council just ignored us... um there was a lot of opposition ... I remember where those flats are, at the bottom of [name omitted] Street is... oh... when it was all just a wilderness.... That was only a few years ago now. There was a lot of community protest to try and stop that... but we never had a chance really... [AA16:2012].* The local residents had become wary of the pressures for potential development of this informal space into more apartments or residential dwellings. The need to examine the potential development of the informal space arose *“in light of a change in policy towards Temporary Permissions for garages in the vicinity, council authorized planning officers to prepare a development brief for this and adjoining sites”* (Appendix 2: City Council Draft Planning Brief, 1986: subsection 1). There had been several (unsuccessful) attempts to build on the informal space and several (successful) attempts to build on other informal spaces nearby. Planning applications for housing on this space were refused on *‘29th January 1982’* and *‘28th August 1985’* (Ibid Appendix 2: City Council Draft Planning Brief, 1986: Sub-appendix A; subsection 5.3.1-2]. Despite the failure to build upon the (communitygarden) informal space, some of the residents feared that this was a temporary reprieve and a longer lasting solution would be needed.

There remained a perceived need to stabilize the status of the space and the town-green legislation was deemed appropriate to achieve this end. *“The purpose is to safeguard this patch of green for the community... There is no current threat, but Town Green status would ensure that none could arise in the future”* (Appendix 14: Excerpt from Community Newsletter posted through residents’ letterboxes: 02.07.2008). The emergence of a threat is un-named and has not been mentioned before in previous newsletters, but now appears in

connection with the justification for applying for town-green status. One of the residents explains, “*we had to stop it [the informal space] becoming a block of flats*” (AA03: 2011). The application to the town-green Act is perceived as a mechanism to facilitate the prevention of further development of the informal space.

6.3.1.2 Networks of Legislative Power

Town-green legislation provides a relatively high degree of protection against development of a space. Section 38 of the Act specifies the range or level of protection to be administered.

“Prohibition on works without consent

(1) A person may not, except with the consent of the appropriate national authority, carry out any restricted works on land to which this section applies.”
Which specifies the range of work or development that is not permitted.

(2) “restricted works” are—

(a) works which have the effect of preventing or impeding access to or over any land to which this section applies;

(b) works for the resurfacing of land.

(3) ... in particular—

(a) the erection of fencing;

(b) the construction of buildings and other structures.”

(Commons Act, 2006: Section 38).

This section of the Act describes the prohibition of almost all building or development of the site, not just of buildings such as dwellings, but even fencing, resurfacing or any development that might impede access to the site – which includes hedges and certain forms of planting. This is quite a prohibitive piece of legislation, one that is considerably more restrictive than contemporary Planning Laws including Conservation Area Consent (Hobson, 2004; Healey, 1988) (*note:*

the empirical case-study site is within a Conservation Area). The provisions within the Act are used to preserve the condition of the space as established in the prior twenty-year period. One of the instruments to prohibit development of a space is through the use of financial punishments. Section 34 of the Act ‘*Enforcement of rules*’ sets out the statutory position on breaches of this legislation:

“(1) A person who breaches a rule to which subsection (2) applies is guilty of an offence.

(2) This subsection applies to a rule which—

(a) is made with the consent of the appropriate national authority pursuant to a function of making rules conferred on a commons council under section 31; and

(b) specifies that a person who contravenes it is guilty of an offence under this section.

(3) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (1) is liable on summary conviction to—

(a) a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale; and

(b) in the case of a continuing offence, to a further fine not exceeding one half of level 1 on the standard scale for each day during which the offence continues after conviction” (Commons Act, 2006: Section 34).

An offence could amount to £39,000 in a year; as determined in Section 34.3 where a level 4 fine is £2,500 and Level 1 would be £200 per day (ref: Criminal Justice Act 1982 s.37). This is a considerable financial sum that is used as a mechanism to protect and preserve the continued status of town-green. Through this legislative clause, punitive financial penalties become a potential actor in the town-green network. Furthermore, fines are not the only mechanism or actor through which this legislation is enacted. The legislative apparatus includes police officers, council employees, eviction officers, criminal trespass laws, criminal damage laws, judges, courthouses, summons, barristers, prosecuting

councils and myriad other judicio-political actors. These form an actor-network all acting towards the maintenance, and performance, of UK legislature.

6.4 Problematisation

The first process of problematisation is identifying the actors and their links/relationships in the network. For a local authority to determine whether a space can be deemed a 'town-green' it must fulfill two main criteria: that the space acts as a 'town' i.e. it has some 'societal' quality and that it is 'green' i.e. it has some 'natural' quality. The space must comprise both of these qualities; one quality cannot be achieved at the cost of the other; a hybrid socio-natural space is required. Furthermore, a third mandatory requirement is that the space must have had these qualities for at least 20 years; thus history is part of the problematisation.

These three elements: town+green+history (or society+nature+time) form a tripartite alliance; and all three must unite to form an obligatory passage point as the question 'is the space a town-green?' These elements are dynamic or kinetic not permanent and static definitions. It is the process of translation to stabilize and potentially redefine their identities to pass through the obligatory passage point. Passage through this obligatory point in this case-study would occur when, or if, the Local Government determines the informal space as a town-green. Although each of the three elements, town+green+history, are complex entities which could be broken down further into more discrete parts; they are bundled together (in the writing up of this research) to marry the terms used in the Commons Act (2006).

At the outset of the problematisation each of the entities have their own goals, and their own obstacles to avoid. Initially all three entities are discrete and isolated from each other. Problematisation aims to try and bring these goals together and establishing ways to avoid obstacles. Nature, in the form of the garden, aims to perpetuate itself; its main obstacles are other more invasive plants, errant humans digging them out or developers building on the space. For community representatives, they would like to tidy up an eyesore (and keep the space from reverting back into one) and protect the space from further

development; their main obstacles are that someone else will claim the land and either develop it or let it become derelict again. ‘*History*’ is one of the key actors in the legislative process. The main objective is to be a true reflection of reality; its main obstacle is being inaccurate or misrepresented by incomplete information. It is a statutory requirement and legislative imperative of the Commons Act that an accurate record of history is produced. If all three actors, *town+green+history*, can be successfully translated then the space will become a town-green.

6.4.1.1 *Problematism: green-ness*

The Commons Act 2006 does not define what is meant by ‘*green*’. There are no clauses or subsections that attempt to describe or determine the basic parameters of this term. In discussion with the legal department of the Local Authority, they confirmed that they did not have a fixed idea of what this might mean, “*as long as we think it fulfills the requirements in accordance with the Act*” (AA14: 2012). It was up to the focal actors to decide; to define what this should be. ‘*Green*’ from a UK perspective invariably requires ‘*grass*’. There are, for example, few parks (if any) in England that are not green, i.e. predominantly grassed, other than in perhaps some very built-up areas, but these would perhaps instead be defined as ‘*play-areas*’, playgrounds or multi-purpose sports areas. The patch of land that would be considered appropriate for a town-green must be literally and symbolically ‘*green*’, i.e. fit the UK socio-legal definition of green; i.e. grass. Arguably a ‘*green*’ does not need to be considered a ‘*garden*’; so for example, flowers are not required; flowers do not rule out the possibility that the space is ‘*green*’.

Nature₃ denotes the assemblage of natural (and other actors) that fit the definition of ‘*green*’ within the classification of the Commons Act (2006). In some of the other empirical examples of town-green legislation, nature₃ could predominantly be grass, with some small scale weeds intermingled (Bristol Post Online, 2009; Castle Park Users Group, 2009). Nonetheless for the requirements of town-green legislation nature₂ could be an acceptable form of green-ness if it “*fulfills the requirements in accordance with the Act*” (AA14: 2012). However as the physical boundaries of the communitygarden (nature₂) and the town-green

(nature₃) are different, the term nature₃ is used here to differentiate one from the other. It is worth pointing out that (in this empirical study) nature₃ is a geographically smaller subset of nature₂.

Problematizing nature₃ as ‘inhabitants from the locality’

The Commons Act legislation refers to ‘*inhabitants from the locality*’ (Appendix 4: Town-Green Committee Report, 2009) with a presumption (but not explicit assertion) that only human actors could be considered as inhabitant. This restriction of inhabitants exclusively to human is supported in legislative practice. For example, “*Agenda Item No. 6... Public Rights Of Way And Greens Committee... Report Of The Head Of Legal Services*” states that “*the application was supported by 148 evidence questionnaires and statements*” but goes on to say that “*In this case the relevant number of inhabitants is 76*” (Appendix 4). This infers that seventy-two human actors have been excluded from the definition ‘*inhabitant*’ and only seventy-six meet their classification system. This report also makes clear that only humans are included as it specifically describes inhabitants as “*people*” (Appendix 4). In the written submissions to this committee only human actors that meet all of the residency status for two decades prior are considered.

The town-green legislation in application restricts ‘*inhabitants*’ to humans particularly the notion of residents. However, the Oxford English Dictionary (1983:1368) defines inhabitant as “*a person or animal which inhabits a place*” from the elisions of the prefix ‘*in*’ meaning “*into, in, within*” and ‘*habit*’ to “ *dwell or live*” or “*to have or posses*”. Coincidentally, the term ‘*habitat*’ derives etymologically from a botanical context “*as a technical term in Latin texts on English flora and fauna, literally ‘it inhabits,’*” (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2012). In both the dictionary definition and the original etymology of the word *inhabitant* is not restricted to humans, but includes animals and flowers. Thus the notion of ‘*inhabitants of the locality*’ does not necessarily include only humans, but a wider range of actors (which serendipitously reflects the perspective of actor-network theory).

The status of the constituency of the actors that make up the green-ness is not stated or questioned anywhere in the legislation. However, town-green is a hybrid condition; both nature and society must be present *in actu*. The garden is acting; the space *must* be green in order to meet the legislation. In the previous chapter the role of nature₂ was examined; the grass effectively cast a ‘vote’ YES in support of being a community garden. In the town-green translation the presence of grass is evidence of nature₃’s support. The grass will be *voting* for town-green status when the local government officials come to carry out their assessment. If there is a plentitude of grass, this is a YES vote, if the grass is dead (or perhaps the space is covered in brambles and weeds) this would be akin to a NO vote. Part of nature₃ has not been an ‘*inhabitant from the locality*’ that has been ‘*on the land for at least 20 years*’ (Appendix 4). The flowers in the community garden were born and bred elsewhere. They were bought in a garden centre, and prior to this, grown in nurseries even further afield. Yet in this problematisation of the town-green they are implicitly counted as inhabitants of the locality. The floral actors in their (flower) beds and the human actors in their (King-size) beds count equally as ‘*inhabitants of the locality*’.

6.4.2 Problematisation: town-ness

In a similar process, the aggregate of human actors that formed the alliance community₂ is a slightly looser definition than that required to meet the requirements for town-green legislation. Community₂ is formed from a broad range of human actors under the guises qua gardeners, helpers, friends, occasional visitors, children playing, [name of City omitted] in Bloom personnel and infrequent users of the space. However, Town-green legislation is much more narrow in its definition and stipulates that community₃ must be formed specifically from ‘*inhabitants from the locality*’ (Appendix 4: Town-Green Committee Report, 2009) rather than visitors to the area or friends of the local residents (and presumably ‘*inhabitants*’ is restricted exclusively to human inhabitants rather than other actors). Community₃ must fulfill other requirements of the ‘*definition of a town or village green*’ (Commons Act 2006: Section 15) which includes the clause regarding historicity, i.e. community₃ residents must have indulged in these pastimes for at least twenty years. Therefore the term

community₃ denotes the specific alliance of humans that “*it fulfills the requirements*” (AA14: 2012) of the town-green legislation. Again it is germane to note that the two social networks (community₂ and community₃) are similar but not identical, thus the need for such specificity in the additional terminology.

6.4.3 Problematisation: obligatory passage point

The obligatory passage point in this case-study is the legislative requirements of the Commons Act. This obligatory passage point is produced by certain actors and not by the myriad other ‘actors’ in the space. Nature was not pushing to be transformed into nature₂; nor is nature₂ trying to transform itself into a ‘green’ (nature₃). The residents are not trying to become a ‘town’ (community₃) any more than they wished to become a community₂. There was no discussion or evidence of any of the actions necessary to become a town or green before this new problematisation emerged. Similarly the Local Authority does not ‘act’ under its own volition or through its own impetus, there is no obligation for Local Authorities to determine *a priori* which spaces are town-green, they need only *re-act* (to requests for determination). The process works the other way round, rather than social-space being defined as town-green (or not), a hybrid socio-natural space must be presented to the Local Authority for adjudication. This necessitates and imbricates certain human actors into the process. The problematisation organised as a question in this case-study is:

$$\text{Nature}_3 + \text{Community}_3 + \text{History} = \text{Town-Green?}$$

The community₃ actors become indispensable within the network; and it is through this process that others are barred from the process (and ultimately excluded from the use of that space). The town-green status will not, in all likelihood, be awarded without their involvement in the network.

The problematisation for town-green proposed the necessity of an alliance of nature and community; in theory (and practice) there are many possible interpretations of what this might constitute. In this specific case, the process of translation into communitygarden was sufficiently approximate to the requirements for town-green status. ‘Green’ is satisfied by the condition nature₃

and ‘town’ is satisfied by the condition community₃ the entirety of the town-green translation the interessement, enrolment and mobilisation of nature₃ and community₃ are almost the same as for the communitygarden. The practices and actions of the communitygarden that continued throughout this period are the same as described in the previous chapter (and are not repeated here). The principle difference in this translation is the incorporation of ‘history’ into the equation and the concomitant inter-relationships with the legislative apparatus. History was part of the problematisation and this account describes its translation through the moments of interessement, enrolment and mobilisation (and dissent).

6.5 INTERESSEMENT

Interessement is “*founded on a certain interpretation of what the yet to be enrolled actors are and want as well as what entities these actors are associated with*” (Callon, 1986: 211). Interessement is when the entities identified by the focal actors during problematisation are enlisted, encouraged and/or enticed to enact their requisite roles. The identities of the actors, *Nature*₃ + *Community*₃ + *History*, come into a relationship with each other.

The identity of each entity is adjusted, modified and partially formed through their inter-action. The allied entities have other problematisations vying for their attention and interesting them in different directions. What the focal actors must do is cut links with others – as Gore Vidal proposes ‘*it is not enough to succeed – others must fail*’. One of those actors who must fail, or have their links cut, is the original landowners. The original landowners could potentially still return to claim their land and build a house on it; or perhaps different, more forcible actors could claim it for another purpose. One of the mechanisms in which interessement is enacted is the use of interessement devices.

Numerous heterogeneous devices are employed as interessement devices as established in the previous chapter; spades, flowerbeds, coffee, grass seeds, fertilizers, benches, residents and flowers. Semiotic devices such as leaflets, posters and notices were also deployed during the interessement of the communitygarden. These devices continued to be used during the town-green interessement. There was a further development, or perhaps more accurately,

refinement of the deployment of interessement devices (specifically semiotic devices). A number of questionnaires, witness statements and other documents were used as semiotic interessement devices for the town-green translation.

History had to be interested; town-green legislation requires that the space must be used for a period of 20 years. The approach taken to *'translate'* the history of that space into one that was co-incident with town-green activities was to use documentary materials: questionnaires, letters, photographs and written statements to help shift the balance of power towards the support of their town-green application rather than any other outcome. History was interested through text and images principally in the form of the *'evidence questionnaires'* and *'witness statements'* submitted as part of the application process. These documents were posted through local residents' letterboxes to coax them to tick certain little boxes and sign on the dotted line. These paper-based interessement devices are used to lure and then entrap the *'inhabitants of the locality'*. By signing on the dotted line, there was a mass of preemptive and pre-formatted information to which you had been conscripted. Notably the majority of residents dissented to this process by not completing the forms.

6.6 ENROLMENT

Regardless of the interessement devices, or how good the case for town-green status is, success is still not ensured. Enrolment is not guaranteed. If there was no interest from local residents then no questionnaires would have been returned, no witness statements given, no photographs of *'lawful pastimes by inhabitants of the locality'* would have been made available. In fact if council officials had visited too early, it is possible that the application would be refused i.e. interessement devices do not lead necessarily to enrolment. The question *'is this space a town-green?'* must be transformed into a statement *'this space is a town-green.'*

6.6.1 Enrolment of history

Enrolment occurred on/with history – individuals supplied testimonies to the local authority about the length of time that the space had been used as town-

green. Archive documents and photographs attempt to ‘*prove*’ that this space has been used as a town-green for two decades. Documents and photographs that are allied to the notion that the space has been a town-green are enrolled. In order to

Source suitable evidential images the questionnaires asked respondents: “*Do you have any photos or other evidence of use of the land?*” (Appendix 19: Sample questionnaire from Town-green Application, 2007). Local residents then provided copies of photographs of ‘*lawful pastimes*’ in the informal space during the prior twenty years. These documentary materials were used to translate the (*re*)telling of the history of the space. The application lists the documentary ‘*exhibits*’ thus:

“EXHIBIT 1 LAND REGISTRY SEARCH

EXHIBIT 2 GARDEN PLAQUE

EXHIBIT 3 GARDENING AND MAINTENANCE SESSIONS

EXHIBIT 4 [REDACTED] DRAFT PLANNING BRIEF 18/6/1986

EXHIBIT 5 PHOTOGRAPHS

EXHIBIT 6 EVIDENCE QUESTIONNAIRES + STATEMENTS”

(Appendix 15: Town-Green Application Form, 2008; subsection 10 (*note: original document is capitalised*)).

‘*Evidence questionnaires*’ are submitted with the application and an executive summary of them in the application documents claims that the space is used for: “*children playing, adults playing together with children, picnics, gardening and planting activity, picking crab apples, meeting and chatting with friends, conkerfest – playing conkers and making animals from conkers and nuts, drinking coffee, garden maintenance sessions, Easter egg hunts, Christmas lantern lighting, studying and reading, nature and bird watching, resting on benches by elderly residents, walking dogs*” (Appendix 15: 8). These ‘*exhibit*’ documents act as the devices through which history is enrolled as part of the translation of the space; particularly: *exhibit 3: gardening and maintenance*

sessions, exhibit 5: photographs and exhibit 6: evidence questionnaires & statements'. It is these exhibits that will provide the framework to enable the space to pass through history requirements of the town-green obligatory passage point.

Images or documents that 'say' something else or 'act' against the collective are omitted and remain outside of the negotiations. Photographs were collated by one of the focal actors who gathered them and selected those images that best represented the requisite town-green-ness. In the application these became "*Exhibit 5 – Photographs provided by local residents*" (Appendix 20: Excerpt from photographic evidence submitted as part of Town-green Application, 2007). Images that might originally have different meanings and signification or bore different histories are subverted or appropriated to tell the 'correct' story. A family photo of an activity is now enrolled (i.e. its identity is translated) into a community₃ event. In this way the 'true' identities of 'actors' documented via photographs are modified and changed through the process. There are twenty three photographs provided: fifteen photographs show children (predominantly children, with a few adults) playing conkers at an organised conkerfest in the space; three photographs show residents gardening, three photographs show elderly residents sat on the bench and two photographs show the space as a garden (without any people). The photographs misrepresent the social activities in the space. Children are over-represented relative to their presence in the space throughout the year, gardeners are under-represented relative to the other social uses. The most prevalent users of the community garden are older residents who are often present whilst they are involved in gardening or maintaining the space. The garden as a space without residents at all is perhaps the most accurate representation of the condition of the space. History is enrolled through photographic material to provide temporal evidence of town-green-ness. Reproductions of the leaflets, posters and notices are enrolled as discursive evidence in support of the town-green status.

6.6.2 Documentary enrolment

There is enrolment of documentary material in the legislative process. The myriad social, spatial and semiotic domains manifest in the informal space have

been transposed into documentary form. The questionnaires and witness statements are standardised documents. The questionnaires are four A4 pages long and includes: a map that preemptively locates and denotes the boundaries of the site and two pages of questions relating to the space and its usage (thirty-seven questions in total), concluded by a final page with a signature and date (Appendix 19: Sample questionnaire from Town-green Application, 2007). The witness statement is a briefer document, only one sheet of A4 with a map of the locality (again including the boundary of the town-green already demarcated on it) with five pre-written statements (Appendix 21: Sample Witness Statement from Town-green Application, 2007). The only variables or uncertainties on the witness sheet are the choice of dates and name of signee.

In the process of enrolment, Callon (1986:211) describes how important it is “*to transform a question into a series of statements*”. In the evidence supplied as part of the application process, this shift from question to statement is supported in the documentary materials. *Questions* (in the ‘*questionnaires*’) have been literally replaced by *statements* (in the ‘*witness statements*’). In the questionnaire, the question “*By what name is the land shown on Map with an X*” (Appendix 19: 2007) is replaced in the witness statement, by the statement “*The land marked on the above map as the [place name omitted] Community Garden is known to me.*” (Appendix 21: 2007). Similarly the question in the questionnaire “*Do you know of any community activities on the land?*” (Appendix 19: 2007) is reworded in the witness statement as “*I have known other people use the [place name omitted] Community Garden for leisure purposes since... [date]*” (Appendix 21: 2007). The shift from questionnaire to witness statement is a shift from uncertainty to certainty. Likewise the questions “*How many years have you known the land?*” (Appendix 19: 2007) and “*Why did you go onto this land?*” (Appendix 21: 2007) are supplanted by the statement: “*I have used the [place name omitted] Community Garden for leisure purposes since... (date)*” (ibid Appendix 21: 2007). There is a displacement of many activities and leisurely pursuits into one (acceptable, unambiguous and) immutable category. The enrolment of documentary materials culminates when the witness statement concludes with the statement: “*I authorize this statement to be used in evidence to support the application for registration as a Town Green*” (ibid Appendix 21:

2007). This statement asserts, immanent to itself, that this sentence on a piece of paper displaces the entire social, spatial and semiotic actions relating to the informal space into the legislative apparatus.

Technology plays a very important part in documentary enrolment. Home computers, laptops, the internet and web hosting all play a part, although perhaps most significantly in this empirical study the technologies of photocopiers and printers play the most significant part. The town-green application documents would be impossible in their submitted format without these reproduction technologies. The town-green application form is only 8 pages long and this document can be filled in by hand (and indeed this is the case here). Yet there are hundreds of other pages of questionnaires and witness statements are submitted (produced via photocopying and/or printing). Most of these documents are incredibly repetitious, they are almost identical in their layout and the data that they hold. The questionnaires and witness statements could not reasonably be generated without these reproduction technologies; without them the majority of the application would not exist. At the end of the process, the questionnaire had been copied prior to being sent out, then it was completed and sent back, before being collated and copied again (to create a spare duplicate copy) and sent back to the local authority. The local authority then made their own duplicate copy. There are 474 pages copied and duplicated then copied and duplicated again.

The photocopier can keep producing the same fact or unit of data (or identical act) again and again and again. Technology such as the photocopiers highlights the issues concerning enrolment of human actors; humans can be much less reliable than other actors. The first issue is getting willing human volunteers – at best they might deliver a leaflet. The reproduction of, for example a leaflet, liberates several human actors from the obligation of having to inform the many residents (i.e. speak the information) in a neighborhood the same piece of information. The reproduction of hundreds of leaflets and their distribution or delivery through letterboxes emancipates a considerable amount of time for humans who might otherwise have to attempt to disseminate the information orally. Whilst some volunteers still have to go to each letterbox to post the leaflet (a task that takes several hours), these messengers are freed from having to stop

at each door and deliver that information by verbally repeating it to each of the hundreds of individual residents (which might take several days). This does not even consider the logistical issues concerning the pragmatics of trying to coordinate visits when people are actually in their house to speak in person to residents (which might take several weeks). Instead the leaflet, once posted (i.e. once enroled), is ‘*content*’ to wait for hours and days, until the resident returns in order to disgorge the information.

6.6.3 Enrolment of local government

Officialdom is not yet consulted though; the Local Authority is not yet aware that they will be part of this act. The legislative documentation regarding the Commons Act (2006) has already been consulted by the focal actors, so it is relatively clear how the Local Authority might behave in these circumstances. The Local Authority will ultimately claim to determine ‘*objectively*’ whether the space is a town-green: “*This committee on behalf of the Council as Commons Registration Authority has a statutory duty to determine objectively whether or not the land in question should be registered as a town or village green, within the meaning of the Commons Act 2006.*” (Appendix 4: Town-Green Committee Report, 2009; Section 7) (Emphasis added). For the moment these legislative documents are the only enrolment of the local authority; they do not need to be consulted any further than this. The next stage, i.e. once an application is made under the Commons Act, is when the local authority is to become enroled into the translation.

“[Address omitted] *Community Garden*

[Address omitted] *residents have applied to make the Community Garden (at the junction of [Address omitted] with [Address omitted]) a Town Green. The application went to [Address omitted] Council on 30 November [2007] ...*” (Appendix 14: 2008 excerpt from newsletter).

This excerpt from a local resident’s newsletter describes the moment when the local authority is enroled into the translation. The 30th November 2007 is the exact date of the arrival of this legislative apparatus as an actor in the network.

6.6.4 Enrolment of nature₃

Enrolment of nature₃ was only partially successful. The weeds, brambles, nettles and other unwanted flora were removed from a large portion of the informal space (though not from all of the space). Grass grew where it was intended, some of the trees were cut down to make the space for the grass and flowerbeds and to increase the amount of light available for flowers. However enrolment of nature₃ was not successful for all flora. One issue was that some species of flowers, decorative shrubs and plants could not be so easily enrolled. “*I’ve just got these from the uh garden centre on [name omitted] road (pointing to plastic trays of flowers in boot of interviewee’s car)*” (AA13: 2012); “*When we planted that tree... we planted the biggest ones we could... um we... um we bought the biggest ones I could afford...*” (AA02: 2011). The volunteer workforce could not induce a flowering garden to live through their best efforts and hard work alone.

The planting of purchased flowers was necessary to complete the creation of a garden that would meet the requirements for a town-green (i.e. nature₃)²⁶. Instead of flowers growing from seeds, through to buds and onto maturity as flowers, they were bought, already grown to their ‘*in bloom*’ state. This meant that a flower garden could be created instantly rather than waiting for flowers to grow. These ‘*readymade*’ flowers were mostly purchased or donated via from local garden centres. The network of gardeners, pesticides and herbicides failed to protect the fledgling flowers from pests and bugs; new, readymade flowers were enrolled. This prevented the garden from having bare patches or diseased plants from destroying the image of the garden (or worse, destroying the concept of the existence of a garden altogether) and thus dissenting from the statement ‘*this space is a town-green*’. The use of *readymade* flowers in this way produces a garden that is relatively artificial; perhaps paradoxically nature₃ could be described as a kind of *artificial-nature*.

²⁶ This was also the case for nature₂, but there was significant increase in the use of readymade flowers during the time of the town-green application process.

6.6.5 Summary of enrolment

Whilst this chapter focuses on enrolment(s) specific to town-green translation, there is still enrolment underway as set out in the previous chapter: people digging, cleaning, varnishing, spraying, aerating, chatting; (*readymade*) flowers are growing, plants germinating, bees and butterflies pollinating, pesticides killing, herbicides destroying, cakes baked, money flowing, hot dogs eaten, drunks drinking, and documents edited and sent to local government funding agencies. Enrolment includes many of the instances mentioned in the previous findings chapter, but for brevity this is not repeated here. Nonetheless it is important not to forget that these are successful and necessary modes of enrolment occurring throughout this process. Town-green enrolment is expanded to include a *documentary* network of: photographs, questionnaires, statements and letters as well as becoming entangled in the many *legislative documents* of the Commons Act 2006. These documents were enrolled involuntarily into the network. The next section explores how the enrolment of these documents was mobilised.

6.7 MOBILISATION

Mobilisation is how the many are represented by the few. During mobilisation only a few actors are represented or involved at any one time. “*These diverse populations have been mobilised. That is, they have been displaced*” (Callon, 1986:218). It is those few who speak that represent the many silent and silenced others. Mobilisation is also a process of displacement: assigning equivalences into the network in order to displace certain actors.

6.7.1 Mobilisation of discourse

An application is made by local residents for “*Registration of land at [road name omitted], [place name omitted] as a town or village green under the Commons Act 2006*” (Appendix 15: Town-Green Application Form, 2008:1), which comprises a number of documentary materials. The first material being “*Form 44 Commons Act 2006: Section 15 Application for the registration of land as a Town or Village green*” (Appendix 15: 2008) a six page document: five pages of

text and one illustrative map (this is the same map used in questionnaires; the map is large scale and shows much of the neighbourhood). This is the minimum amount of documentary material required for this legislative process. However, in addition to this principal document, there is appended “148 indexed evidence questionnaires and statements” (Appendix 4: Town-Green Committee Report, 2009:3), a city council planning brief, maps and photographs. The entire application documentation is 474 pages long, i.e. 466 pages longer than the minimum legal requirement. That constitutes 98.3% additional paperwork.

There is a large amount of paperwork that is not technically required for this application. Almost all of the paper submitted is in addition to that specified by the stipulated requirements of the Local Authority, only 1.7% of this paperwork is strictly necessary. What is all the other documentary material doing? The documents are acting, in effect, as a proxy on behalf of the requisite condition: *town+green+history*. Each witness statement and questionnaire is an agent for this triumvirate. As the residents cannot all attend the session, and the garden cannot fit into the Council House, nor can time be rewound to be observed first-hand; then these documents perform the task of acting out these entwined domains. The individual sheets of paper can be seen as acting in this context. Akin to voters in a ballot, each sheet of paper a ‘yes’ vote in the ballot box. The documentation has been stacked heavily in favour of one outcome; this is a landslide majority, there are 474 votes ‘for’ and 0 votes ‘against’. Documentation performs the incredible feat of merging the social, natural and temporal worlds all in one hybrid device – text on paper. These sheets of paper have taken over, in a legal sense, the ‘real’ space, practices and events that have occurred in the informal space.

The evidence produced in the documentary materials includes an abbreviated list by the applicants of the activities of local residents (Appendix 15: 8). This list summarises most (though not all) of the activities in the informal space. Displacement occurs within this list through a process of careful exclusion. The list reveals a high degree of selectivity, for instance, ‘elderly’ people are referenced rather than any other subsection of the population (ibid). This points towards or suggests that this subsection of the population is held in an elevated

position in relation to the application requirements (and used to manipulate the data). This displacement is a form of discursive power via the production of social asymmetries.

6.7.2 Mobilisation of community₃

“Residents completed statements in support of registration, and various photos and other evidence were sent to the Council” (Appendix 14: Excerpt from Community Newsletter posted through residents letterboxes: 02.07.2008).

There is evidence of an attempt to mobilise members of community₃ as part of the translation. The thirty-one residents who completed the ‘*evidence questionnaires*’ and seventy-six ‘*witnesses*’ are speaking on behalf of the silent majority of residents (many hundred ‘*inhabitants of the locality*’ (Appendix 4, 2009:2)) who did not fill in a questionnaire, nor endorse nor verify the application²⁷. The active population (community₃) has been mobilised through the questionnaires via displacement from the neighbourhood into the council chambers. There is also a call for community₃ to attend the meeting in person. *“Please come along and offer your support if you are able”* (Appendix 22: Excerpt from Community Newsletter posted through residents’ letterboxes: 10. 11. 2009]. The presence of ‘*inhabitants of the locality*’ within the council chambers would evidence in support of the application; the few people who attend the meeting are synecdochically the entirety of community₃. However, their presence at the committee is not particularly required. Not everyone can speak at such a council meeting, due to time constraints and the size of room; so those people do not ‘*speak*’ directly at all; it is their words in the questionnaires and statements that speak on their behalf. It is their involvement in the production of documentary material that is most significant. It is those who ‘*speak*’ (or act) via these documents, speak for those who remained silent (i.e. displace and mobilise); the many are represented by the few.

²⁷ *Within the application documents, there are discrepancies concerning the statistics for the statements and questionnaires. The local authority discounts some of this material they deem not meet their legislative requirements.*

6.7.3 Mobilisation of nature

Latour (1987: 172) defines mobilisation as “*the ability to make a configuration of a maximal number of allies act as a single whole in one place*”. The focal point of this mobilisation is in the council chambers on 19th January 2009 (Appendix 4). This occurs at the Council Committee for the ‘*Public Rights of Way and Greens*’, which the Council’s legal representative pronounces via the acronym “*Per-Rohw-Guh*” (AA14, 2001). All of the multiple actors have been displaced into a folder of reports, minutes and notes but made to act in unity as one coherent representation of a town-green. Those silent residents could speak had they so wished: they were consulted with notices posted along the street, leaflets through the letterbox and displays in the community noticeboards. It is ‘nature’ for whom the concept of speaking appears most unfair as nature cannot speak for itself. In the mobilisation of the community garden we saw how nature was represented through a form of direct democracy. In the instance of the mobilisation of the town-green there is a similar process. The two officials who visit the site must ascertain whether the space is green; i.e. if nature₃ is present. Neither official is an expert on nature, nor particularly knowledgeable to any extent. Their assessment of whether nature₃ ‘*fulfills the requirements in accordance with the Act*’ is based entirely upon expectations of what it should look like; i.e. a relatively neat, grassed area with some flowers and trees. Accordingly their assessment was evidenced by the presence of nature₃ (and the absence of nature₁) in appropriate quantities. In this empirical study; the officials were convinced and could put forward their findings that the space was indeed ‘*green*’. The council officials did not invent or magically construct this representation of nature. Nature₃ ‘*spoke*’ directly to the council officials; nature₃ was acting. If the grass had not managed to survive, the garden would be bare earth, with perhaps a few weeds; or perhaps if the local residents had forgotten to garden (or given up on gardening) and the space might have been overgrown with weeds. This would not have satisfied the requirements by the local authority for the ‘*green*’ of town-green.

The council representatives are merely carrying out their role, like a union delegate, of counting up those votes for and against. It is their tally, which then

forms the mobilisation of the voice of nature₃ by displacing it into a written report. The voting system of grass/flowers/trees transforms flora into a series of numbers and words written down in the official report. It is this documentary report where nature's speaking is transformed into "*easily transportable, reproducible, and diffusable sheets of paper*" (Callon, 1986: 210). Nature has been mobilised, it has been displaced from the informal space into the council chambers without the need to be physically '*there*' nor literally '*speak*'. This has the effect of further stabilizing the representation of nature; the voice of nature has been black-boxed and made permanent via the written report. The complexity, contingencies, conflicts and struggles of the natural world, natural selection, evolution, the thousands of blades of grass, petals and leaves of the garden are all converted into a single YES/NO box on the council representatives forms (i.e. does it fulfill the legislative requirements). The issue of whether the informal space meets the requirements for green-ness necessitates that the infinities of the *analogue* world of nature are displaced into a *digital* YES/NO binary. An equivalence is made between the static words in the report and the ever-changing natural world of the space. The difficulties and flux of maintaining nature₃ in this state, and the constant battle against weeds, pests, weather and the indifference of residents is now obscured and displaced into a durable, unchanging and immutable mode of representation.

6.7.4 Mobilisation of history

"The little garden at this junction, which is now a Town Green"

(Appendix 10: A4 sized Community Association publication (8 pages long) posted through local resident's door 11.11.2012).

History is mobilised; twenty years of varying activities, interests and lawful past-times have been elided and displaced into an appendix of the report. Furthermore, the 433 pages of individual testimonies provided as an appendix to the application are collated and displaced into an even briefer executive summary (Appendix 4). The plurality of voices, actions and practices are displaced into an equivalence qua bullet point list of fifteen items that will be accepted as evidence of town-ness. The documentary evidence simultaneously provides a mobilisation

of representatives from multiple temporal voices into its equivalence in the form of “*immutable mobiles*” (Latour, 1987). All of the alternative (unwanted) histories of this space and dissensions that might have occurred or indeed did occur along the way have been silenced and excluded from this report. The ‘*City Council Public Rights Of Way And Greens Committee*’ report now forms the de facto account of history.

The evidence provided by the local residents is produced in a heavily standardized format. Rather than a series of letters, notes and missives from local residents which could have arrived in a variety of formats, length and commented about a wide range of topics and potentially differing geographical extents of the informal space; the data was much more controlled (Appendices: 15, 19, 21). The formatting of the questionnaire focused the gathering of information very carefully and did not permit respondents to comment widely or make generalizations about the space or the process. The extent of the town-green was pre-determined and included with the questionnaire, rather than for example, an un-annotated map of the area which residents could draw the delimitations of the town-green for themselves. The witness statements were similarly preemptive in their format. The map was similarly pre-marked with boundaries; there was no option for residents to question these boundaries. The questions were removed and replaced with statements. The statements were written in a specific form of English legalese designed to be acceptable to a legal committee. In the systematization of this evidence, displacement occurs in a number of ways. The preordained structure and predetermined data embedded within the documents displaces a number of possible alternatives *a priori*. The evidence also ensures and enables that the many voices of the local residents may answer as one. The statements do not allow for variance or alternative expressions to enter into the formal dialogue. The standardization of these documents, made feasible by the technologies of reproduction, allows each piece of paper to act identically. The few people who devised the questionnaires and witness statements displaced a large amount of actors in this process of *document-isation*.

6.7.4.1 Mobilisation of dirt/data

The systematisation of production of one particular knowledge or data (for example in the form of leaflet) is made possible by the technology of the photocopier. More than just facilitating the proliferation of paper, these reproduction technologies produce proliferations of the same data, not slight variations of data or almost the same data, but precisely the same. Part of this systematization involves the ‘*cleaning up*’ of data. The standardisation of knowledge (metaphorically, literally, discursively, documentarily) is part of the removal of dirt: cleaning up history, clearing up the truth, cleaning up the data, cleaning up the mess. The messy, disorderly, disorganized and chaotic world is reduced, distilled and controlled in various ways to *re-present* a cleansed translation. This removal of ‘*dirt*’ from the data mirrors the myriad processes of the removal of dirt evident elsewhere in the empirical study. Dirty actors have included material objects/process such as: weeds, pests, bugs, staining, rusting, mould, decay, rotten trees, car-parts, dead flowers, vandalism and broken fences as well as more complex or hybrid dirt as: mucky children, drunks, risk (risky or dangerous environments) as well as too much variation in data, the wrong language or the wrong form of data. All of this dirt has been cleansed, removed or hidden during translation. The absence of dirt is mobilised.

6.7.1 Mobilisation of local government

“Town Green Application

The final [Address omitted] Council determination on whether to register the [Address omitted] Community Garden’ (at the junction of [Address omitted] and [Address omitted]) will take place at a meeting of the Council’s Rights of Way and Greens committee on 19th January at 2.00pm at the Council House.”

(Appendix 22: Excerpt from Community Newsletter posted through residents’ letterboxes: 10. 11. 2009).

Once the formal application for town-green status was made; two key events occur; the first is a visit by officials to the space to ‘*see*’ for themselves; the second is at the Council House where the application will be assessed and

judgment passed. When the two officials arrive at the site to see for themselves whether the application is appropriate, their eyes are made to see for the many other council officials whom are expected to objectively adjudicate on the application. It is the report by these two officials that will represent the view of the many at the council house. Similarly those at the council will be speaking on behalf of a much bigger legislative body and for the whole of the city populous in whom they have been charged with representing. Each event is a displacement of the many by the few.

In the local government's Council House all (of reality) is transformed into discourse. There are only representations of reality qua reality; even further than that, the representations of reality are produced to align with the problematisation of the town-green legislation. This documented reality is arguably no longer a true reflection of the past, as the events of the previous two decades have been heavily mediated and interpreted to configure with the requirements of town-green legislation.

6.7.2 Mobilisation of semiotics

Exhibit 2 refers to the '*Garden Plaque*' as evidence of town-green-ness (Appendix 15: Town-Green Application Form, 2008; subsection 10). This exhibit is ambiguous in its status as evidence. The previous chapter examined how the '*representational space*' of the community sign was mobilised. In its role within the production of a community garden, the sign is paradoxical; it serves almost no functional or practical purpose and is not acting in any functional or pragmatic role. However the sign acts at a semiotic level, partly through the overall aesthetic condition (in the style of official signage) and partly (by literally and metaphorically) asserting that the space is a "*Community Garden*" (Appendix 18). The mobilisation of the sign in relation to the town-green is perhaps even more complex.

The sign has been enrolled involuntarily, but is not inherent evidence of green-ness nor of town-ness. The sign arguably exists outside of any of the relevant criteria for a town-green but nevertheless it was submitted as one of six exhibits. The sign is not an inhabitant of the locality, nor has it engaged in lawful sports or

pastimes of any kind, nor has it been there for twenty years²⁸. Nor does a sign intrinsically signify a natural condition (*i.e. green*); nor does a sign evidence ‘*lawful pastimes*’ (*i.e. town*); nor does it register the necessary ‘*20 years*’ as the sign is relatively new (*i.e. time*). It does not meet the requirements of Commons Act legislation: to ‘*say*’ that you have done so (at the local government chamber), nor to ‘*write*’ letters claiming you are doing this (from the comfort of your living room), nor to put a ‘*sign*’ up as proxy; instead community₃ really do need to actively engage in “*in lawful sports and pastimes on the land for a period of at least 20 years*” (Act 2006: Section 15.2).

The communitygarden sign qua ‘*Exhibit 2: Garden Plaque*’ is included in the town-green applications in two forms: firstly in the form of a *photograph* and secondly in the form of *words*. (The photograph is a representation of the *real* communitygarden sign and the words are a representation of the photograph of the sign). The photograph portrays the plaque in its context within the communitygarden. The plaque depicts a representation of the garden, the depiction is not accurate nor it is a photograph of the space, but an idealized, somewhat abstracted, (painted) representation of the garden. The painting of the garden does not depict any humans within the space, the painting does not illustrate anyone engaging in sports or pastimes. In this way the painting is saying the wrong thing, it is arguably evidence of a lack of real human action within the space. However, the painting does depict a garden which in itself represents (*in absentia*) the action of humans (as the producers of the garden). Thus the presence of ‘*Exhibit 2: Garden Plaque*’ sign in the town-green application documents is a representation (*text*) of a representation (*photograph*) of a representation (*painting*) as a representation a town-green-ness.

6.7.3 Summary of town-green mobilisation

Mobilisation occurs when the changing, complex real world is displaced by a more fixed, static mode of representation; *i.e.* words and text (and from reality to words). This semiotic mobilisation is even more distinct in the production of

²⁸ Note: the sign itself is not 20 years old, nor do local representatives state that the sign has been there for twenty years. However, contained within the painted image inside the sign, there are dates inscribed which pertain to events that are more than twenty years old.

town-green status, as all representations of nature, society and history are eventually translated into written text. Society+nature+time have formed a tripartite alliance, passed through the obligatory passage point of the Commons Act. The question ‘*is the space a town-green?*’ is replaced with the statement ‘*this space is a town-green*’.

The town-green mobilisation was in many ways similar to that of the communitygarden (set out in the preceding chapter but not repeated again here). This summary examines specifically the mobilisation of documentation in relation to the town-green application. The questionnaires and witness statements ‘*acted*’ in a number of different ways. Firstly they acted as interessement devices to lure local residents into the problematisation. The extent of the communitygarden network was expanded via the act of posting these documents through the letterboxes of local residents. Residents did not have to come to participate in the gardening, clearing tasks or festive events. The residents merely needed to complete the questionnaire form or witness statement from the comfort of their living rooms. This enrolment of actors through the completion of these documents is the second mode of documentary ‘*action*’. These interessement documents made it relatively easy for local residents to become part of the communitygarden – indeed the dissemination of documentations in this way made it possible (at least in theory) to become enrolled into the network without even needing to physically visit the communitygarden. Thirdly, these documents heavily structured the possible range of actions possible for the local residents. The community was effectively straightjacketed through these documents; the biased questions and limited range of answers largely pre-determined the responses. Residents could, in theory, ignore these documents and write an entirely alternative account of the space, however residents chose not to do this. The actor’s identities are altered through this process; actors were redefined through this ‘*document-isation*’ of identity. Fourthly the documents are used to mobilise the accounts of human actors and the space itself into the domain of legislative mechanisms. The myriad actors: nature, community, discourse, local authority and displaced via these documents are reduced to a single plane (i.e. a sheet of paper). Almost of the documents state the same account of the informal space; the many documents are in effect all speaking the same truth. Each

questionnaire and witness statement summarizes the rich, complex history and practices related to the informal space; each document displaces differences and diverse versions with a single, homogeneous account.

6.8 DISSIDENCE

There are multiple cases of dissent in the network. Nature₁ had to be coaxed, battled and disciplined repeatedly to perform (or be identified) as nature₃. Pesticides, fertilizers, insecticides, tools, prayers and digging were all used to translate nature. The flora and fauna of nature₁ dissented to their destruction, and repeatedly challenged the problematisation (albeit unsuccessfully). Many local residents played the role of ‘town’ (community₃) for the purposes of the legislation. There was dissent by various human actors: alcoholics, vandals, graffiti artists and errant children who played in the flowerbeds. However this ‘alliance’ of dissenters was unsuccessful; it was the actions of a different subset of local residents that represented community₃. What is significant about the examples of dissent in this case-study is that they were not successfully mobilised. The communitygarden network at times deliberately and purposively misleads (through a discriminating and selective choice of actors and events). In the application there is misrepresentative information, it excludes many actors: drunks, vandals, the original owners of the site, the peripheral derelict space that is not, nor has ever been in the previous 20 years, used for human pastimes. None of the dissenting actors were reported on, nor accounted for, in the final report that the Local Authority examined. It is relevant to state that these dissenting actors were not mobilised in officialdom, but they do still act in the space, they still ‘produce’ an effect in the garden.

Many of the examples of dissidence were covered in the preceding chapter and are not repeated again here. This should not diminish the value or role of these myriad dissenting actors in application for town-green status, but for brevity and to avoid unnecessary repetition, these are not recorded in this chapter.

6.8.1 Dissidence and documentation

The questionnaires were structured in such a way that prevented much variance from a prescribed set of responses. However there were a few examples of dissent to the questions. The response to question 5 of questionnaire “*By what name is the land shown on Map A known?*” (Appendix 19, 2007) should be the same as that on the map given on the preceding page ‘[place name omitted] *community garden*’. However some of the residents use different names: “[alternative place name (omitted)] *green*”, “*Do not know of a name*”. “*No particular name*”, “*Community Green*” or “[alternative place name (omitted)] *community Centre*”. A number of residents did not answer this question at all. The majority accepted or agreed with the name given on the accompanying map.

The list of the activities of local residents in documentary materials submitted in the application (Appendix 15: 8) do not mention teenagers who choose to sit on the bench nor drunks (nor even residents more generally). These dissenting voices and activities do not fit in with the requisite legislative requirements for ‘*neighbourhood... pastimes*’ (Commons Act, 2006). Not only are certain demographic groups excluded but different activities. The activity ‘*drinking coffee*’ is listed in the evidence (ibid), whereas evidence of other beverage consumption is not, e.g. drinking alcohol. Drinking alcohol was not just by drunks, but also by local residents as part of some organised social activities; mulled wine at Christmas and Halloween. Alcohol consumption might be considered an unlawful activity. One of the residents who completed the application form was more concerned that it might have “*sent the wrong message*” to mention drinking alcohol, regardless of whether it was lawful (AA03, 2011). The summary provides an example of displacement where one actor replaces the voices of many other actors, and where many different voices are unified as one (regardless of veracity).

Town-green legislation requires that only ‘*lawful sports and pastimes*’ be considered (Appendix 4, 2009:2). It is not unreasonable for those making an application to only list the legal activities; it is a politic decision, not least, as only legal activities are considered eligible for consideration as part of the Commons Act (2006). (Although there is arguably a paradox at the core of this

legal process, because the users of the space trespass in order to undertake these ‘*lawful sports and pastimes*’). However there is necessarily a process of removal, or restriction, of certain groups, cultures and/or behaviours through the delimitation of which activities are lawful. The exclusion of unlawful activities is a reasonable terms of reference for the Commons Act (2006) to account for, and similarly for the applicants to this legislation to defer to. The informal dissenters included a number of activities that are not all legal/lawful; there is vandalism, litter, dog-mess, graffiti, drunk (and disorderly) behaviour, (certain species of) weeds, pests and (certain forms of) dirt. These are all dissenters from the dominant (albeit legally mandated) requirements for a town-green. These dissenters are excluded from the legislative process. This restriction necessitates a reduction of all the activities that take place to a smaller sub-set. In this context, all activities that occurred outside of the realm of ‘*lawful sports and pastimes*’ are acts of dissent. This restriction of practices also illustrates, to some extent, how legislation is part of an apparatus that is used to administer (and make acceptable) certain modes of behaviour and social mores. Whilst the existence of dissenters points to the fallibility of these legislative mechanisms to control social actions; the dominant network of non-dissenting practices aligns with the legislation. The formal network attempted to rewrite the history of this space to remove any unlawful (i.e. dissenting) actors.

6.8.2 Dissidence and dirt

Dissidence is evidenced in the presence (or not) of ‘*dirt*’. At the peripheries of the town-green remains some derelict, dirty informal space. Whilst this dirty space extends considerably beyond the extents of the town-green application, some of this dirt lies within the boundaries of the town-green application. (However none of this dirt is mentioned or represented within the application). There is a spatiality to dirt. The ‘*front*’ of the town-green space is the most controlled and organised (and visually clean). (The ‘*front*’ being the area nearest to the pavement and road). Towards the rear of the space, particularly out of sight; there is more dirt – literally in the sense that garden waste is dumped there – sometimes composted, but sometimes just left to (literally) rot. Along with actual dirt, this is where there is less gardening, more weeds, more pests (and

animal burrows) and this is where the children generally play/build dens and dig holes. There is a correlation with lines of sight and spatiality and these simultaneously correspond with degrees of dirtiness. One could draw a grid with these three axis marked thus: dirt, distance (space), sight, and there would be a correspondence between them. (More) dirt is further away and less visible. Cleaner is nearer and more visible.

6.9 Summary of town-green translation

The translation in this empirical study was successful, the town-green status is awarded; nature is deemed the correct type; the community really exists and history is revealed. Throughout this process, the gardeners continued with their activities, the weeds advanced and retreated, the community gathered intermittently in their living rooms, vandals infrequently visited the space, mulled wine was drunk, litter was dropped, graffiti was scrawled on the fences and the trees grew taller. The account of this has mostly been included in the previous chapter, but is just as important in this account. What has occurred, in addition to all of these activities, and which largely differentiates the communitygarden translation from the town-green translation has been the interaction with *documentary materials* and *discourse*. The translation into a town-green is relatively '*document*' based and discursive in that almost all of the activities and processes involved the transposition of reality into documentary evidence; which is mostly, but not exclusively, text based.

Any controversies that might have arisen from dissenting voices were quelled at the point when the Local Authority made their decision to determine the space as a town-green. It was at this point, at 2.00 pm on 19th January 2009, when the committee voted in favour of the application that the controversy of '*is this space a town-green?*' was converted into the definitive statement '*this space is a town-green*'. In this moment, the controversy is closed with the traverse through the obligatory passage point of town-green legislation. All of the various actors: community₃, nature₃ and history are effectively incarcerated within the legislative infrastructure²⁹. Once this decision was made, the full power of the

²⁹ *It is not impossible to over-rule or reverse the legislative decision; but in practice it is a very complex, difficult and expensive procedure.*

legislative apparatus: law enforcement agencies, judiciary, bureaucracy, lawyers, administrative processes and governmental organisations, are deployed to maintain this status.

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Preface to conclusions

This chapter commences by synthesizing the findings of the empirical study using the research questions set out in the methodology chapter as the organizing structure. The conclusions answer each of three research questions: (i) *how do actor-networks operate in the production of space*; (ii) *what (or who) produces informal space*; and (iii) *how are power-relations structured in an informal actor-network?* The conclusions then reflect back on the principal question ‘*how is informal space produced?*’ Finally the research strategy actor-network theory and specifically the use of translation are evaluated before summarizing the contributions to knowledge and setting out possible avenues for furthering this research area.

7.2 Answering the research questions

7.2.1 How do actor-networks operate in the production of space?

The case-study describes how (part of) a relatively informal space was slowly transformed into what is variously described as a communitygarden and/or town-green. This translation involved a network of actors, all with different identities and interests; yet through the translation became allied to each other in various ways to effect and enable these changes. The communitygarden, and the town-green, are examples of hybrid alliances. They are comprised of actors that transgress nature and culture. An alliance between a complex network of different actors: natural, social, economic, cultural, biological, chemical, climactic and gastronomical, were required in order to effect this change. In this process, two issues are revealed; the first is that an alliance is necessary for this specific actor-network constellation. For a communitygarden to be formed, nature and society (and others) must unite; neither can exist in this configuration without some degree of a shared identity/mutual existence. The second issue is that in order to arrive at this specific constellation (e.g. a communitygarden) then there is displacement, negotiation, conflict, dissent and modification; some actors

control others, some actors are submissive, some resistant and others compliant but all are part of the process of translation. In this empirical study, the configuration is not random, nor wholly chaotic; rather this actor-network is a relatively choreographed series of (inter)actions.

In the empirical study, actor-networks that are more durable, convergent and inter-connected had the greatest effect on others. This might appear to be a truism; however it is not merely stating that the bigger the actor-network, the greater the effect. For example, what was described in the previous chapter as the '*informal actor-network*': vandals, weeds, dirt, graffiti, pests, litter, drunks, teenagers, soil, rubble, car parts, decay and erosion form a relatively large actor-network. However this informal actor-network did not have much effect on other actor-networks, there was little action as a result of this actor-network. The associations and connections between the '*informal actor-network*' were relatively weak and often inconspicuous. Even though the outcome of, for example, slugs and vandals on flowerbeds was the same (i.e. dead flowers); the agents of this destruction did not know each other nor come into much contact with each other. These inter-relationships were weak and insubstantial. To put this into contradistinction (*although perhaps overstating their differences for the purpose of comparison*) with the '*formal actor-network*' which resulted in others acting. The '*formal actor-network*' was composed of (amongst other actors): the human actors of community₂₊₃, a number of their living rooms, the provision (and consumption) of coffee and croissants, spades, Weedol, trowels, songs, leaflets, Christmas decorations, benches, varnish, bulbs, manure and a glossy communitygarden sign. The formal actor-network was more durable, convergent and inter-connected (and hence powerful) in the sense that it continued to act or imbricate other actors into the network. The inter-relationships between actors were relatively durable and could be maintained over a longer time period.

Limits to informal actor-networks

The informal actor-network is not limitless. It cannot effect all of the operations, events, actors and activities it wants or needs to be accomplished through sweat

equity alone. For example, activities such as tree surgery require expertise, machinery and personnel that the local inhabitants do not possess. Most of the actors in the network have some degree of direct interest in the production and reproduction of that network. However there is no inherent need or benefit for a tree surgeon to become active merely through pleas for help or bribes of croissants. Instead a different mechanism is required and an intermediary is used. In most instances in the empirical study, the same intermediary is used - i.e. money. Money is used to bring actors into the network where no other inducement can be deployed. Along with tree surgeons, there is repairing of walls, construction of a barbeque, and some plants bought from local garden centres. All of these interactions were negotiated through the intermediary of money. The limits of the actor-network can be perceived through these intermediaries. The extent of the actor-network is defined through these limits; the edge of action is the edge of power. This has implications for the understanding of informality as it evidences that there is a limit to what can be achieved. Only limited manifestations can be produced through informality.

Semiotics in action

Semiotics is an important mode in which actor-networks operate. There are many examples of semiotic production of the actor-networks that are intertwined with the social, spatial and material domains. For example, the painting of a wall in the informal space is both a physical change, albeit only a few molecules thick, yet is predominantly a signal of some cultural or social intent. The sign at the entrance to the communitygarden is physical, yet it mostly acts semiotically. There are many examples of semioticity in the actor-network: stickers and graffiti posted onto the walls of the space and leaflets posted through residents' letterboxes. Semiotic dirt is the visual junk of capitalist spaces: billboards, advertising signs and marketing hoardings. The informal space had none of this semiotic dirt initially. Over the research time period there is evidence of this form of signage; for instance, the communitygarden sign can be conceived as semiotic dirt. The sign itself is superfluous – it serves no functional purpose for users. This sign imparts no additional information that is not already self-evident from being in the space (in which one must be in order to read the sign). The sign

is largely a symbolic gesture, partly to act as a territorial marker, to claim the space by one actor-network (they literally stake out their claim). The sign is used almost as a form of marketing or branding. The sign takes on the aesthetics of formal signs, in the presentation, printing, framing, support and mounting, the sign looks like an '*official*' sign. This is a second gestural '*act*' of the sign, not only is it signalling directly, i.e. stating overtly, that the space is officially a communitygarden, the sign itself takes on the characteristics of officialdom.

Action through semiotics

There is a double movement of semiotic production; the first pertains to the signals/signification produced by the space (and its users) in action, what one could describe as '*active semiotics*'. That is, signals, signs and signification are generated directly through actors, action and acting. The second movement relates to semiotic displacement of these activities into documents, letters and text (which might be described as discursive semiotics'). This second movement (particularly from communitygarden to town-green) is a metamorphosis of '*active semiotics*' into '*discursive semiotics*'. In the empirical study there is a tendency towards semioticity of actor-networks, events, practices, and materials as they are displaced by documents, texts and diagrams. The '*real*' actions in the space are re-presented through '*semiotics*' of the real. Displacement concerns changing actors *but maintaining the same action*, for example: in the eyes of the local government, photographs of the garden replace the real garden; signs stating the informal space is a communitygarden replace the need to perform many of the actions required to enact a communitygarden.

Whether displacement by semioticity is an accurate representation or a democratic process is a moot point, translation is not necessarily a change for the better or towards fairness and equity. Whether any of these particular modes of production might be categorized as '*destructive*' or '*creative*', '*good*' or '*bad*' processes is difficult to define objectively. These are judgments that are culturally constructed and these conclusions do not attempt to categorize in this way. Rather the conclusion is drawn that different actor-networks produce different outcomes. In one particular configuration, the outcome is a communitygarden.

Actor-network semiotics

Space is (itself) a sign. The garden is a sign, a culturally produced sign or symbol, of bio-cultural production. The specificity of a garden, and an English garden in this instance, is a highly prescribed organisation. The configuration of the communitygarden in the case-study is in many ways far from ‘*natural*’. A considerable amount of effort is expended in maintaining this particular configuration. All this activity is done against nature₁’s wishes. If left to its own course of action, nature₁ would result in a very different outcome to that recognizable as a garden. All of this action and effort is thus expended for a purpose. That purpose is not particularly functional for humans: the flowers are too delicate to walk on or amidst, the flowerbeds impede access and carve up the space into small, relatively useless parcels (for human-sized actors). The bench and space adjacent to the barbeque are the only useable parts of the space and these make up a small fraction of the overall space. The use of the communitygarden (aside from gardening activities) is mostly for looking at or gazing upon. In some ways, this is the point (or at least this is the outcome): that the communitygarden is a sign to be looked at (rather than used). The configuration of the communitygarden permits (and/or facilitates) some social activity (and prohibits many others), but the majority of the overall scene acts as a *sign*³⁰.

The word ‘*communitygarden*’ is itself used as a kind of sign. Most obviously attempting to signify that there is a ‘*community*’ and a ‘*garden*’. The notion of community is a desirable quality for many residential areas; and the concept of a garden, as opposed for example, to a municipal ‘*park*’ (or worse still: a ‘*bomb-site*’, ‘*dump*’ or ‘*derelict*’) has (economic, social and symbolic) capital. The meaning(s) of this discursive sign is/are debatable, yet for many of the human actors it represents an improvement to the area. This aligns the broader semiotic production of the informal space with a trend towards greater formality (and, in turn, to gentrification). The naming of the space is a specific example of discursive power operating in this empirical study. There is no practical need for a name to be given to this space (indeed it already had a name and was known as

³⁰ It is pertinent to note that this sign is not legible to all; small children cannot read this sign, nor can the many pests such as slugs and weeds read the meaning of this sign.

the ‘*Debris*’); language used here suggests a link between discourse, documentation and power.

Invisible signs

There is a conundrum in the semiotics of dirt. A portion of the informal space remains derelict and unused by the local residents. Whilst the dirt could be understood as a sign of dereliction and informality; it now remains largely invisible. Dirt becomes unnoticed – it is almost entirely invisible: to the formal network, to the legislative process; it has no name, it is not registered on any formal map, no one speaks of it, no adult uses it. It could be argued that dirt is paradigmatic of the limits of semiotics and to the limits of the actor-network. Dirt, in this regard it is not a sign at all; or it is perhaps an example of an anti-sign. It is a sign of entirely nothing, it signifies nothing because it is invisible, no longer seen or thought of. In Latourian terms; dirt is not acting; ergo it has no power. This echoes Eco’s (1977: 7) assertion that “*semiotics is in principle the discipline studying everything which can be used in order to lie. If something cannot be used to tell a lie, conversely it cannot be used to tell the truth; it cannot in fact be used ‘to tell’ at all*” (emphasis in original). This commentary on how signs act is analogous to the limits of power: no action = no voice = no power; are all equivalences. To be precise, it is not strictly true that dirt is not acting at all; it certainly acts in relation to certain flora and fauna, to the soil, to the chemicals released into the microclimate and to the occasional forays by inquisitive children. However, none of these constitute part of the formal actor-networks, none of these form part of the communitygarden network nor are they considered under town-green legislation.

7.2.2 What (or who) produces informal space?

Action and absence

Informality, by definition, means an absence of formal owners, institutions and/or organisations. In this empirical study, the absence of any formal owner is a significant condition influencing the production of space. The lack of formal ownership facilitates and/or liberates actors to perform in a relatively

unprecedented way for a public urban space. Put simply, action here is different to that of a formal public space. Local parks and open spaces do not need any action by its users; in a formal public space production and maintenance is carried out by a range of governmental institutions, for example: parks and estates, pollution control team, street cleansing and tree management. All of these actors are paid for through taxation and require no direct action by residents. Formal spaces provide a range of valuable amenities to the local residents, however they do not provide the same amenities as informal space. In contradistinction, informal spaces have none of the above agencies to tend to the space. All gardening and maintenance activities must be done by local residents but if no-one does this work, then the weeds take over again. This results in either a derelict space or local residents taking over the production of the space directly (both conditions are evidenced in the empirical study³¹). Informality itself becomes a force in facilitating social interaction but it is more than merely a forum for such activity; informal space is an integral part of a network wherein social interaction is enmeshed.

Informal activities

The informal space provides affordance for activities that are generally rare in the public realm. There is evidence of a discernibly different set of social activities that occur within, or adjacent, to the informal space. Activities that would be rare in formal/public urban spaces (although not particularly unusual in private spaces) such as gardening, digging holes, installing benches, painting, having barbeques and planting trees. These activities are usually restricted to private realms, such as back gardens (or perhaps allotments). However, in the informal space, all of these activities (and more) are permissible. Xmas tree decorations are put up, Halloween parties, Easter egg hunts and many other activities and materials are evidenced in this informal space. Local inhabitants hold more social events, parties and gatherings in the informal space (notably these are not held in the local nearby formal park). The research is not a comparison between formal and informal space per se; nonetheless it is germane

³¹ The battle between nature₁ and nature₂ was evident throughout the research process. In the absence of keen gardeners, nature₁ regains its territory and nature₂ withers.

to point out that significant differences are evidenced in the informal space, compared to the formal space, that are attributable to its informality. Perceptions of interference and intervention by the local government prohibit residents from using the formal space for many activities. Similarly a fear of health and safety risks (regardless of whether those fears are real and justifiable) are attached to holding an event in a formal space but are not evidenced in the informal space. It is perceived that there is more freedom to hold events and perform activities in the informal space that would not be permitted in a formal space. This perceived sense of freedom and permissibility is a significant factor in the production of the informal space.

Who/what produces informal space?

The account of the informal space predominantly concerns the transformation of the space towards a neater, tidier, cleaner, controlled configuration. Yet throughout this entire period, and for the preceding decades, much of the space remained relatively informal. The untouched parts of the informal space are in a derelict and overgrown condition. This space remains '*dirty*': covered in a variety of weeds, brambles and nettles, ivy along with shards of broken glass, rubble, jettisoned car parts, dog mess, scraps of abandoned clothing and forgotten fragments of toys. These more remote, difficult to access areas were not subjected to gardening, maintenance sessions or clearing events. The species of plant here differ from formally maintained spaces; there are many weeds such as nettles, bracken, ivy and brambles, which would normally be removed from gardened spaces. The social actors here also differ; these are the spaces most used by local children for games such as hide and seek or making dens (and rarely or never frequented by adults). The continued presence of the dirty, derelict, informal space amidst the community garden/town-green is revelatory of a number of different issues; fallibility of translation, dissidence, poorly conceived problematisation, failed mobilisation, or more pragmatic issues, such as older people being less capable of using steep inclines or slopes affording reduced utility for adults.

Soil is one of the most actors in the production of the informal space. Soil is the common denominator between derelict space and gardened space, in that is an

actor that is present in both the clean and dirty networks. It is suppositional to state but if soil had not been present, then the decision to generate a garden might not have occurred. For example if the space was originally tarmacked, it would have been significantly more difficult to convert into a garden and perhaps other outcomes/uses might have been employed. Soil can form a network with nature₁ and nature₂. Soil provides an affordance for an overgrown wasteland or for a tidy, ordered garden.

Actor-network territories

There are many different physical/geometric boundaries for the case study. The town-green is geometrically different to the communitygarden and both are geometrically different to the greatest extent of the informal space. The legal boundary of the town-green is the smallest in extent and the most fixed (as it is defined and mapped on the legal documents). The communitygarden is larger than the town-green zone, but does not include the most inaccessible and least useable (by adult humans) areas; the informal space is the largest potential geometric extent. Even across these three principle zones there are blurred boundaries and fluxive territories. The geometric boundaries alter in relation to a number of factors: sometimes in relation to legislative boundaries, social activities or nature's actions. Nature extends and redefines the edges of the space, like the human actors, soil creeps onto adjacent spaces. Plants attempt to invade and occupy the informal space and adjacencies: brambles, ivy and nettles make tracts of the space inaccessible for other acts; effectively reducing the geometrical space available for other users. Even the boundaries of the informal space alter; when there is a social gathering, the event spills out onto adjacent land and paths and even onto the road. There is social production evident in the gatherings of gardeners and of organised communitygarden maintenance sessions, along with everyday usage by people pausing to have a sandwich on the bench, rest awhile or to stop for a moment in the sun. There are events, festivals and parties held in the space that fills up with crowds of humans. These 'social' events alter, extend and redefine (at least momentarily) the spatiality of the communitygarden. The communitygarden is a network of many actors; not just biological plants, but of built and material interventions and various social

performances. The informal space is formed as a kinetic network of actors each with their own territories of influence and range of occupation.

Production and capital

The production of space by the gardeners, activists and local inhabitants can be seen as a form of informal economy, outside of '*capitalism*'. Equally the work, effort and labour of those actors engaged in the production of the space are a form of sweat equity and the capital raised is not financial but symbolic (or perhaps cultural). There is also implicit resistance to some forms of '*capitalist*' development in the space. The informal space would be a lucrative place to build new housing for significant economic capital gains. The intention to produce a community garden is (partly) related to preventing development; the decision to apply for town-green status is also concerned with resisting housing (i.e. capitalist) development on this site (more explicitly than the case for the community garden). Although there is a rejection of development of the space for housing development, there are arguably capitalist processes attributable through the gentrification of the area. There is resistance to the deterioration of the site towards dereliction and decay. There is evidence of local residents wishing to '*improve*' the look of the area by tidying the informal space: removing rubbish, litter, remediating vandalism, cleansing, clearing, cleaning and '*improvements*' to the area through community action. The cleansing and other changes to the space over time have the effect of gentrification, which increase the economic (and symbolic) capital of residential properties in the locality. Thus this translation has a paradoxical relationship of resistance to development. Whilst much of the translation process is predicated on resisting capitalist production, the outcome and practice through which that resistance is enacted becomes a form of capitalist production qua gentrification.

7.2.3 How are power-relations structured in an informal actor-network?

Networks of power

Power is conceived here as the associations, definitions, alliances and interactions between the various actors in the case study. Power is the effect of one entity or network on another; power is operating, *'speaking'* or *'visible'* when one actor makes another *'act'*. To put it another way, if there is no action, then there has been no transference of power. The process of translation is a study of power-relationships. Power is not immanent to some actors and external to others; nor is it an abstract force that operates invisibly across this scene. Power is a part of a network (and the network is itself a mode of power); some actors control other actors, and some have more effect than others. Power operates in all directions, not merely from top to bottom, i.e. from the powerful to the weak, even the *'weakest'* have some power and can affect the process of translation. Power, in this context, is neither portrayed as *'bad'* nor an incarceratory force; it is a way of tracing and describing the inter-relationships and effects of the actor-network in action. Power is evidenced in the description of how the actor-networks operated in the case-study. That is, the process of translation is itself evidence of power-relationships.

The control of power

The process of translation in this empirical study can be understood as a shift from informal to formal. In this process it is clear that all actors in the network are not equal. Some actors endeavor to control others. In particular there are a (relatively few) human actors who are pivotal in forming, coercing and seducing other actors into a new alliance. One could refer to these focal actors as gatekeepers, controllers or part of the obligatory passage point. It is arguably they who decide on the configuration of the modified informal space. They are restricted by what is possible in that space and what they can conceivably get other actors to perform. Nonetheless it is these controllers who are pivotal in establishing and maintaining the communitygarden alliance. One of the more unexpected findings is the absence of children in the communitygarden. The interviews and documentary evidence all pointed to the presence of children as important and active producers in the network. However, it became clear through observations that this was not the case. Despite the rhetoric and despite the written statements about the role children play in the space; children are mostly

absent. The problematisation by a few controlling adult humans has effectively (and inadvertently) generated a space that provides little affordance for children. There is a dominating presence of a few actors in the network, who largely establish the conditions within which the translation of the informal space is effected. It is over-simplistic to say the direction of control is mono-directional; society controls nature, rather there is a complex interplay of myriad actors. Nature₂ forced these controllers to modify their behaviour and aspirations; forcing them to perform more work than they had initially desired, to carry out more maintenance than planned and to enrol more and more actors into the network. These controllers had to enrol actors such as pesticides, fertilizers, walls and fences in order to help corral nature₂ into its required role. All of the actors in the network were involved in manipulating, seducing and/or forcing other actors into new roles and identities. However some were more effective and prolific at this than other actors. It is this inter-activity that is the manifestation of power in this empirical study. Power is immanent in the actor-network.

There was evidence of different genders performing different roles within the network. There was an equal balance of genders frequenting the space over the research period and for the majority of the time and for the majority of activities there were no significant gender divisions in evidence. Gardening is a practice that was equally engaged in by both genders. However some of the activities did tend towards divisions of labour on the basis of gender. The erecting of fences, use of power tools and some of the heavy lifting was predominantly carried out by male actors. Whereas the production of cakes, biscuits, tea and coffee in the space tended to be more dominated by female actors. This gender imbalance was not total, there were some male actors who at times provided refreshments and there were some female actors involved with heavy lifting. This division reflects the current patterns of distribution of activities in the UK according to gender and does not stem from anything inherent in the informal space itself.

Discursive power

One modality of how power ‘acts’ is through discourse. Discourse forms part of the actor-networks of the case-study and it displaces many of the actors (as

examined previously in the conclusions on '*semiotics*'). The second case-study translation, that of gaining town-green status, particularly concerned the action(s) of documentary/discursive materials. The nature, scope and semiotics of the documents are important; as well as the discourse '*embedded*' in, or facilitated through, these documents. The town-green discourse is part of a larger, complex, comprehensive, legislative regime of discourse. The '*power*' of this legislative discourse is compelling as it is part of an actor-network that includes: legal institutions, judiciary power, council barristers, penal codes, police forces, incarceration facilities and enforcement officers. Furthermore, legislation enacts, enrolls and translates eons of time into its network. The Town-Green Act describes how it is a compilation of many ancient laws and statutes – thus embroiling centuries of British law into its network. This is another mechanism in the power structure manifest in legislation. Time and history are seemingly immutable allies of this piece of legislation.

The empirical material from the town-green legislative process illustrates how myriad actors, agencies, institutions and personnel were displaced through discourse. The relatively few words that were used in the Council House proceedings in relation to town-green status had a profound effect on a wide range of actors. Community₃ produced discourse in the form of questionnaires and evidence sheets in response to legislation. In the case-study it is clear that the production of this discourse is discerning in what is expressed and what is suppressed. The format of the questionnaires and witness statements pre-emptively displace a large amount of the actors, history and (dissenting) evidence. It is the formal actor-network that (successfully) acted within the requisite legislative network. The full range of voices of the informal space are further displaced through official discourse; the voices (and actions) of dissenters are silenced.

Hybrid power

The informal space is an example of a hybrid₁. The informal space under the guise of a communitygarden is produced through the combination of material, social, natural and semiotic actors. The communitygarden does not simplify nor cannot be reduced to any individual one of these domains. The informal space as

a town-green is also a hybrid₁. It is a complex imbroglio of: fiction, legislation, nature, economics, knowledge, society and power-relations. These hybrids are not mutually exclusive; they are sometimes coterminous, inter-related and/or interdependent. Production occurs as power relations through these hybrid actor-networks.

7.2.4 Reflexions on the research questions³²

Do the findings answer the research question? Yes (and no). The case study answers the principal question ‘how is informal space produced?’ through the examination in detail of the socio-spatial-natural-semiotic networks in action. The accounts reveal and describe how the informal space, as a network of actors, is produced and reproduced over time. The theoretical and methodological framework of actor-network theory is able to provide a sound intellectual apparatus with which to answer this question. The literature describes a diverse range of physical science, art, social science and philosophical domains that requires an analytical framework that could facilitate the requisite trans-disciplinary approach. The nature of ‘*space*’ requires an examination of multiple actors, similarly ‘*production*’ implies an action, and ANT is particularly appropriate for investigating the making of knowledge ‘*in action*’.

The findings from the case-study are inevitably partial, they cannot tell the entire story. There is not enough word space to go into depth about every aspect of the events in this empirical study; careful selection has been used to decide what is included here (and what is left out). This is not a limitation that is restricted to this research alone; all ethnographic accounts must be selective in what is included or excluded. The findings perhaps over-focus on certain aspects of the account, concentrating on those actors that are ‘*successful*’ and most visibly represented. There are limitations to the study and caution must be taken when drawing generalizations from this single empirical study. The empirical study does answer the research question, although it is reasonable to add the proviso that it answers the question for a limited set of conditions. The research is UK-centred and as such might not be equally applicable globally; also the site is

³² This document (the PhD) is hybrid in the way it unites myriad heterogeneous domains together on a single surface (of paper) all metamorphosed into words.

located in a certain socio-economic demographic (albeit quite a diverse range) and again there might potentially be somewhat different results for more extreme or differing socio-economic groups.

7.3 Actor-network theory translation

The empirical work *'followed the actors'* and mapped the varying configurations of actor-networks as they modified over time. The framework of translation was appropriate for this research in that it was equally applicable at each of the moments/stages of translation and for each of the actors. A different grid or reference system was not needed to examine humans, nature, production, spaces or semiotics. Although terms such as *'community'*, *'town'*, *'garden'* or *'nature'* are used in the thesis this was a device adopted to facilitate the writing up of the research (and to marry certain terms encountered during the research) rather than a fundamental distinction between any of the actors. There were no *a priori* classifications applied to society or nature at the outset; nor were they considered as separate nor unified until after the empirical work; judgment was determined *a posteriori*. At the start of the empirical study nature and society were largely isolated; at the end of the process a much closer and intricate alliance has been created between nature and society. Translation allowed for a degree of flexibility to follow events and actors as they emerged. At the outset of the process, it was neither clear nor obvious that the planting of flowers in an informal space would lead to a delegation of council officers convening for legislation. This illustrates both the heterogeneity of an actor-network and the emergence of the actor-network processually.

7.4 Contribution to knowledge

The research contributes to knowledge in three principal areas: empirical, theoretical and methodological. The study generates empirical evidence concerning socio-spatial relationships during the production of informal spaces. The informal space is a paradigmatic case-study and as such reveals unique evidence for this population. Some form of extrapolation could be developed

from the theoretical inter-relationships between actors discussed in the findings. There is a wealth of empirical data from this case-study gathered over an extended period contributing to knowledge relating to, for example: modes of governance, the role of public realm, the perceptions of bio-diversity, resolution of conflicts, gentrification processes, low-cost urban regeneration processes, the appropriation of town-green legislation and the utility of unregulated space. The implications and lessons can be disseminated further afield. The section on '*Further Research*' examines in more detail how this original research can be used beyond the confines of the site. Secondly, the work is innovative theoretically, combining Actor-Network Theory with the fine-grained accounts and descriptions generated from the fieldwork. The research also adds to theoretical knowledge by applying ANT into a '*spatial*' field of study. Many of the earliest ANT accounts relate to the production of science and technology based on research in laboratories and techno-scientific fields. There are now ANT accounts that focus on a wide range of subjects beyond laboratories and science institutions. However this empirical research extends the ANT theoretical approach with that of a '*thick description*' by undertaking prolonged fieldwork. The intricate ethnographic-type work enmeshed within the '*translation*' framework is a contribution to theoretical knowledge. Thirdly, the research has adopted an innovative methodological approach. The methods have been drawn from a range of different disciplines: visual studies and visual anthropology, social studies, urban studies, architecture and discourse analysis. Whilst none of these are unique in themselves; the contextualisation of these methods within ANT as a transdisciplinary practice contributes to new methodological knowledge.

7.5 Future research

There are a number of avenues for future research opportunities to progress the work already undertaken. The most obvious is to continue to monitor the on-going production of the case-study site as it evolves and changes over a longer time period. This would not necessarily enrich the work already undertaken but would provide a longer timeframe within which to examine more longitudinal changes occurring. One of the significant transformations to the area is

gentrification and continuing research in this space would enable an examination of the inter-relationships of the informal space to gentrification.

In a period of prolonged economic depression and severe cuts to public finance, the relevance and role of informal spaces is a highly relevant area of research. Whilst this research project did not focus exclusively on the economic factors apposite to this empirical study this could be a relevant sub-theme for further analysis. The role of potentially ‘*cost-free*’ public realm³³ such as an informal space is a germane area for further research. As part of this investigation into the potential role and value of informal spaces, there are a number of other themes that could be explored in far greater detail as subsequent research opportunities. Informal spaces provide a wide range of opportunities for communities, civil society, social movements and interest groups to appropriate and alter the public realm. There are a number of potential benefits related to the provision of informal spaces that could be examined, which include (but are not limited to): the minimal financial costs associated with producing informal spaces; informal spaces can provide a more diverse range of spatial options (than can be provided for or maintained by the local government); informal space can be more directly targeted to the needs of the inhabitants of the locality (as their interests and views are inherently consulted through the production process); informal space could facilitate a richer, more diverse and user-targeted public realm; informal spaces can evidence alternative modes of (informal) governance and; develop new, innovative or emergent relationship(s) to formal governmental institutions (or perhaps, formal governments might become imbricated qua informal governance) which could lead to hybrids of formal and informal government/governance. The research could be used towards the development of policy and practice guidance as informal spaces are an important part of the urban environment.

The benefits listed above point towards the potential and promise of the production of informal space that could be relevant areas for future research. Equally, the failures and limitations of informal spaces could equally form pertinent domains for future study. Merely providing informal space does not

³³ ‘*Cost-free*’ as seen from a local government perspective.

necessarily lead to such favourable outcomes. In many cases a broad consensus of agreement might be found in each locality particularly where the social users are homogenous in their interests and demographics (although even then there is dissent). There are potentially more conflicts in certain urban locations than others, particularly where there are more diverse interest groups and heterogeneous users; for example riots, protests camps and demonstrations evidence how extreme conflicts of interest can lead to (extreme) conflicts. The other concern of informal spaces (and hence a potential area for further research) is the provision of space for those actors who are silenced or othered in this process. There are the needs, actions and interests of the various: drunks, ‘*vandals*’, graffiti artists (and arguably) children who did not have much representation in the empirical study. Other non-human actors were not accorded much of a voice; the various flora and fauna that occupied the space at the start of the translation process but who were omitted by the end, need to be accounted for as part of a wider public realm provision. How, and in what way, this would be achieved could form part of a future research strategy.

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9 APPENDICES

Appendix 1: A copy of the confidentiality form and interview documentation used in the interview procedure.

Appendix 2: City Council Draft Planning Brief, 1986.

Appendix 3: Land Registry search (21/2/2006) Certificate Ref: 227/161EAFB

Appendix 4: Town-Green Committee Report, 2009.

Appendix 5: A5 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 03.09.2012.

Appendix 6: A5 sized Leaflet posted through local residents door 10.11.2010.

Appendix 7: A6 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 16.11.2011.

Appendix 8: A4 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 13.10.2012).

Appendices 9.1-9.11: Various leaflets posted through local residents doors, as submitted as evidence (*i.e.* 'EXHIBIT 3: GARDENING AND MAINTENANCE SESSIONS') in town-green application.

Appendix 10: A4 sized Community Association publication (8 pages) posted through local resident's door 11.11.2012.

Appendix 11: A6 sized leaflet posted through local resident's door 02.12.2011.

Appendix 12: Extract from poster pinned to tree at entrance to informal space 13.08.2012.

Appendix 13: Excerpt from Community Newsletter posted through residents letterboxes: 16. 06. 2008

Appendix 14: Excerpt from Community Newsletter posted through residents letterboxes: 02.07.2008.

Appendix 15: Town-Green application form, 2008.

Appendix 16: Town-Green application resident's letter, 2007.

Appendix 17: Illustrative plan indicating extents of: informal space, community garden and town-green.

Appendix 18: Photographs of '*official*' community garden/town-green sign in situ (2010).

Appendix 19: Sample questionnaire from Town-green application, 2007.

Appendix 20: Excerpt from Photographic evidence (submitted as part of Town-green Application) 2007.

Appendix 21: Town-Green application sample witness statement, 2007.

Appendix 22: Excerpt from Community Newsletter posted through residents' letterboxes: 10. 11. 2009.

Appendix 23: Extract from dissenting questionnaire from Town-green application (originally forming page 352 of application), 2007.

Appendix 24: Interviewee data, observational data & primary documentation data.

Appendix 25: Glossary of Terms.

Appendix 1: A copy of the confidentiality form and interview documentation used in the interview procedure.



University of the West of England, Bristol

CONSENT FORM

Full title of Project: ‘The Production of Informal Space’

Contact details:

Louis Rice

Email address: Louis.Rice@uwe.ac.uk

Architecture + Planning Department

University of the West of England

Bristol

BS16 1QY

0117 32 83014

Please initial in box:

- 1 I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
- 2 I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.
- 3 I agree to take part in the above study.

Please tick appropriate box

- 4 I agree to the interview being audio recorded
- 5 I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications

YES	NO

Name of participant (please print)	Date	Signature

Name of researcher (please print)	Date	Signature



University of the West of England, Bristol

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH

Title: The Production of Informal Space in the UK

Researcher: Louis Rice

The research examines how informal spaces *in the United Kingdom* are made, used and produced. Informal spaces, are parts of the city that are either derelict or left over space. There is growing evidence of an increase in the use of these spaces by local communities for purposes such as recreational space or gardens. The role of informal spaces is becoming increasingly pertinent during the current economic crisis as local authorities look to lower cost approaches to maintaining and producing open space - whilst also maintaining or augmenting their aspirations for community building, bio-diversity and local governance. The research examines not just the social change occurring but also the impacts on nature and the physical space itself. Using a UK-based case study, the research strategy is to adopt the following methods: interviews, observation, and documentary analysis. The research will focus on the following key issues:

Who is using the informal space?

What change is happening in the informal space?

Why are these changes occurring?

The research aims to develop a deeper understanding of the role of informal spaces for their users and the wider community. This relates to the government's current policies aimed at delivering 'sustainable communities' through the development of high-quality environments and the creation of improved neighbourhoods, social equity provision for physical activity, livability and mental well-being. It also points towards the creation of low-cost urban spaces with high social value. This could be particularly relevant to local authorities who rarely have large budgets for urban regeneration or restructuring. The research could also lead to useful 'practice guidance' for local groups wishing to establish a new informal space.

Material from these interviews (will be made anonymous) and included in a written research document.

Appendix 2: City Council Draft Planning Brief, 1986

Exhibit 4



Draft Planning Brief 18/6/1986.

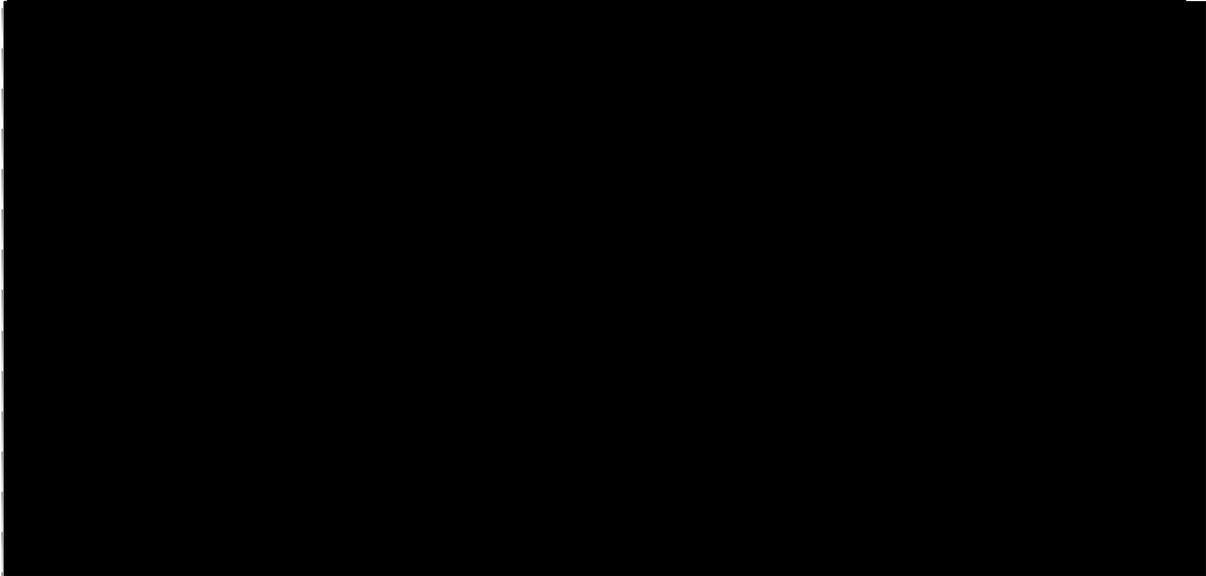
See particularly 5.3.2 of Appendix A

6

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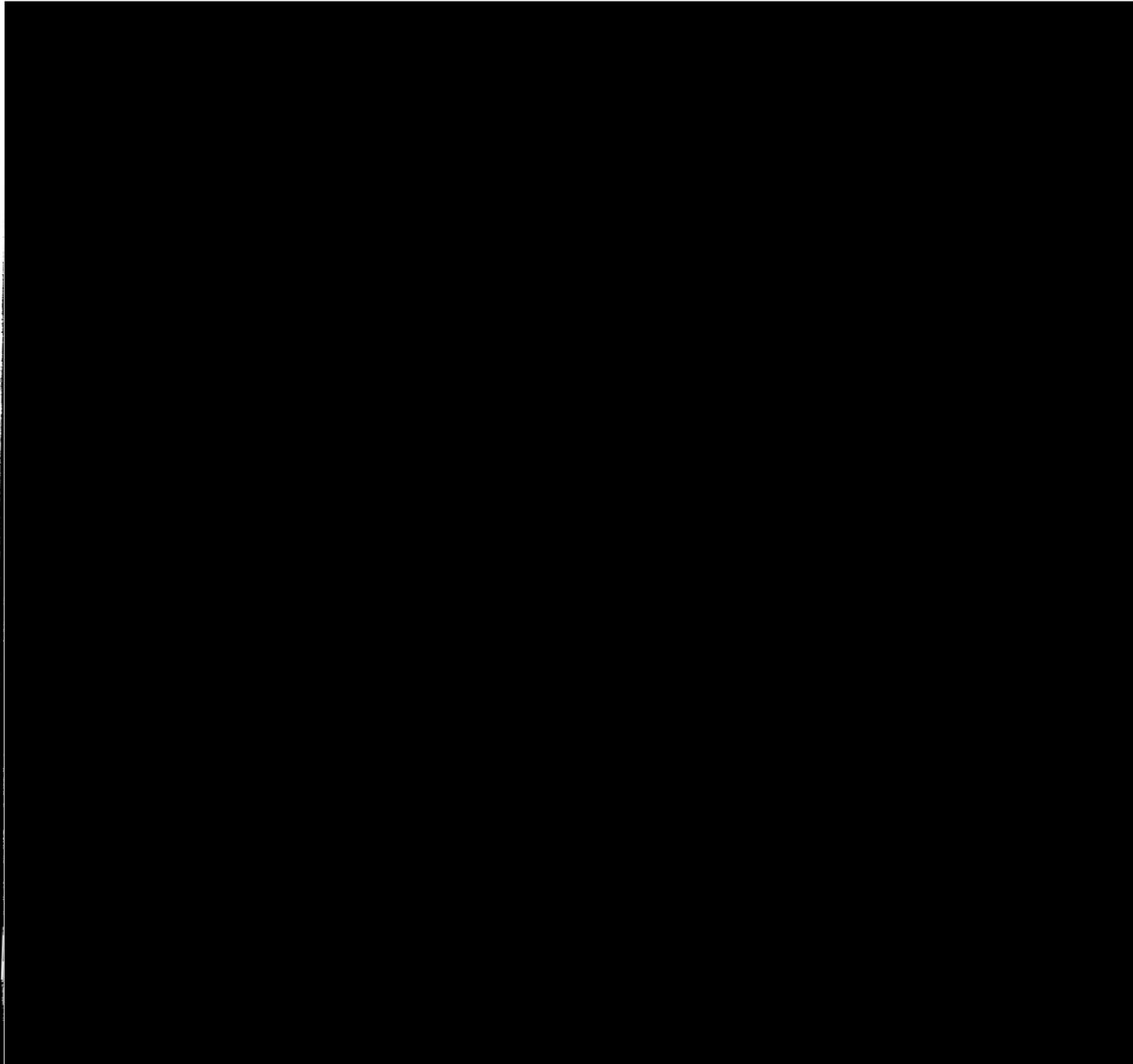


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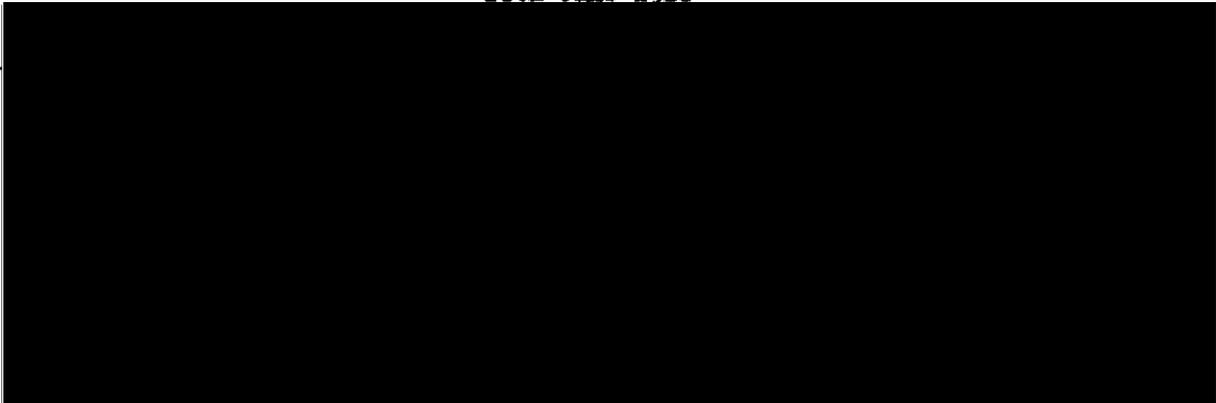
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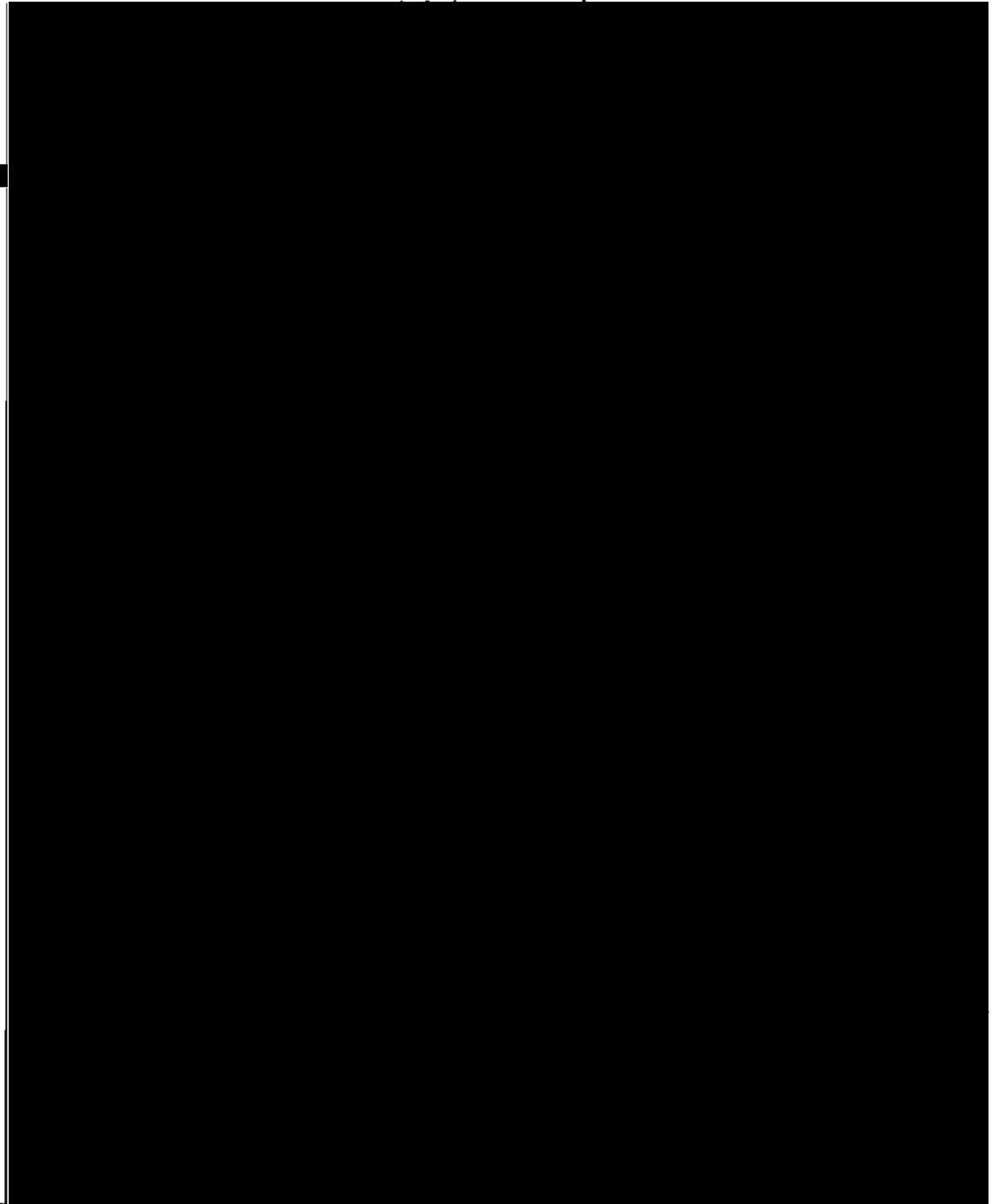
APPENDIX A

111

18th June 1986



2 LOCATION



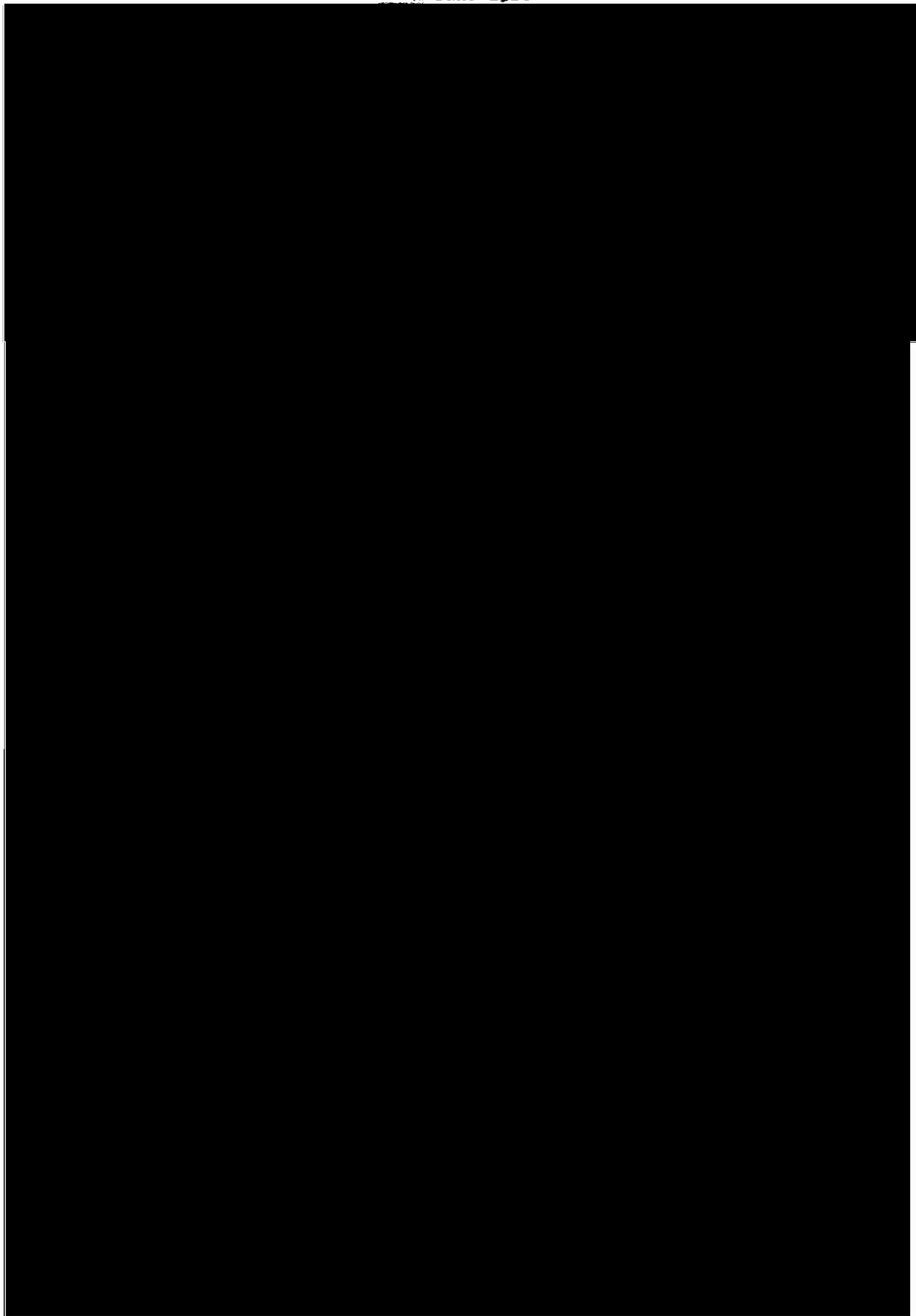
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18th June 1986



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**Appendix 3: Land Registry Search (21/2/2006) Certificate Ref:
227/161EAFB**

Exhibit 1

Land Registry Search



INDEX MAP PLAN

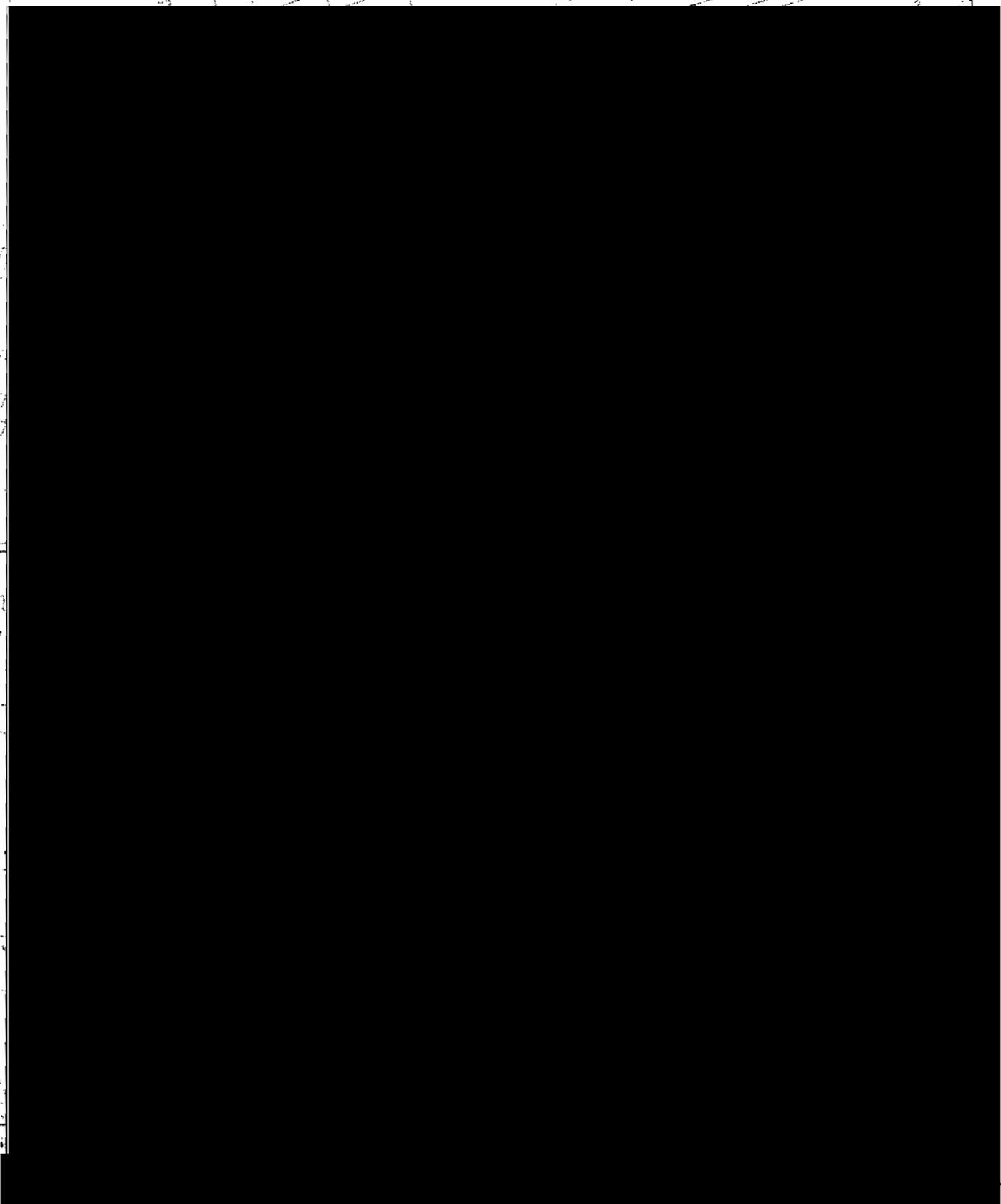


Plan prepared on 21/02/2006 at [REDACTED]

ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP REFERENCE: [REDACTED]

SCALE 1:1250

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Thi



1883041002

Land Registry search 21/2/2006

Official certificate of the result
of search of the index map

Land Registry
Land Registration Rules 2003

SIMR

Certificate Date:
Certificate Time:
Certificate Ref:



Page 1

Property	Land within the red broken line on the attached Land Registry plan and described in form SIM as 
----------	---

Result

The index map has been searched in respect of the Property with the following result:

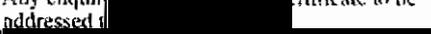
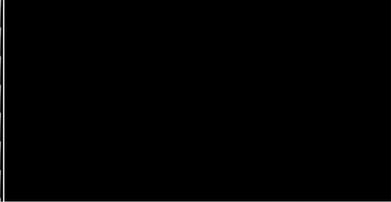
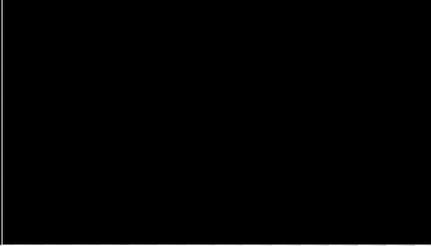
No registered estate, caution against first registration or application for first registration or application for a caution against first registration is shown on the index map in relation to the Property.

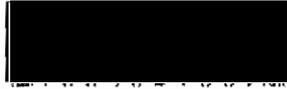
Since we were unable to precisely identify the land you applied to search from the plan which accompanied your application, the certificate has been completed in respect of the land shown by a red broken line on the accompanying Land Registry plan. Please note that we may need to raise a requisition if you use a defective plan on a subsequent application for registration.

The plan attached to this result is prepared for the sole purpose of showing the area in respect of which an official search has been made. The information has been taken from the index map. It is illustrative only and does not define the extent of the land in any individual title. For information about the general boundaries of a title please refer to the individual register and title plan.

END OF RESULT.

NS

Your Reference: 	Key Number: 	Any enquiries should be addressed to:  certificate to be
		





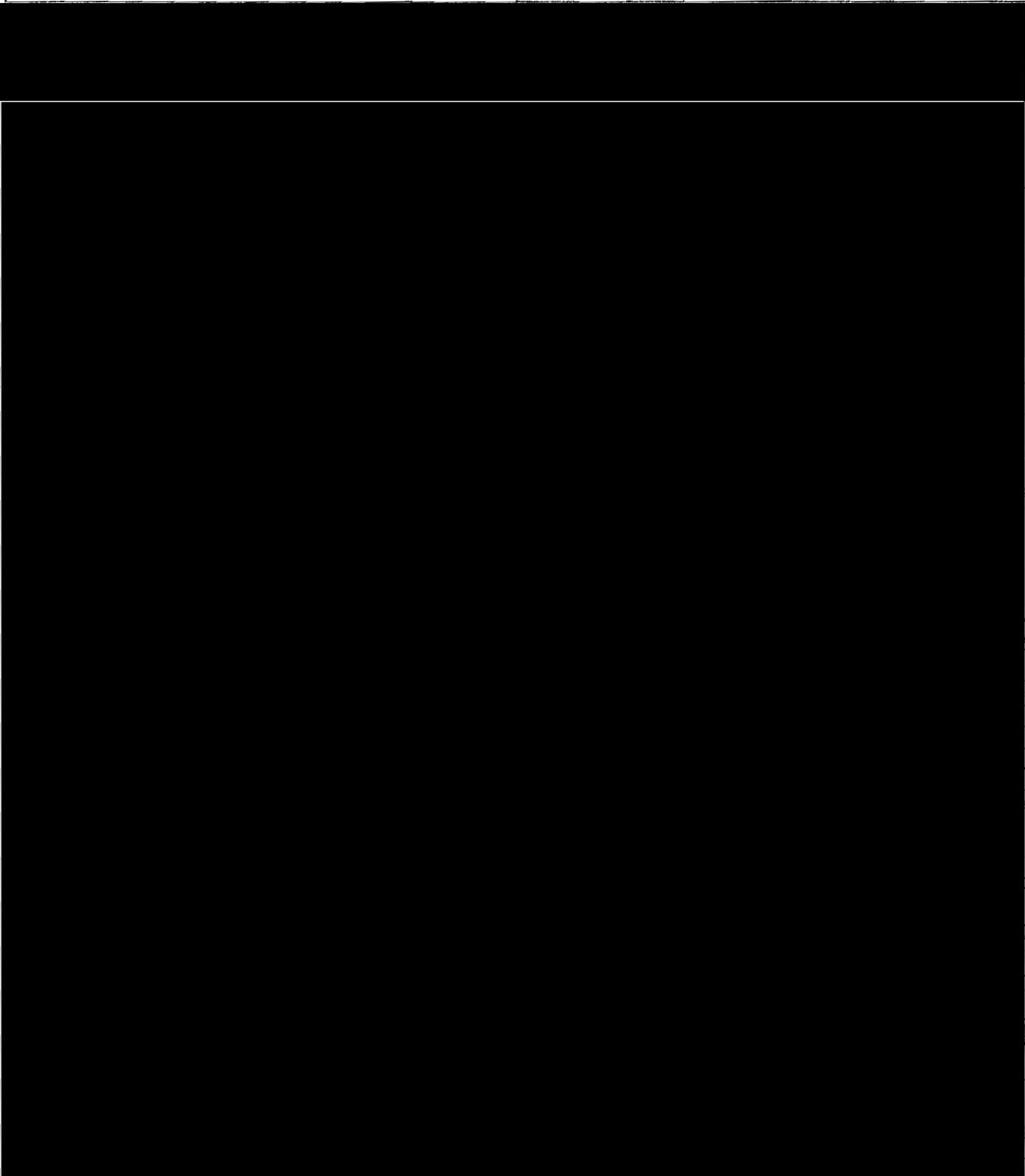
INDEX MAP PLAN



Plan prepared on 21/02/2006 at [REDACTED]

ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP REFERENCE: [REDACTED]

SCALE 1:1250



Appendix 4: Town-Green Committee Report, 2009

[REDACTED] CITY COUNCIL

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND GREENS COMMITTEE

**APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION OF LAND AT [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] AS A TOWN OR VILLAGE GREEN UNDER THE
COMMONS ACT 2006**

(Report of the Head of Legal Services)

(WARD: [REDACTED])

APPLICANTS:

[REDACTED]

Objectors: None

Purpose of Report

1. TO ADVISE GRANT OF THE APPLICATION

Background

2. The Applicants, on behalf of the [REDACTED] Residents Association applied on 29 November 2007 for registration as a town or village green of land located at the eastern end of [REDACTED]. The site comprises approximately 290m .

A copy of the Application with the Statutory Declaration in support and a plan showing the subject land is to be found at Appendix 1. The Application was supported by 148 evidence questionnaires and statements, which are included at Appendix 2.

3. A Notice of the application was posted at the site and published in the [REDACTED] Evening Post during February 2008, with a deadline for objections of 30 April 2008, but no objections to it were received.
4. Thirty one people, of whom thirty live in [REDACTED] have completed questionnaires to the effect that they have used the land for at least

twenty years, principally for the purposes of gardening and children's play, but there is also evidence of activities such as drawing, nature study, holding fêtes, exercising dogs, picnics and fruit picking. Twenty-five people all of whom live in [REDACTED] have stated that they have used the land during a twenty year period for leisure purposes without specifying the activities.

5. Forty-five witnesses who all live in [REDACTED] have stated that they have used the land for lawful sports and pastimes, such as gardening, children's play, nature study, and picnics, during the previous twenty years, but not throughout the whole period.
6. For this application for registration as a green under the 2006 Act to be successful, the applicants must prove that the land in question comes entirely within the following definition of a "town or village green" to be found in Section 15(2) of the Commons Act 2006. (Section 15 in its entirety is included at Appendix 3).
 - (a) A significant number of the inhabitants of any locality, or of any neighbourhood within a locality, have indulged as of right in lawful sports and pastimes on the land for a period of at least 20 years; and
 - (b) they continue to do so at the time of the application.

For the land to be registerable as a town or village green, all the elements of the statutory definition must be met, and these can be broken down as follows:

- (i) significant number of inhabitants;
- (ii) of any locality, or neighbourhood within a locality;
- (iii) have indulged as of right i.e. without force, secrecy or permission;
- (iv) in lawful sports and pastimes;
- (v) on the land for at least 20 years.

In this case the relevant number of inhabitants is 76. The neighbourhood is [REDACTED] and the locality is [REDACTED]. There does not appear to have been any use of force or secrecy, nor any grant of permission. The main activities have been gardening and children's play. Thirty-one of the 76 have used the land for these lawful activities for at least the twenty years immediately prior to the application.

Conclusion

7. This committee on behalf of the Council as Commons Registration Authority has a statutory duty to determine objectively whether or not the land in question should be registered as a town or village green, within the meaning of the Commons Act 2006.
8. Accordingly the Committee should grant the application on the basis of the evidence submitted by the Applicants, which shows that the land fulfils all the criteria for registration.

Consultation

[REDACTED]

Appendices

Appendix 1

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Legal Implications

The City Council in its capacity of Commons Registration Authority has a statutory duty under the Commons Act 2006 to determine whether the land should be registered as a green.

It has to consider objectively and impartially all applications to register greens on their merits.

The effect of registration would be that local people would be entitled to engage in any lawful sports or pastimes on the land. As this land is unclaimed, the Commons Act 2006, Section 45 would apply to it, and therefore the City Council would have power if it were registered to take steps to protect it, including institution of proceedings for any offence such as encroachment, enclosure or unlawful construction.

Resource Implications

Financial: None.

Land:

[REDACTED]

Personnel: None.

Recommended - that the Committee grant the application.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Registration Authority, [Redacted]

[Redacted]

**Appendix 5: A5 sized leaflet posted through local residents door
03.09.2012**

Dates to look forward to:

Saturday September 22nd

Share, swap and save: Please put your unwanted items outside your door after 9:00 AM. Then wander around to see if any of your neighbours have put out something you need. Please take unclaimed items off the street by dusk.

Community barbeque on the town green 6:30PM: The community barbeque will be fired up for another sociable evening. Hot-dogs £1.50. Bring your own drinks. Weather forecast is dry but cloudy.

Halloween October 31st

Community barbeque 6:00 PM: Fancy dress optional but scarier the better. Mulled wine and hot dogs on sale. Trick or treaters welcome.

Saturday November 17th

Coffee morning, 50 [REDACTED] 10:30 AM -12:30 PM: This is to raise money to maintain and improve the town green and for other local community projects. Enjoy a cup of coffee and a cake. There will also be cakes and home baking for sale to take away. Contributions welcome.

Forthcoming events whose date is yet to be decided

October

Garden working party to prepare for the winter and to complete some outstanding tasks.

December

Decorate a Christmas tree on the Green. [REDACTED] will provide an 8 foot tree at cost. A good supply of baubles is left from last year although more would be welcome. Mulled wine and mince pies to be served.

Another swap, share and save possibly on Saturday December 8th.

January

A mid-winter celebration in [REDACTED]. Details to be arranged.

Suggestions for other events are welcome.

**Appendix 6: A5 sized Leaflet posted through local residents door
10.11.2010**

COFFEE MORNING

In aid of the Community Gardens

On

Saturday 17th November from 10.30 a.m.

At



Coffee, tea & cakes £2.50

+

Sale of books & cakes

If you have any novels or books for children that you would like to donate for sale, bring them along.

**Appendix 7: A6 sized leaflet posted through local residents door
16.11.2011**

URGENT!

HELP NEEDED AT [REDACTED] GARDEN

Sunday 20th November 10:00 AM to Noon

Coffee and croissants to follow

We have been given a ton of compost and 1000 woodland bulbs by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to enhance our garden. Please could you help to spread the compost and to plant the bulbs. Please bring a spade, trowel or wheelbarrow if possible.

Questions to:

[REDACTED]

**Appendix 8: A4 sized leaflet posted through local residents door
13.10.2012**

Autumn Gardening/Planting
Session 2012

REMINDER!

You are invited to an Autumn
clearing and gardening session on
Saturday Oct 20th at 9.30 - 12.30
followed by coffee and croissants
at [REDACTED]

Meet at the [REDACTED]

Bring: i) Gown seed to spread around.

ii) Bubbles and towels to clean them in around
the area [REDACTED]

iii) a rake to work the gown seed in

iv) A song to sing if you would like to, and
a pot of yogurt to eat with honey if
that's what you'd like!

Appendix 9.1: A5 leaflet posted through local residents door, 1994

PUT THIS DATE IN YOUR
DIARY!

Bulb Planting Session: 1st Oct 1994

Here is an invitation! Come and join
in a bulb planting session this coming
Saturday morning at 10.00 AM.

Then, at 12.00, we will provide coffee
and tea and biscuits at

Please bring a trowel and some bulbs
to plant. We also need more plants
and evergreen bushes for the public garden
area so that next Spring, everything will look good.
See you at 10.00 AM
on Saturday!

Appendix 9.2: A5 leaflet posted through local residents door, 1997.

7
SPRING PLANTING.
INVITATION

Please join us for a planting
and general tidying session on
Sunday 23rd March at 9.30 AM
followed by coffee and croissants
at

Please bring forks trowels etc
along with any plants, bushes, bulbs
you want to bring.
Hope to see you there!

Appendix 9.3: A5 leaflet posted through local residents door, 1999.

SPRING PLANTING

99

Come to a Spring planting on
Saturday ~~27th March~~ 10-12 noon
17th April.

We need to restore the estate circle
for the lounge on the lower green.
cut grass, treat wooden railings,
plant summer flowers/shrubs.

Her coffee/tea at

Appendix 9.4: A5 leaflet posted through local residents door, 1999.

AVTUMN PLANTING.

4

OCT 99.

The Autumn planting and clearance session will be held on Sunday 10th Oct 10 AM.

Please bring bulbs and plants. We need to sort out the area where the sewer works took place and burn the rubbish as usual on the green.

This will be followed as usual by coffee and croissants.

Do join us.

Appendix 9.5: A5 leaflet posted through local residents door, 2000.

AUTUMN 2000

5

CLEARANCE AND PLANTING
SESSION.

There will be a planting and clearing
session (and collection of rubbish to burn)
on Sunday 15th Oct. from
10 AM — 12.00 Noon.

This will be followed by the usual
refreshments!
Please bring shears, bubs,
rubbish bags, garden waste for burning.

Appendix 9.6: A6 leaflet posted through local residents door, 2003.

2003 ? 6

SPRING PLANTING

There will be an Spring planting on Sunday 23rd
March 10-12.30pm

Please bring spring bulbs, plants and gardening
tools.

Coffee and croissants



Appendix 9.7: A5 leaflet posted through local residents door, 2001.

SPRING PLANTING. 2001

You are invited to join the
Spring Planting on
Saturday 17th March.

9.30am — 12.00 NOON.

Please bring plants and bulbs, forks and
~~shovels~~ trowels. We will have a bonfire.

We need also to cut down some dead wood
at the back of the garden at [REDACTED]

The benches and the foot and rail fencing all
needs oiling.

At the end of the session we will
have coffee and croissants at
[REDACTED]

See you then
[REDACTED]

Appendix 9.8: A5 leaflet posted through local residents door, 2001.

8

AUTUMN 2001
PLANTING AND CLEARANCE
SESSION

You are invited to a planting and
clearance session on:

SUNDAY 21st OCT 2001.
10.00 AM — 12.00 NOON.

Please put this date in your diary.
There is a lot to do! Please bring bulbs to
plant for the Spring.

The session will be
followed by coffee and croissants at

[REDACTED]

Best wishes

[REDACTED]

Appendix 9.9: A5 leaflet posted through local residents door, 2002.

SPRING PLANTING

2002.

You are invited to a Spring Planting
on Sunday 10th March. 9.30 - 12.30.
followed by coffee and croissants
at [REDACTED]

Please bring forks trowels etc
as usual and any thing you would
like to plant.

lets hope for a sunny spring
morning.
See you there!

[REDACTED]

Appendix 9.11: A5 leaflet posted through local residents door, 2004.

10.

Autumn 2004
Planting Session:

You are invited to an Autumn session
of clearing, tidying, planting on
Sunday 3rd October: 10-12.30.

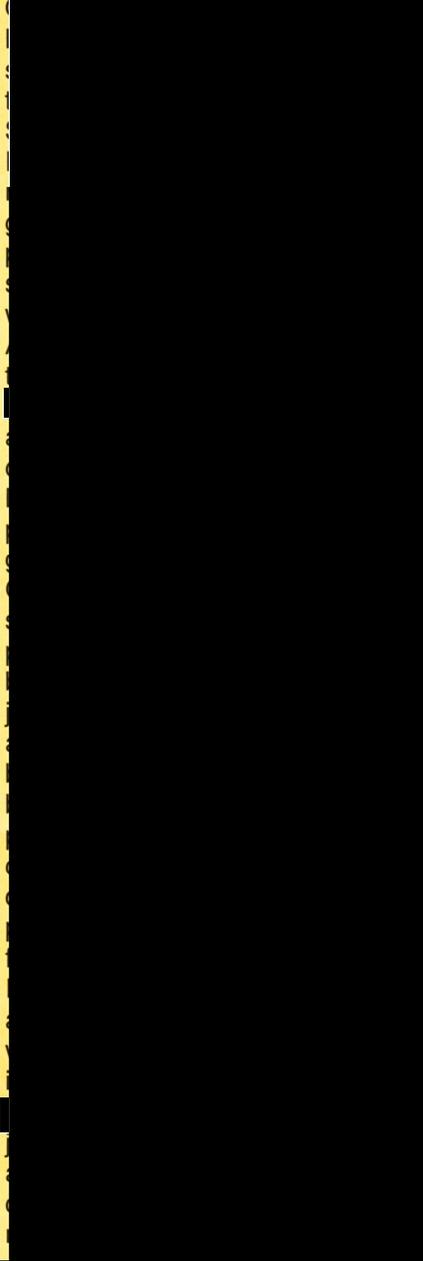
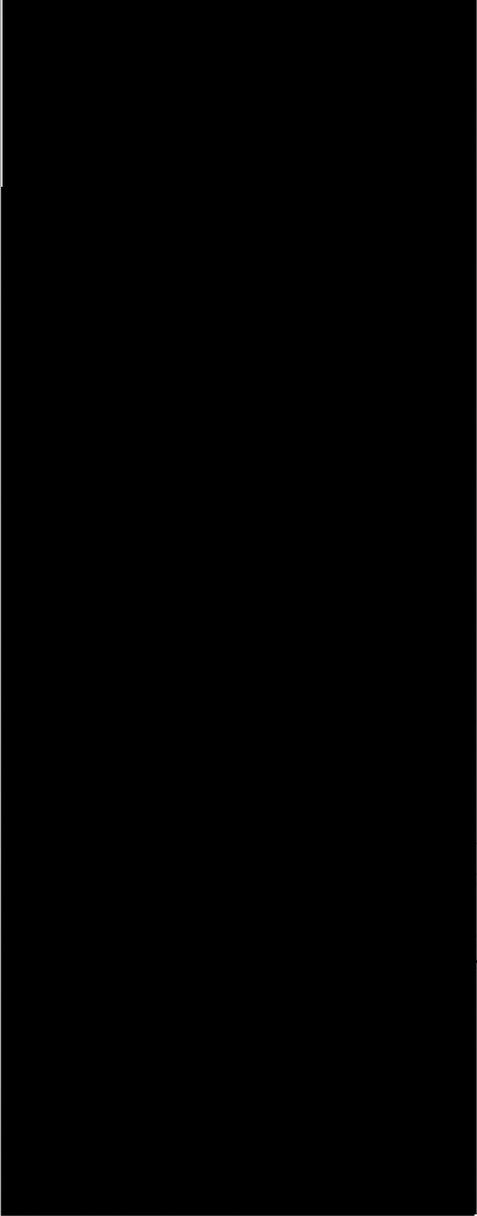
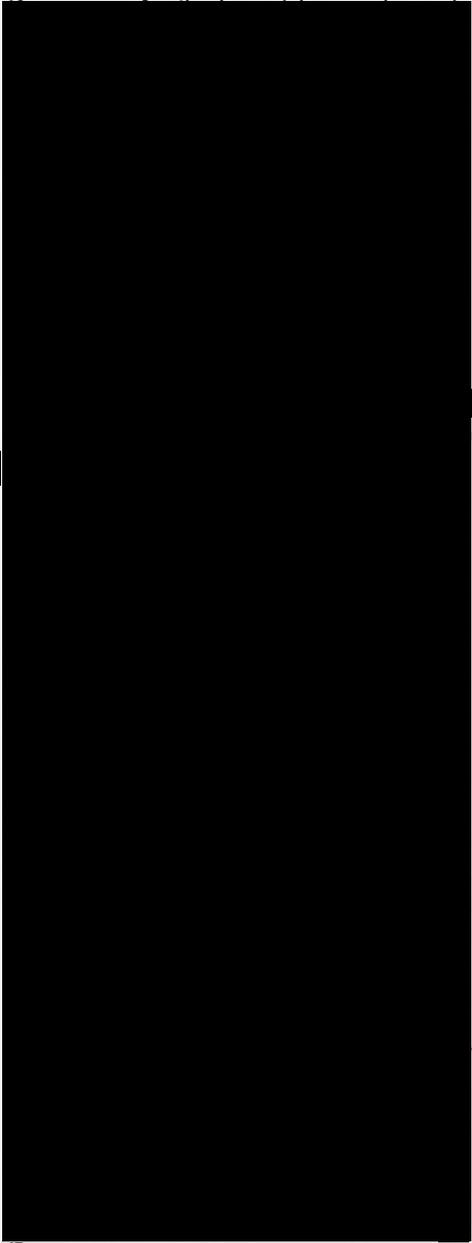
followed by the usual coffee and
croissants, but not at the usual
place..... refreshments will be at
[redacted] at [redacted].

Do bring bulbs and trowels
and clippers to cut back growth etc

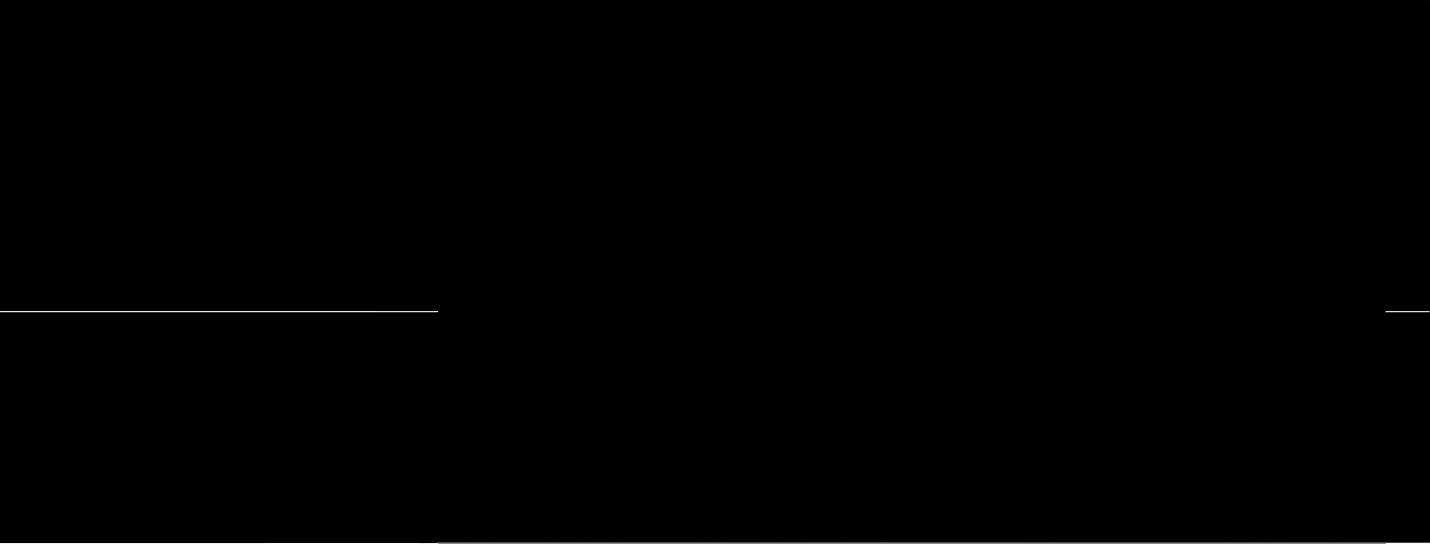
See you then...

[redacted]

**Appendix 10: A4 sized Community Association publication (8 pages)
posted through local resident's door 11.11.2012.**



IL.



The little garden at this junction, which is now a Town Green was the scene of frenetic activity in November as a band of local people, masterminded by ██████████ and ██████████ descended on it to clear the weeds and plant bulbs. It will look superb in the coming Spring.

Appendix 10

Appendix 11: A6 sized leaflet posted through local resident's door

02.12.2011

Appendix 12: Poster pinned to tree at entrance to informal space
13.08.2012

THIS IS A COMMUNITY EVENT and as such

PLEASE KINDLY NOTE that PARENTS must be fully RESPONSIBLE for Their CHILDREN at all TIMES.

Those Local Residents and others who have begun to clear the Garden Ground near the Barbeque and Table area , have found a quantity of broken glass and bricks and metal objects , which when near the surface have hopefully been removed .

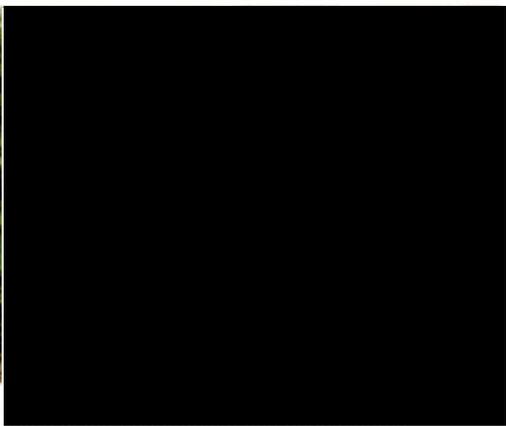
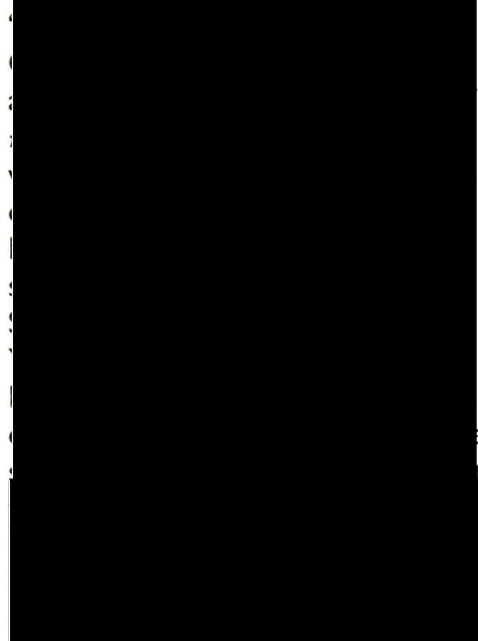
Everybody should be aware , however , that this was a local bomb site from the last war and then a refuse dump and as such will inevitably have all sorts of items in the soil which will be a hazard to small children .

Great care should be taken when picking up objects on this area of ground or walking on the rough uncultivated areas .

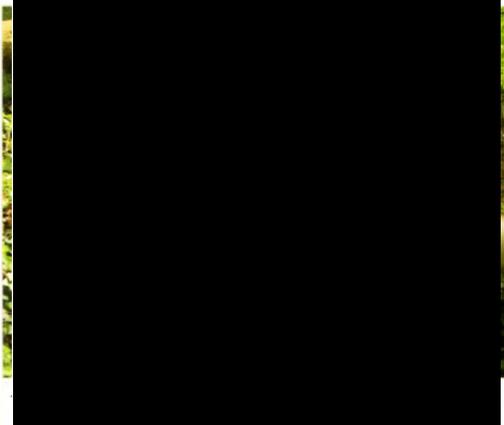
NO CHILDREN UNDER 12 years , should be in the Barbeque area, because of the hot charcoal and cooking facilities .

Appendix 13: Excerpt from Community Newsletter posted through residents' letterboxes: 16. 06. 2008

tion.



some of the undergrowth has been cleared

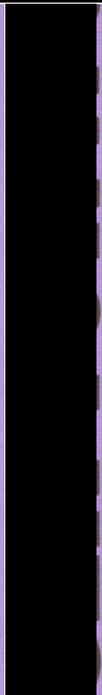
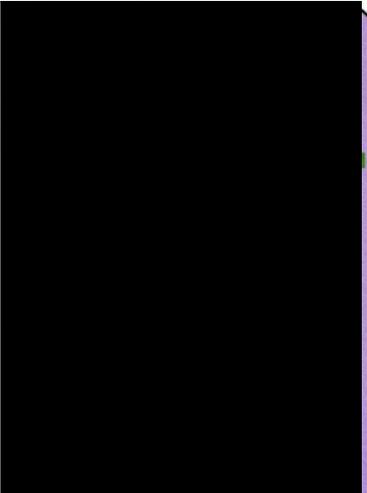


as a wildlife habitat



Town Green Application for [Redacted] Community Garden

This open space at the end of [Redacted] has no registered owner. Local residents [Redacted] and [Redacted] have now submitted a Town Green application to the [Redacted] to have it formally registered as a public open space. It was bombed during the war and local people created a garden there in 1980. To qualify for Town Green status, the applicants have to show evidence of regular use of the land for at least 20 years, unopposed by anyone claiming ownership. [Redacted] and [Redacted] have gathered about 150 statements in support of the application. The consultation period for objections to be raised has now expired and the matter should be considered by the council Open Spaces Committee soon.



Summer 2008

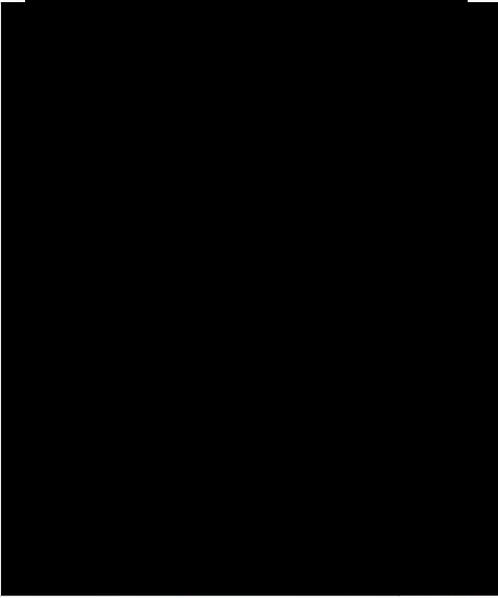


NEWS

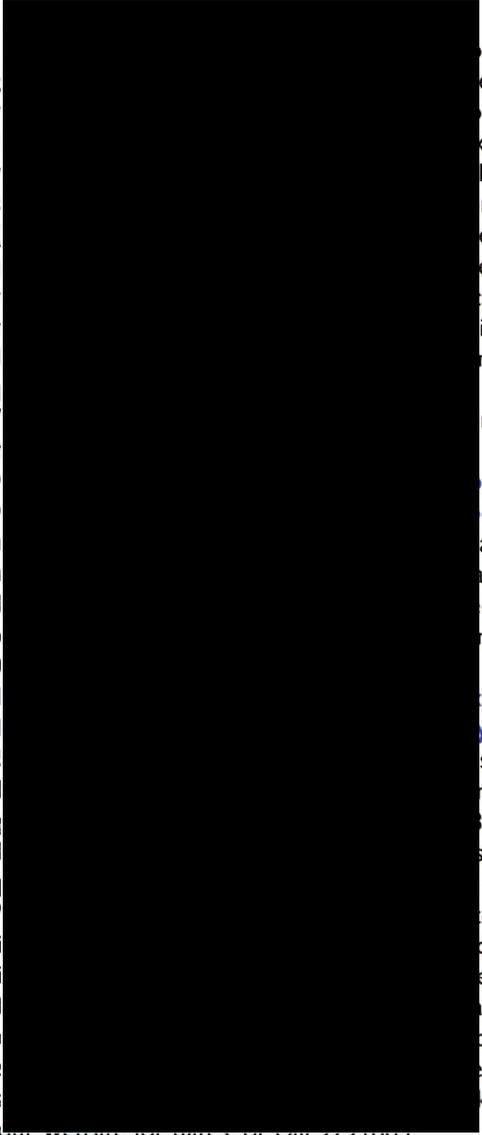
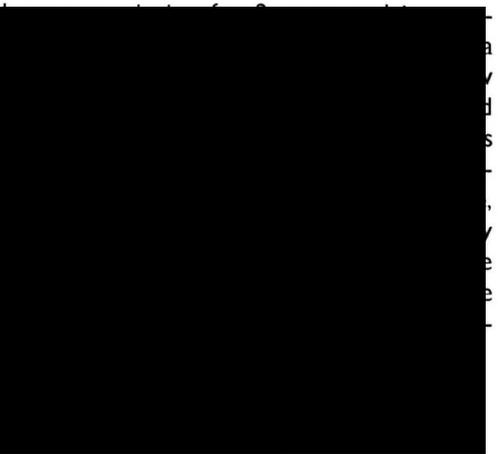
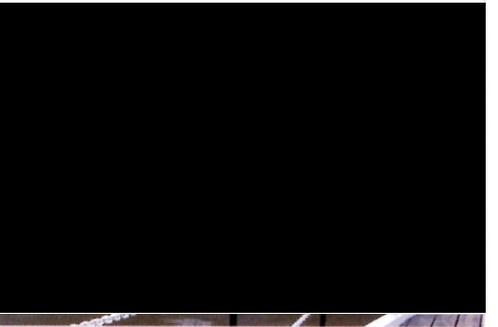
Appendix 14: Excerpt from Community Newsletter posted through residents letterboxes: 02.07.2008

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the Portway. The Swivel Bridge Group has



Our Website for dates, or call 927 1009.

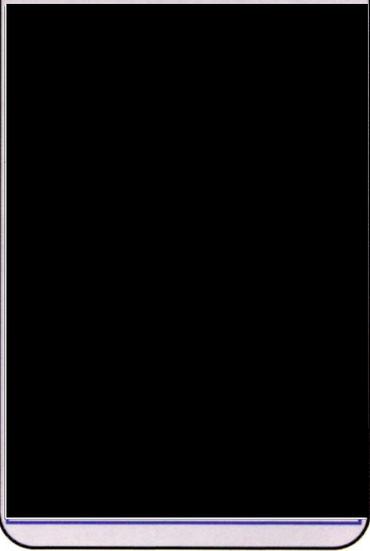
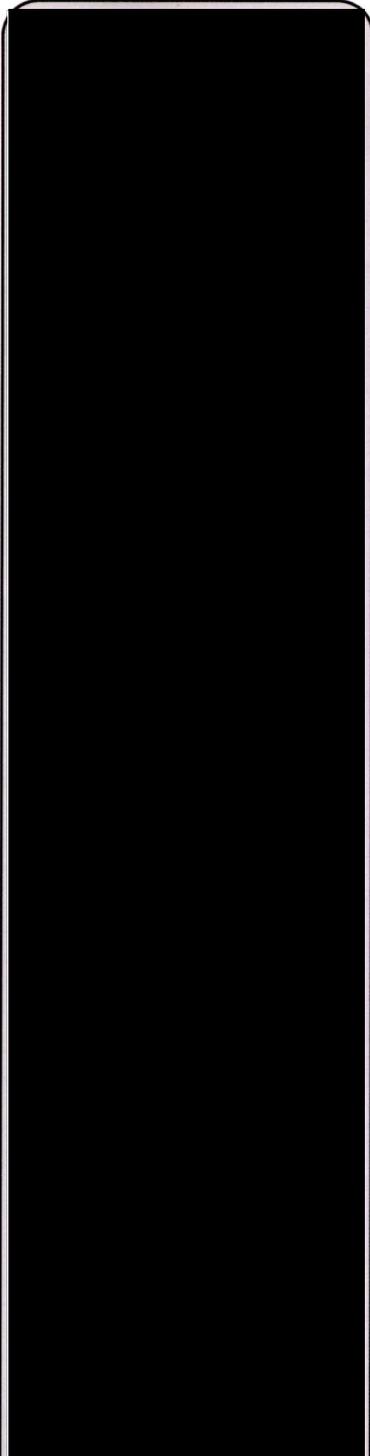
Community Garden

residents have applied to make the Community Garden (at the junction of [redacted] and [redacted]) a Town Green. The application went to [redacted]

The purpose is to safeguard this patch of green for the community. Local people would continue to have the right to use the land in exactly the same way as now. There is no current threat, but Town Green status would ensure that none could arise in the future.

The application had to show that a significant number of the local inhabitants use the garden. A total of 148 residents completed statements in support of registration, and various photos and other evidence were sent to the Council. It will be some weeks before the outcome is known.

[redacted]



Appendix 15: Town-Green Application Form, 2008

Commons Act 2006: Section 15

Application for the registration of land as a Town or Village Green

Official stamp of registration authority
indicating valid date of receipt:

Application number:

Register unit No(s):

VG number allocated at registration:

(CRA to complete only if application is successful)

Applicants are advised to read the 'Guidance Notes for the completion of an Application for the Registration of land as a Town or Village Green' and to note the following:

- All applicants should complete questions 1–6 and 10–11.
- Applicants applying for registration under section 15(1) of the 2006 Act should, in addition, complete questions 7–8. Section 15(1) enables any person to apply to register land as a green where the criteria for registration in section 15(2), (3) or (4) apply.
- Applicants applying for voluntary registration under section 15(8) should, in addition, complete question 9.

1. Registration Authority

To the

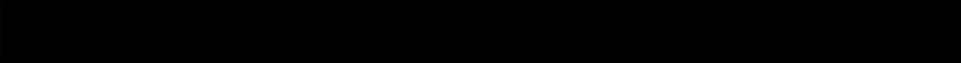
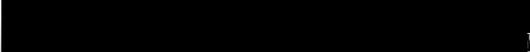
Note 1
Insert name of
registration
authority.

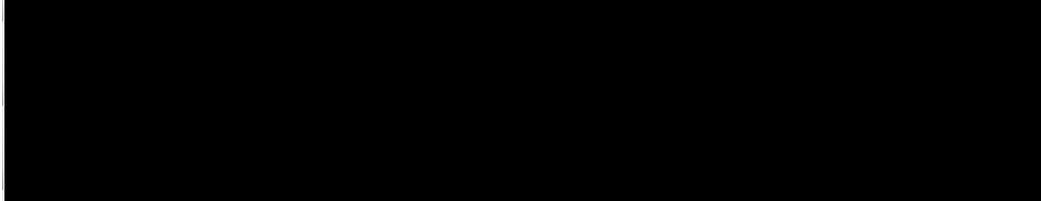
Note 2

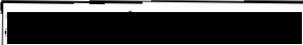
If there is more than one applicant, list all names. Please use a separate sheet if necessary. State the full title of the organisation if a body corporate or unincorporate.

If question 3 is not completed all correspondence and notices will be sent to the first named applicant.

2. Name and address of the applicant_s

Name 


Full postal address:


Telephone number:
(incl. national dialling code)  

Fax number:
(incl. national dialling code) 

E-mail address: 

3. Name and address of solicitor, if any

Name: 
Firm: 

Full postal address:


Telephone number:
(incl. national dialling code) 

Fax number:
(incl. national dialling code) 

E-mail address: 

Note 3

This question should be completed if a solicitor is instructed for the purposes of the application. If so all correspondence and notices will be sent to the person or firm named here.

4. Basis of application for registration and qualifying criteria

If you are the landowner and are seeking voluntarily to register your land please tick this box and move to question 5.

Application made under section 15(8):

If the application is made under section 15(1) of the Act, please tick one of the following boxes to indicate which particular subsection and qualifying criterion applies to the case.

Section 15(2) applies:

Section 15(3) applies:

Section 15(4) applies:

If section 15(3) or (4) applies please indicate the date on which you consider that use as of right ended.

If section 15(6)* applies please indicate the period of statutory closure (if any) which needs to be disregarded.

Note 4

For further advice on the criteria and qualifying dates for registration please see section 4 of the Guidance Notes.

** Section 15(6) enables any period of statutory closure where access to the land is denied to be disregarded in determining the 20 year period.*

Note 5

The accompanying map must be at a scale of at least 1:2,500 and show the land by distinctive colouring to enable it to be clearly identified.

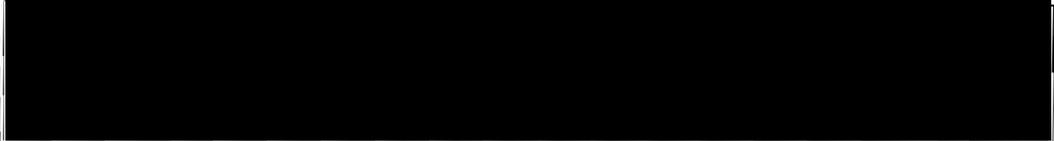
* Only complete if the land is already registered as common land.

Note 6

It may be possible to indicate the locality of the green by reference to an administrative area, such as a parish or electoral ward, or other area sufficiently defined by name (such as a village or street). If this is not possible a map should be provided on which a locality or neighbourhood is marked clearly.

5. Description and particulars of the area of land in respect of which application for registration is made

Name by which usually known:



Location:

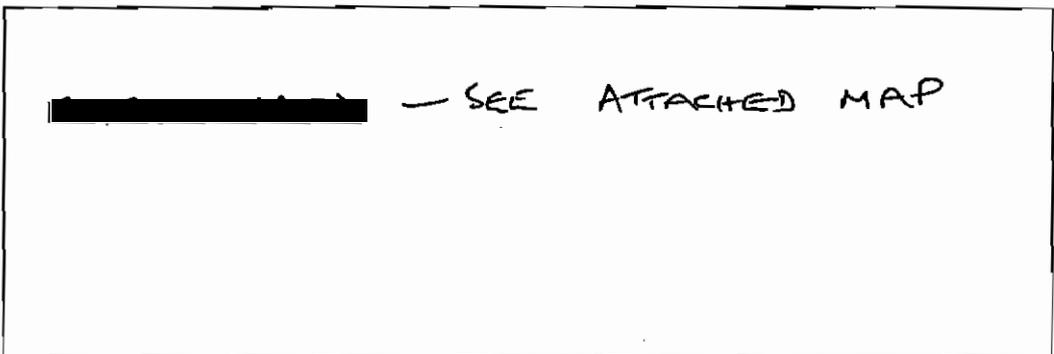


Shown in colour on the map which is marked and attached to the statutory declaration.

Common land register unit number (if relevant) *

6. Locality or neighbourhood within a locality in respect of which the application is made

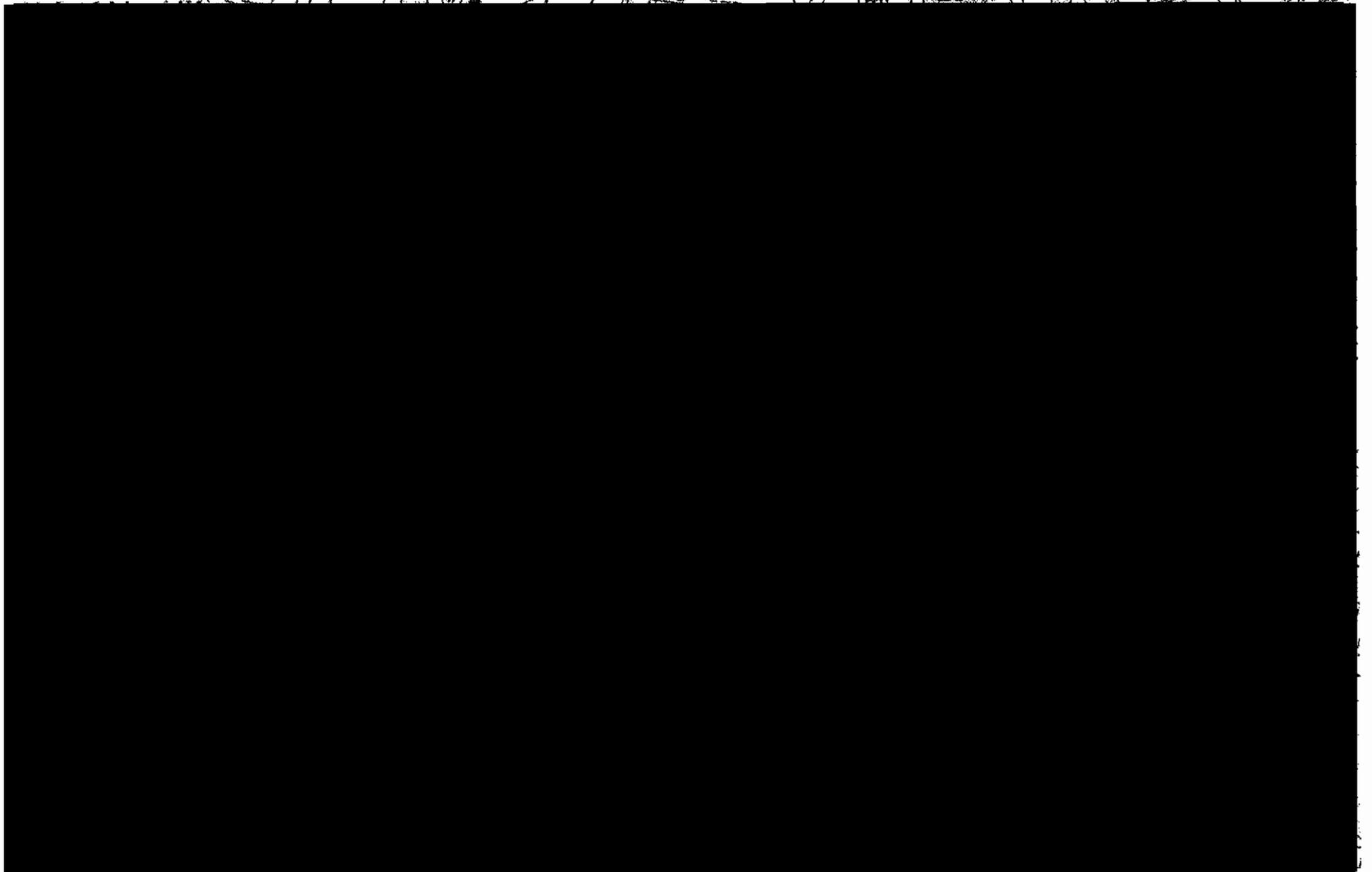
Please show the locality or neighbourhood within the locality to which the claimed green relates, either by writing the administrative area or geographical area by name below, or by attaching a map on which the area is clearly marked:



Tick here if map attached:

Land known as [REDACTED]

in relation to the neighborhood of [REDACTED] (marked in green)



7. Justification for application to register the land as a town or village green

Note 7

Applicants should provide a summary of the case for registration here and enclose a separate full statement and all other evidence including any witness statements in support of the application.

This information is not needed if a landowner is applying to register the land as a green under section 15(8).

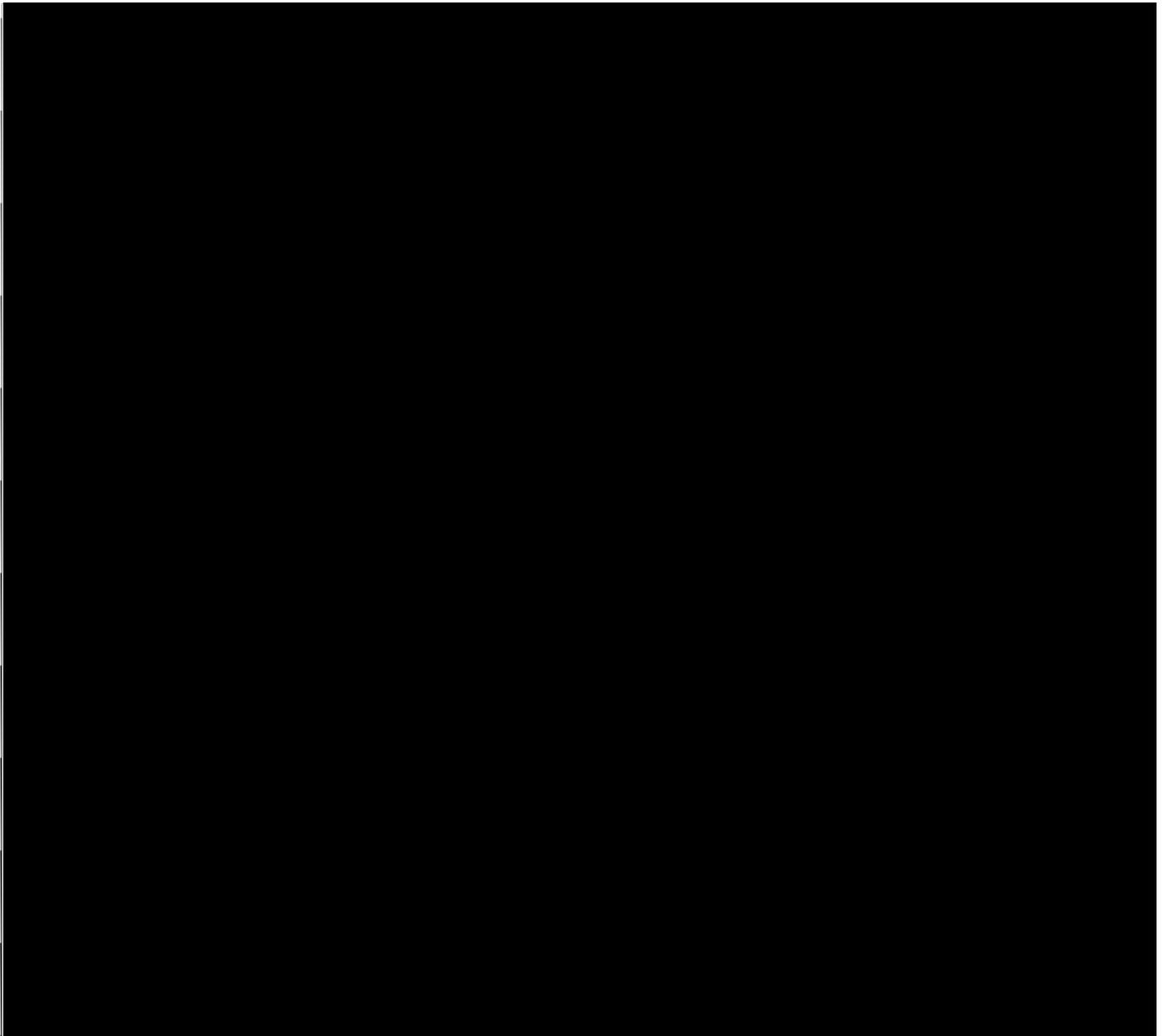
PLEASE SEE TWO SHEETS ATTACHED.

Justification for application to register the land as a town green

The land known as [REDACTED] Community Garden is eligible for registration as a Town Green under S. 15(2) of the Commons Act 2006 because:

- (a) a significant number of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood of [REDACTED] have indulged as of right in lawful sports and pastimes on the land for more than 20 years; and
- (b) they continue to do so at the time of this application.

A map identifying the land is attached to the statutory declaration. A map showing the relationship of the land to the neighbourhood of [REDACTED] is also attached to the statutory declaration. A Land Registry search was unable to identify an owner [*see Exhibit 1 Land Registry search*].



8

continues to the present day.

Some photographs of activities are provided in *Exhibit 5*.

The garden continues to be used by local inhabitants for a variety of activities, and is an important feature of local facilities in this densely populated inner-city area where most homes either have tiny courtyards/gardens or none at all. A large number of inhabitants, have taken the trouble to complete documents in support of registration as a Town Green, 148 in all [see *Exhibit 6 Evidence Questionnaires and Statements*]. From these it is clear that very many people from the neighbourhood use the space.

Some of the diverse activities listed in the Evidence Questionnaires include:

- Children playing
- Adults playing together with children
- Picnics
- Gardening and planting activity
- Picking crab apples
- Meeting and chatting with friends
- Conkerfest - playing conkers and making animals from conkers and nuts
- Drinking coffee
- Garden maintenance sessions
- Easter egg hunts
- Christmas lantern lighting
- Studying and reading
- Nature and bird watching
- Resting on benches by elderly residents
- Walking dogs

Activities on the site are obviously restricted by its modest size of approximately [redacted] square metres. Despite that, its value to local inhabitants make it worthy of the status of a Town Green. The Commons Act 2006 contains no suggestion that a Green needs a minimum size, and in the context of replacement land (see Commons Act 2006, S. 16) it implies that land over 200 square metres is of significant size.

Note 8

Please use a separate sheet if necessary.

Where relevant include reference to title numbers in the register of title held by the Land Registry.

If no one has been identified in this section you should write "none"

This information is not needed if a landowner is applying to register the land as a green under section 15(8).

8. Name and address of every person whom the applicant believes to be an owner, lessee, tenant or occupier of any part of the land claimed to be a town or village green

NONE

9. Voluntary registration – declarations of consent from 'relevant leaseholder', and of the proprietor of any 'relevant charge' over the land

Note 9

List all such declarations that accompany the application. If none is required, write "none".

This information is not needed if an application is being made to register the land as a green under section 15(1).

10. Supporting documentation

Note 10

List all supporting documents and maps accompanying the application. If none, write "none"

Please use a separate sheet if necessary.

EXHIBIT	1	LAND REGISTRY SEARCH
"	2	GARDEN PLAQUE
"	3	GARDENING AND MAINTENANCE SESSIONS
"	4	[REDACTED] CITY COUNCIL DRAFT PLANNING BRIEF [REDACTED]
"	5	PHOTOGRAPHS
"	6	EVIDENCE QUESTIONNAIRES & STATEMENTS

11. Any other information relating to the application

Note 11

If there are any other matters which should be brought to the attention of the registration authority (in particular if a person interested in the land is expected to challenge the application for registration). Full details should be given here or on a separate sheet if necessary.

NONE

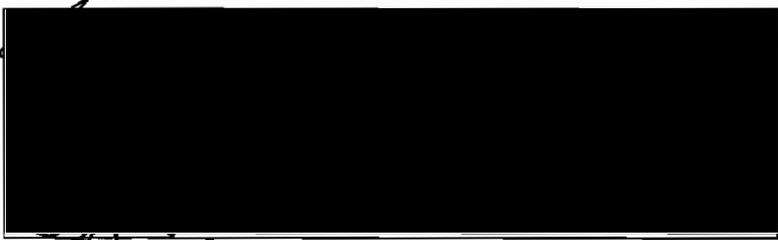
Note 12

The application must be signed by each individual applicant, or by the authorised officer of an applicant which is a body corporate or unincorporate.

Date:

29 November 2007

Signatures:



REMINDER TO APPLICANT

You are advised to keep a copy of the application and all associated documentation. Applicants should be aware that signature of the statutory declaration is a sworn statement of truth in presenting the application and accompanying evidence. The making of a false statement for the purposes of this application may render the maker liable to prosecution.

Data Protection Act 1998

The application and any representations made cannot be treated as confidential. To determine the application it will be necessary for the registration authority to disclose information received from you to others, which may include other local authorities, Government Departments, public bodies, other organisations and members of the public.

Statutory Declaration In Support

To be made by the applicant, or by one of the applicants, or by his or their solicitor, or, if the applicant is a body corporate or unincorporate, by its solicitor, or by the person who signed the application.

¹ Insert full name (and address if not given in the application form).

.....¹

solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:—

² Delete and adapt as necessary.

1.² I am (~~the person~~ (one of the persons) who (~~has~~) (have) signed the foregoing application) (~~the solicitor to~~ (~~the applicant~~)³ (one of the applicants)).

³ Insert name if Applicable

2. The facts set out in the application form are to the best of my knowledge and belief fully and truly stated and I am not aware of any other fact which should be brought to the attention of the registration authority as likely to affect its decision on this application, nor of any document relating to the matter other than those (if any) mentioned in parts 10 and 11 of the application.

3. The map now produced as part of this declaration is the map referred to in part 5 of the application.

⁴ Complete only in the case of voluntary registration (strike through if this is not relevant)

4.⁴ ~~I hereby apply under section 15(8) of the Commons Act 2006 to register as a green the land indicated on the map and that is in my ownership. I have provided the following necessary declarations of consent:~~

- ~~(i) a declaration of ownership of the land;—~~
- ~~(ii) a declaration that all necessary consents from the relevant leaseholder or proprietor of any relevant charge over the land have—~~

Cont/

⁴ Continued

~~been received and are exhibited with this declaration; or~~
~~(iii) where no such consents are required, a declaration to that effect.~~

And I make this solemn declaration, conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the Statutory Declarations Act 1835.

Declared by the said

[Redacted Name]

at

[Redacted Address]

this

23rd day of January 2008

[Handwritten Signature]

Signature of Declarant

Before me *

[Redacted Signature]

Signature:

[Redacted Signature]

Address:

6. [Redacted Address]

Qualification:

Justice of the Peace.

* The statutory declaration must be made before a Justice of the peace, practising solicitor, commissioner for oaths or notary public.

Signature of the statutory declaration is a sworn statement of truth in presenting the application and accompanying evidence.

REMINDER TO OFFICER TAKING DECLARATION:

Please initial all alterations and mark any map as an exhibit

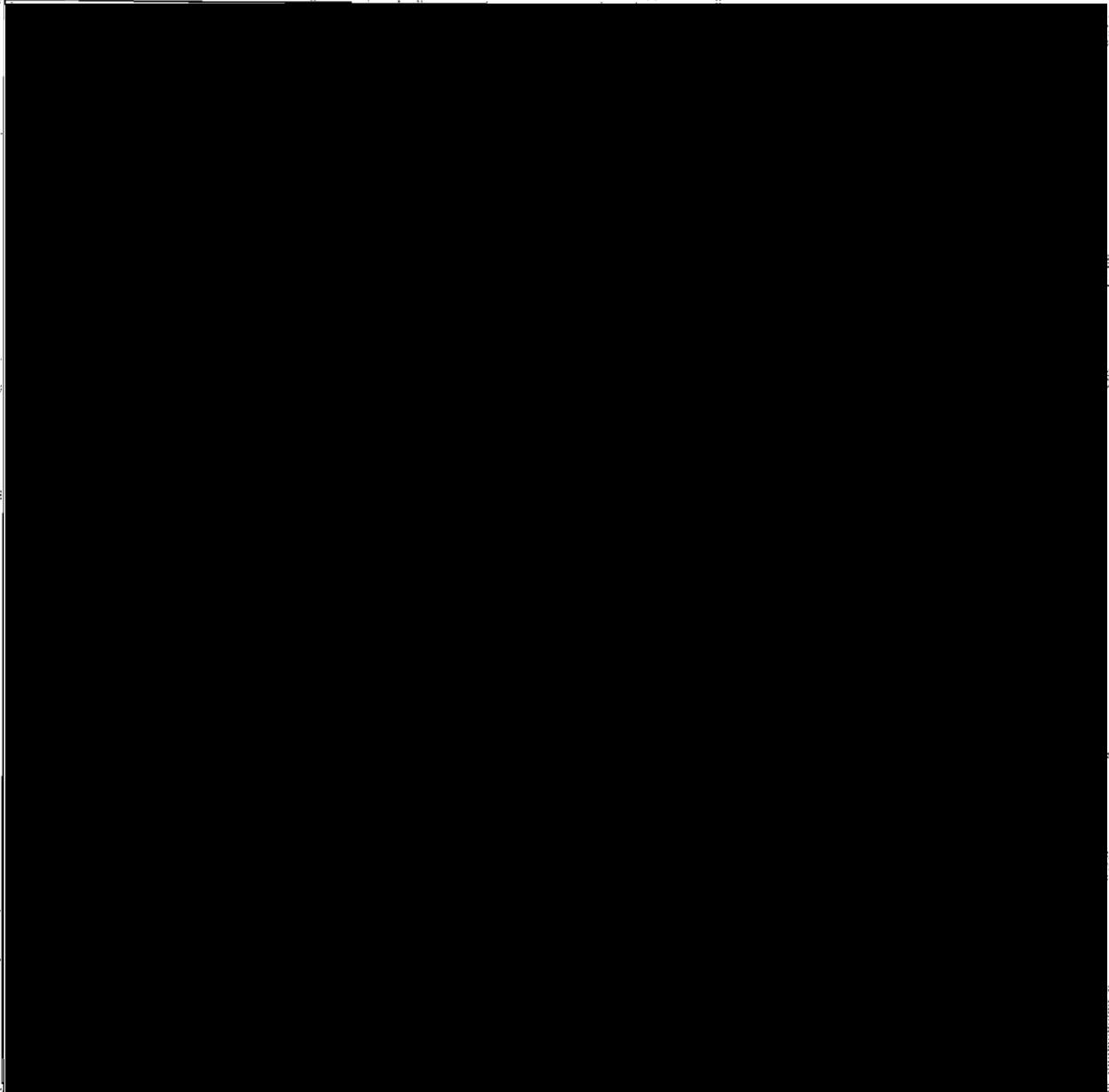
Siteplan®

Map identifying land known as

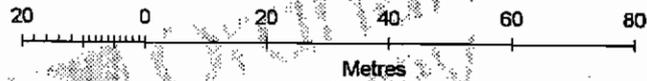
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

1:1250 Scale

The land is marked in red.



Produced 23 May 2002 from Ordnance Survey digital data and incorporating surveyed revision available at this date. © Crown copyright 2002.



Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited without prior permission of Ordnance Survey.

Ordnance Survey and the OS symbol are registered trade marks and Siteplan a trade mark of Ordnance Survey, the national mapping agency of Great Britain.

THE GARDEN AT THE JUNCTION OF
[REDACTED] ROAD AND [REDACTED]
IN [REDACTED]

EXHIBIT attached to statutory declaration and endorsed this 23rd day of January 2008

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Appendix 16: Town-Green Application Resident's Letter, 2007

[Redacted]
24 [Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Dear Sirs/Madam,

7-6-07

[Large Redacted Block]

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Appendix 17: Illustrative plan indicating extents of: informal space, community garden and town-green.



INDEX MAP PLAN

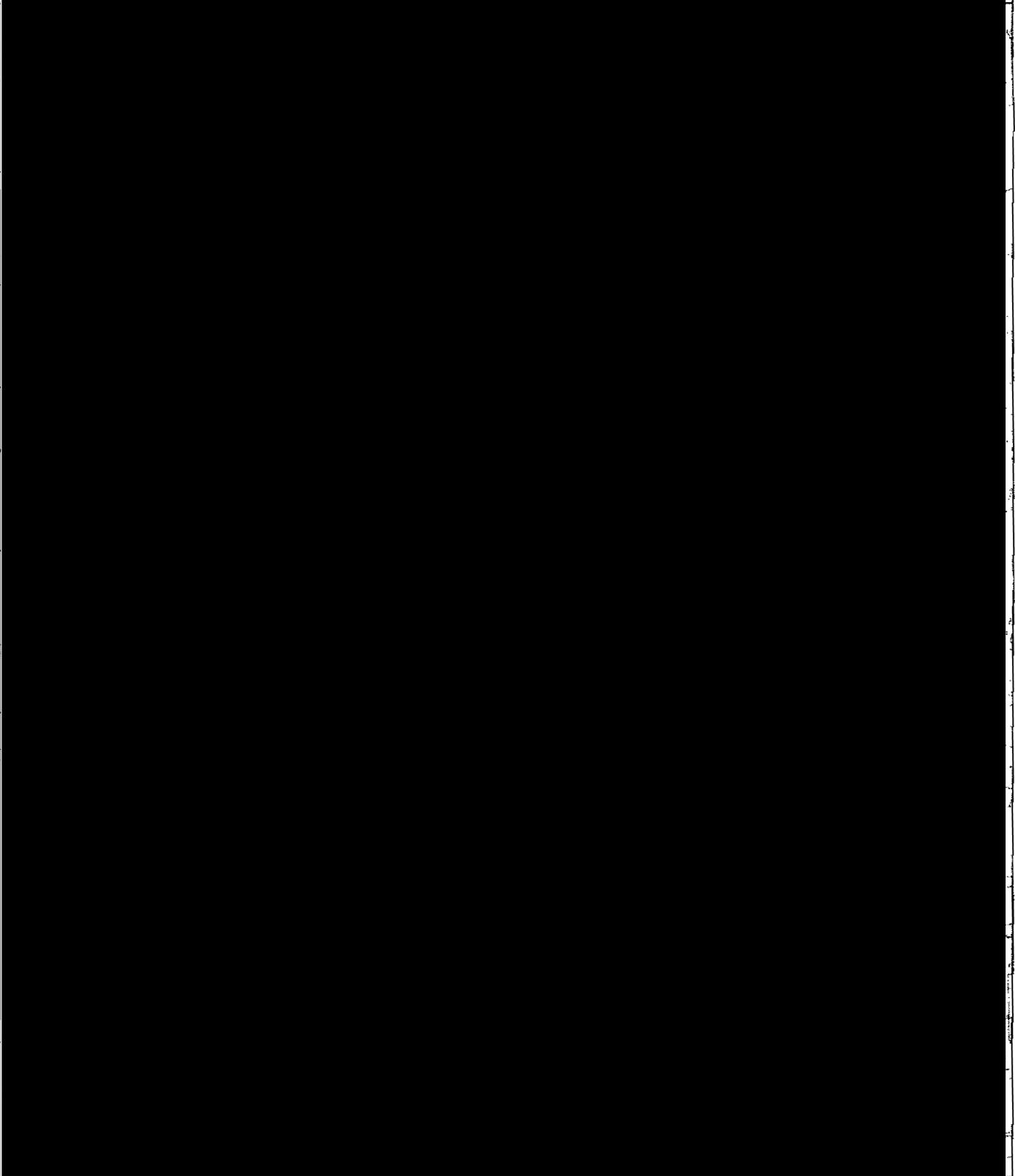
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Plan prepared on [redacted]/2006 at [redacted]

ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP REFERENCE: [redacted]

SCALE 1:1250

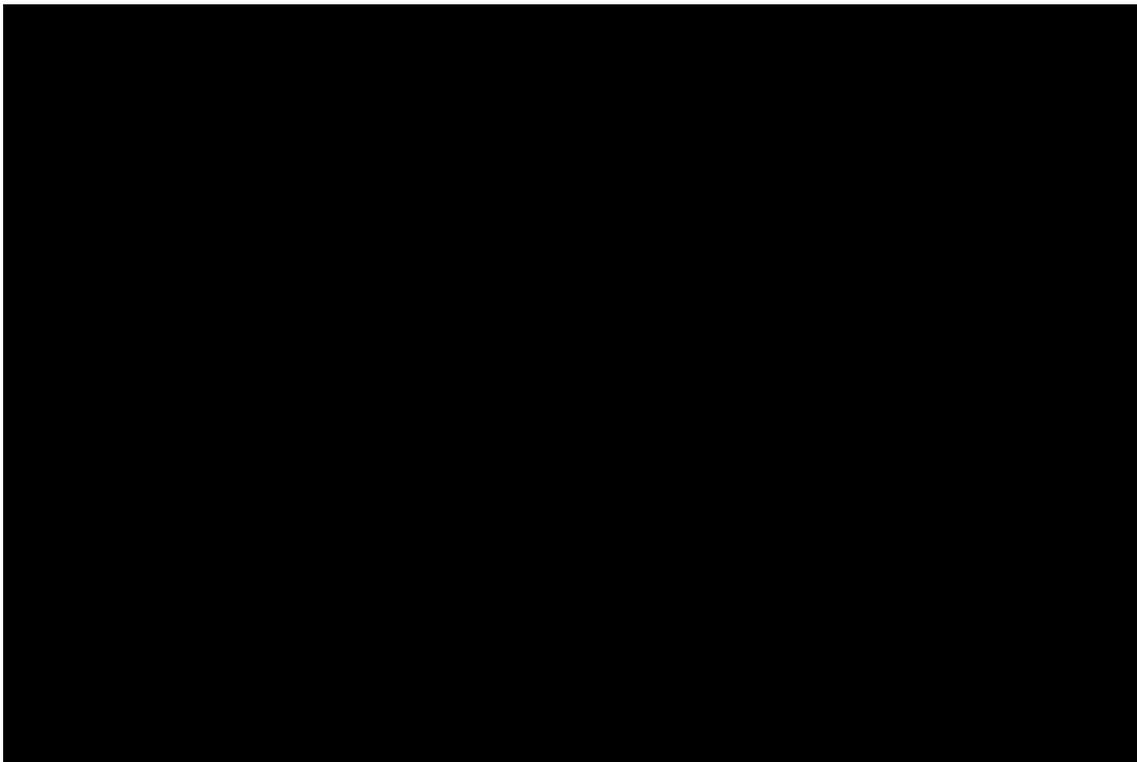


This plan should be read in conjunction with result [redacted]

[redacted]
1883041002

Appendix 18: Photographs of 'official' communitygarden/town-green sign in situ (2010).

Appendix 18 – *Communitygarden Sign*



Appendix 19: Town-Green Application Sample Questionnaire, 2007

EVIDENCE QUESTIONNAIRE IN SUPPORT OF REGISTRATION OF A TOWN GREEN

NAME	[REDACTED]
ADDRESS	[REDACTED]
POSTCODE	[REDACTED]
TELEPHONE	[REDACTED]

1	Your address when you used the land or knew it was used by local inhabitants	
2	Have you signed the reverse side of Map A confirming it relates to this evidence provided by you?	Yes/ No
3	Please confirm that you agree with the boundaries of the neighbourhood within a locality on Map A edged in green.	Yes/ No
4	Please mark location of your house on Map with an X	
5	By what name is the land shown on Map A known?	[REDACTED]
6	Has it been known by any other name, if so, what name?	NO
7	How many years have you known the land?	From 1994 to 2007
8	Between which years did you use it?	From 1994 to 2007
9	Do you consider yourself to be a local inhabitant in respect of the land?	Yes/ No
10	During the time you used the land has your pattern of use remained basically the same?	Yes/ No
12	To your knowledge are there any public paths crossing the land?	Yes /No
13	How do/did you gain access to the land?	walking on to it
14	Why do/did you go onto this piece of land?	Sit - Meet chos
15	How often do/did you use the land?	2 x a week
16	What activities have you taken part in?	Gardening & planting
17	Does/did your immediate family use the land?	Yes/ No
18	If yes, what for?	Sit
19	Do you know of any community activities on the land?	yes
20	If so, please list them and state for how long they have taken place. <i>Annual Gatherings</i> <i>for coffee & general meeting</i> <i>Map</i>	from 1994 to 2007 from .. to .. from .. to .. from .. to ..
21	State which, if any, you have taken part in.
22	Do any seasonal activities take place on the land?	YES

23 Please tick all the activities you have seen taking place on the land			
People sitting on the benches (talking etc)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	People tending the garden area	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Children playing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dog walking	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picnicking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Playing conkers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picking fruit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community activities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Others (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>		

24	Do you know who is the owner of the land?	NO
25	Do you know who is the occupier of the land?	NO
26	Was permission ever sought by you for activities on the land?	NO
27	If so, from whom?	-
28	Did anyone ever give you permission to go onto the land?	NO
29	If yes, when and for what reason?	-
30	Have you ever been prevented from using the land?	NO
31	If yes, when and for what reason?	-
32	Has any attempt ever been made by notice or fencing or any other means to prevent or discourage the use being made of the land by the local inhabitants?	NO
33	If yes, state how and when.	-
34	Do you have any photos or other evidence of use of the land?	NO
35	If yes, are you willing to lend them to us?	-
36	If you have made a separate written statement, please attach it to this form.	-
37	If you have knowledge of others who may be in a position to complete an evidence form, please attach their names and addresses to this form.	-

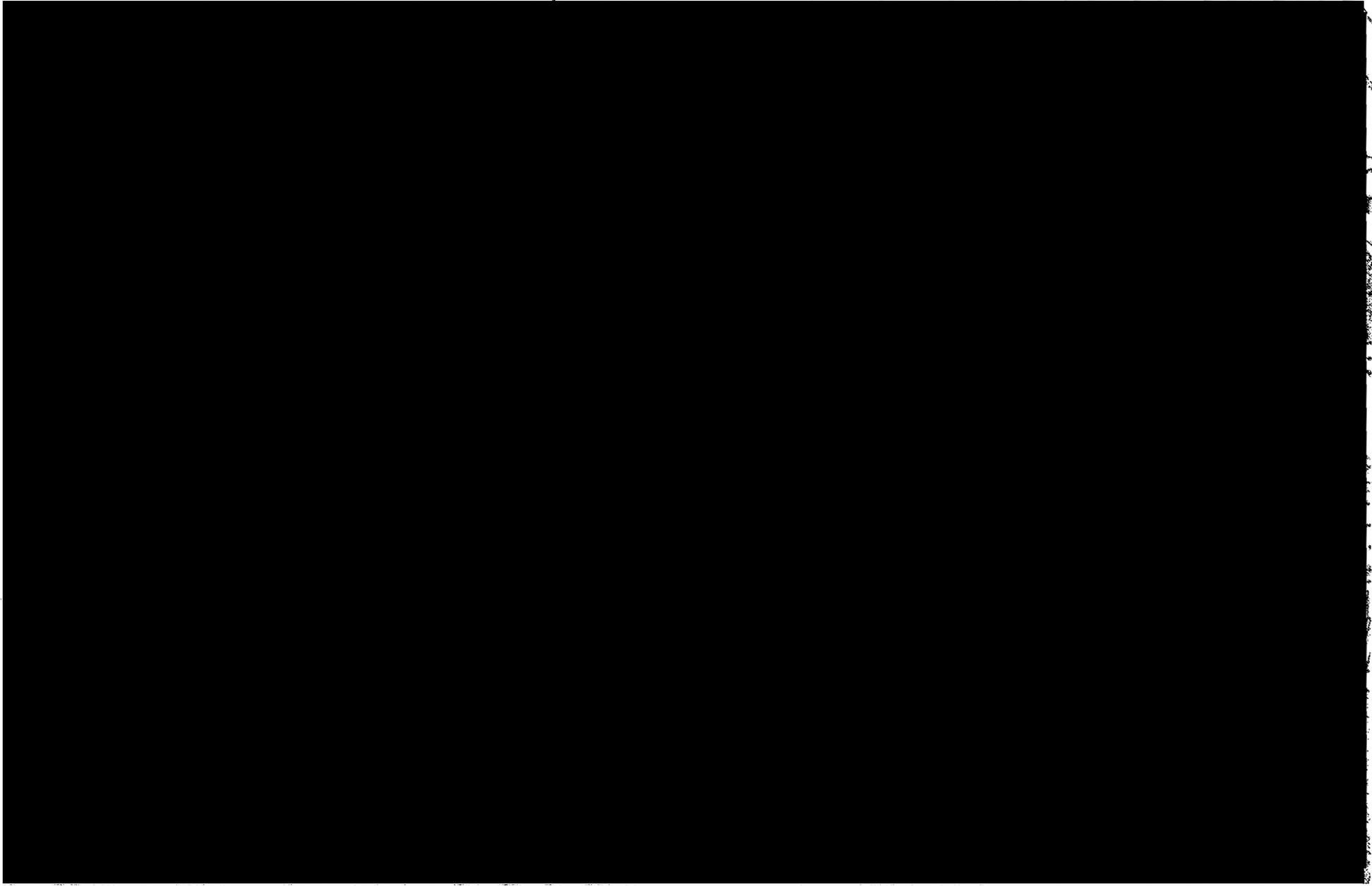
- 38 I have known of the activities referred to in the questionnaire for ¹³.....years without anybody trying to stop them and I believe those activities should be treated in law as having a lawful origin.
- 39 I understand that the evidence form I have completed in relation to this application for registration of a town green may become public knowledge and I authorise the applicants to disclose this form to anyone reasonably requiring access to the application.
- 40 I also understand that this evidence may be presented to a non-statutory inquiry and I authorise the applicants to use this form for that purpose.

Signed..........

Date.....29 AUG 07.....

Land known as

[REDACTED]



I confirm that this map relates to the evidence
provided by me

Signed.....

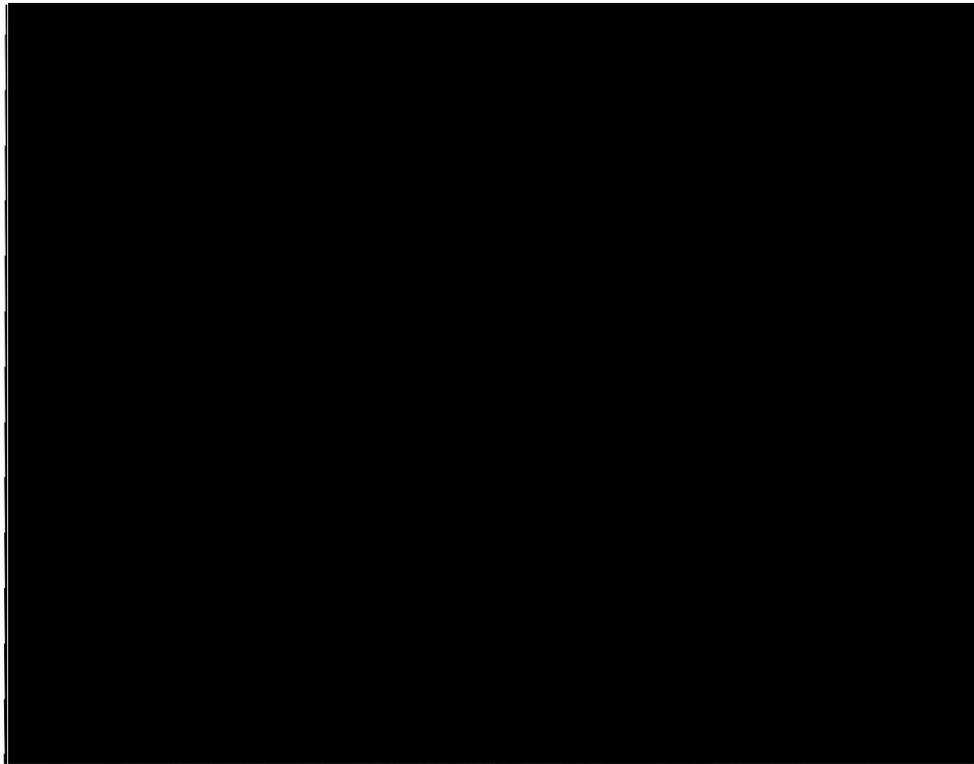
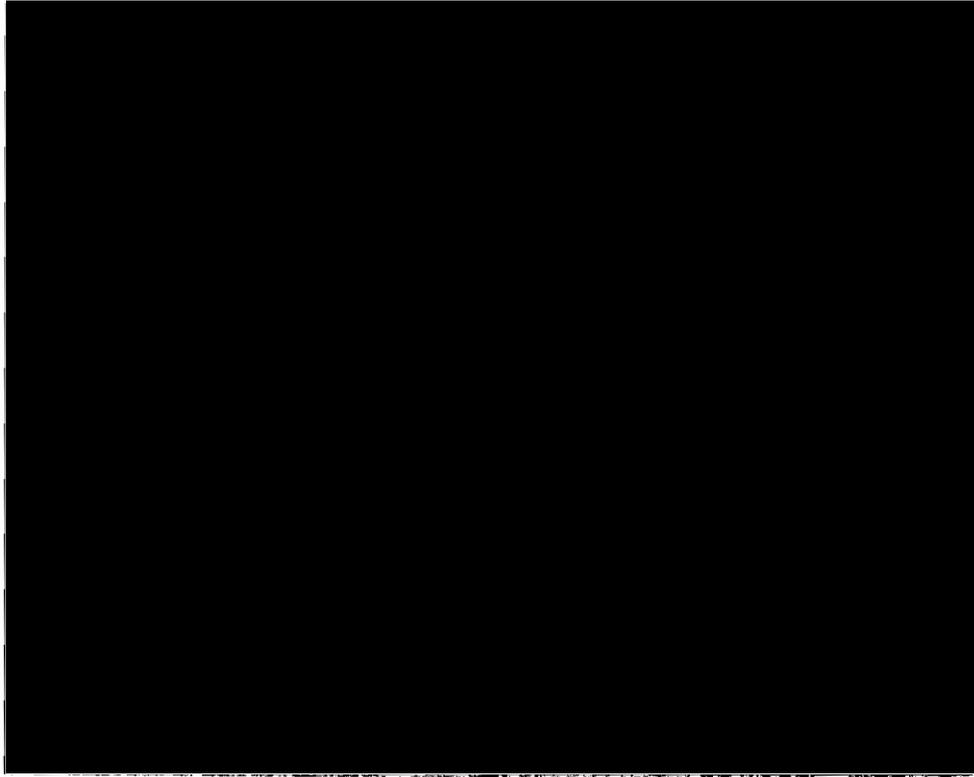


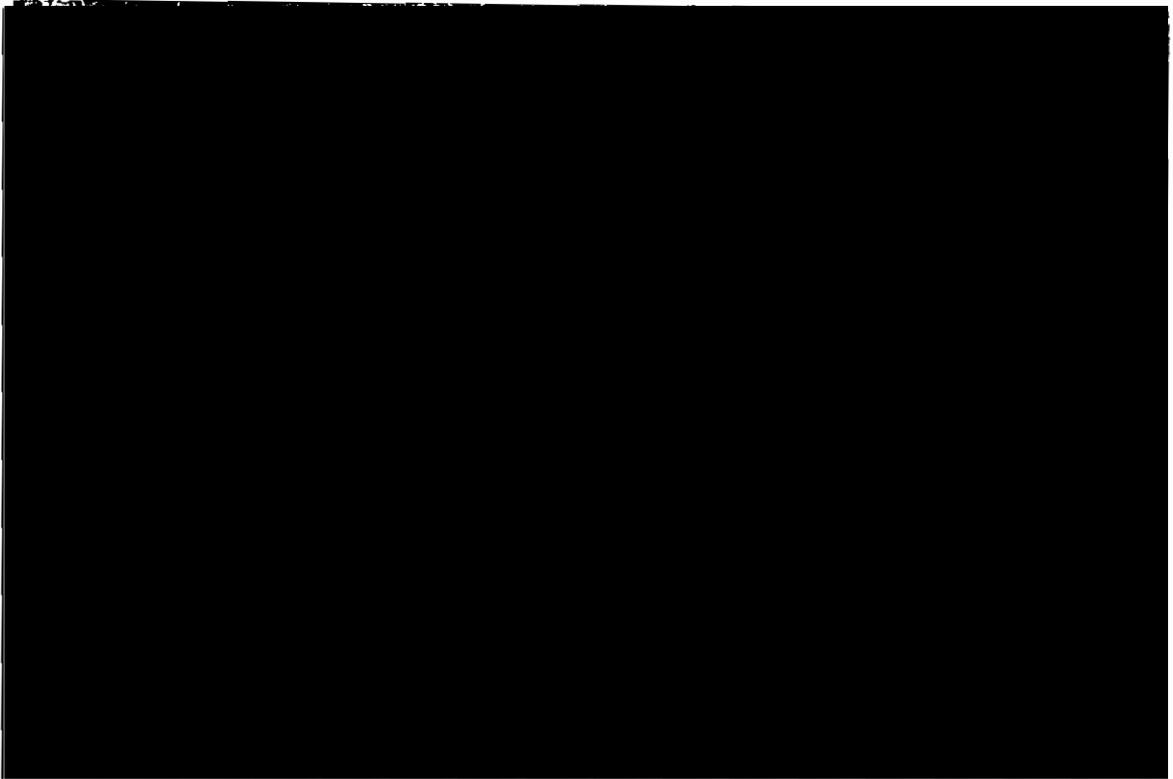
Date.....

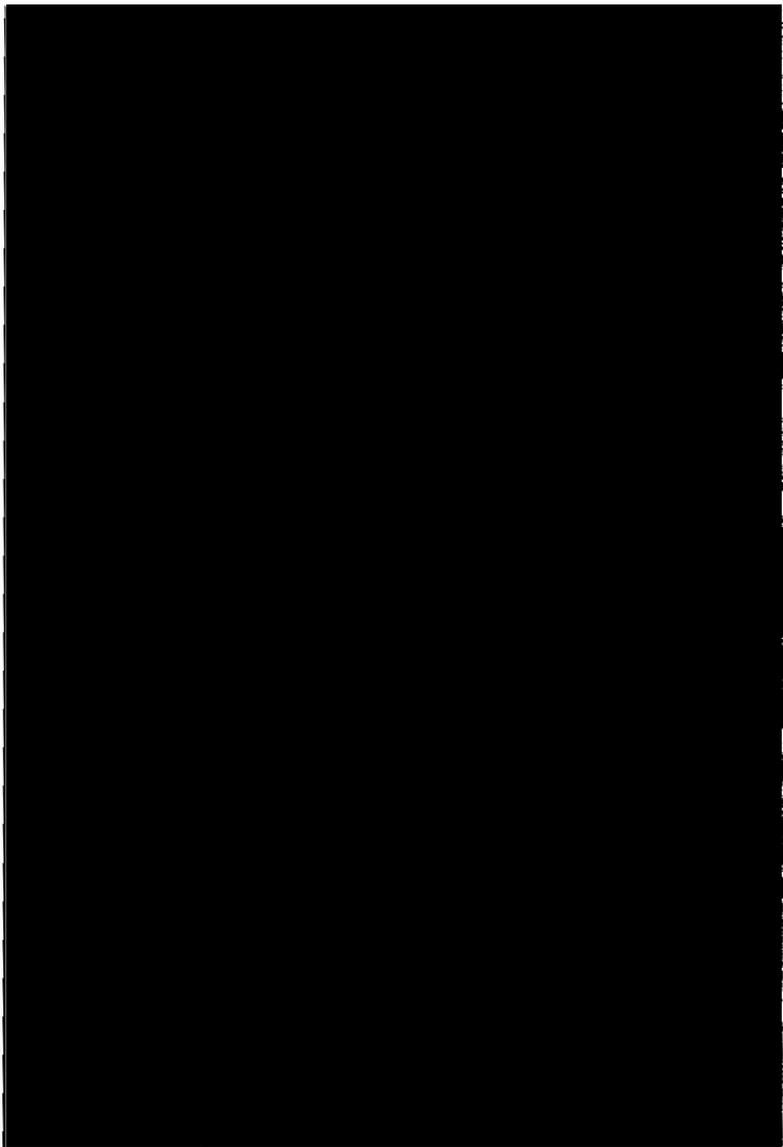
29 AUG-07

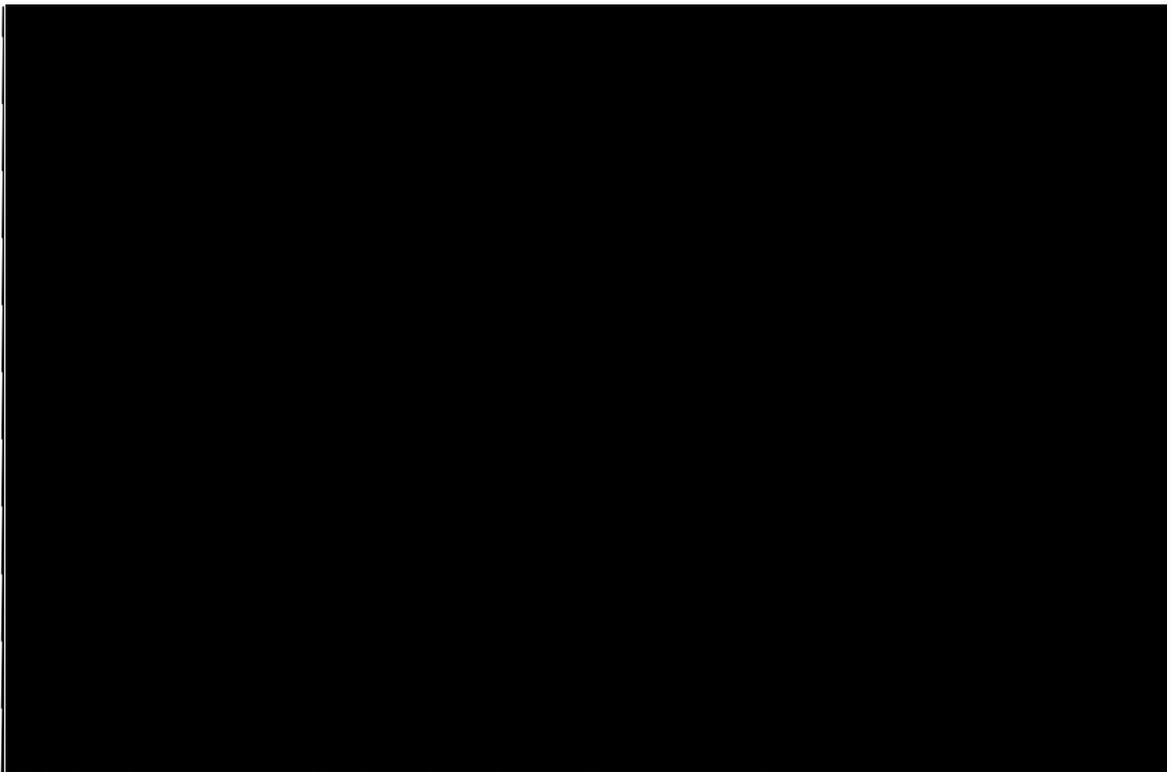
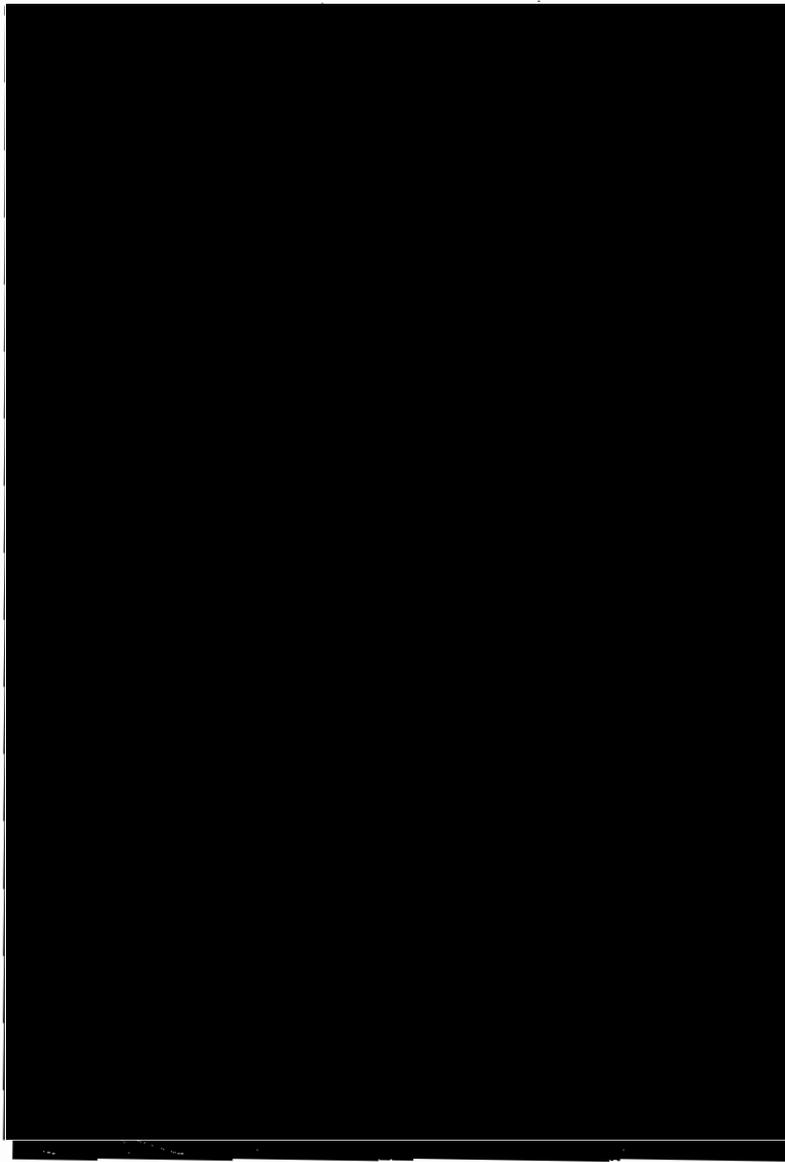
**Appendix 20: Town-Green Application Photographic Evidence
(submitted as part of Town-green Application) 2007.**

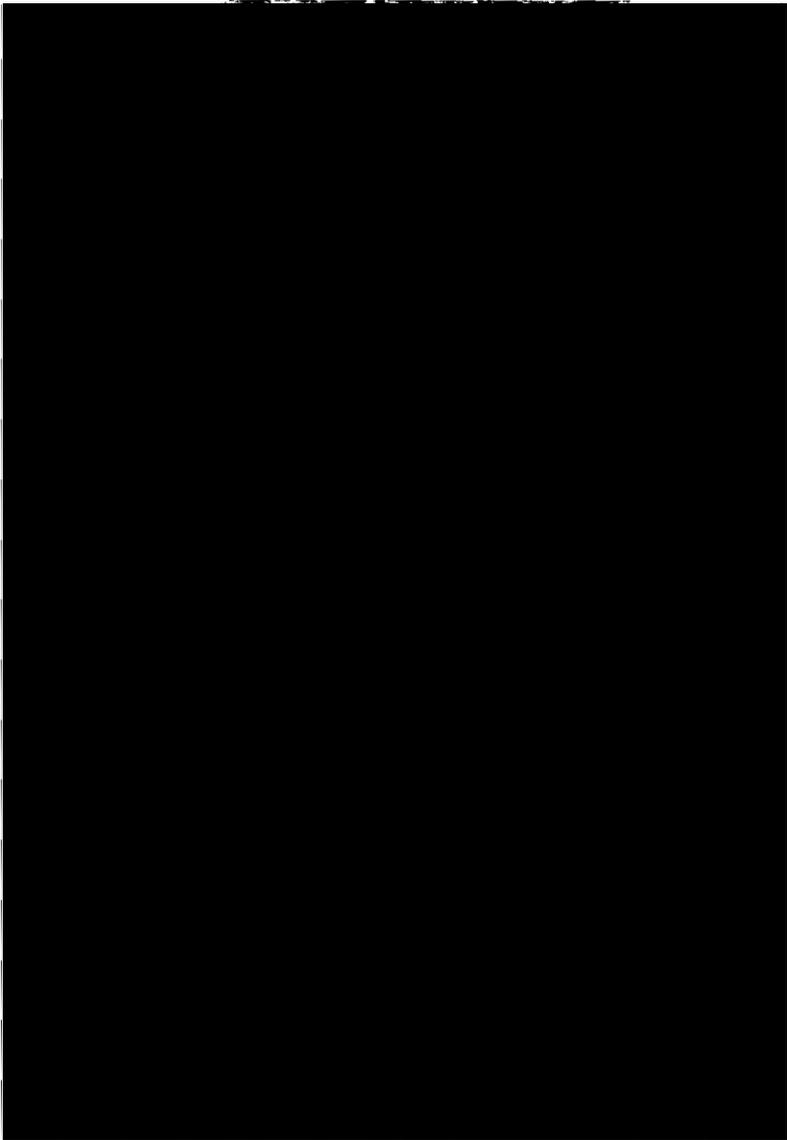
Exhibit 5 - Photographs provided by local residents

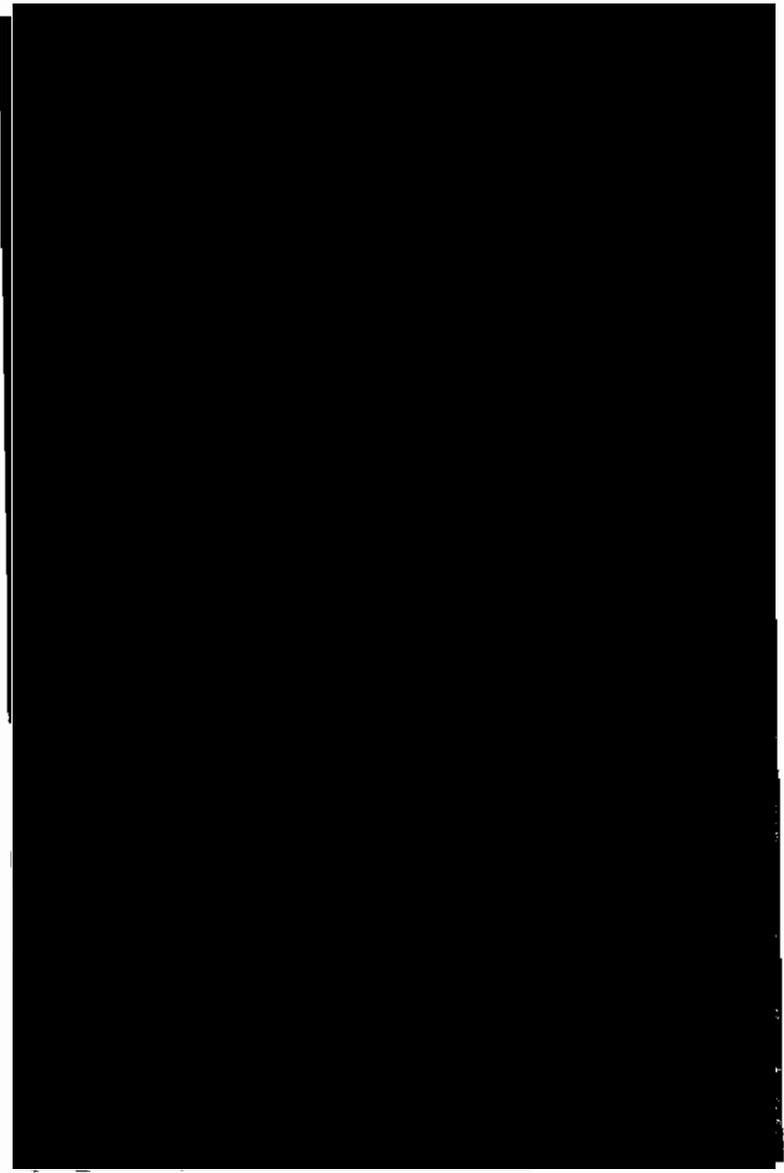
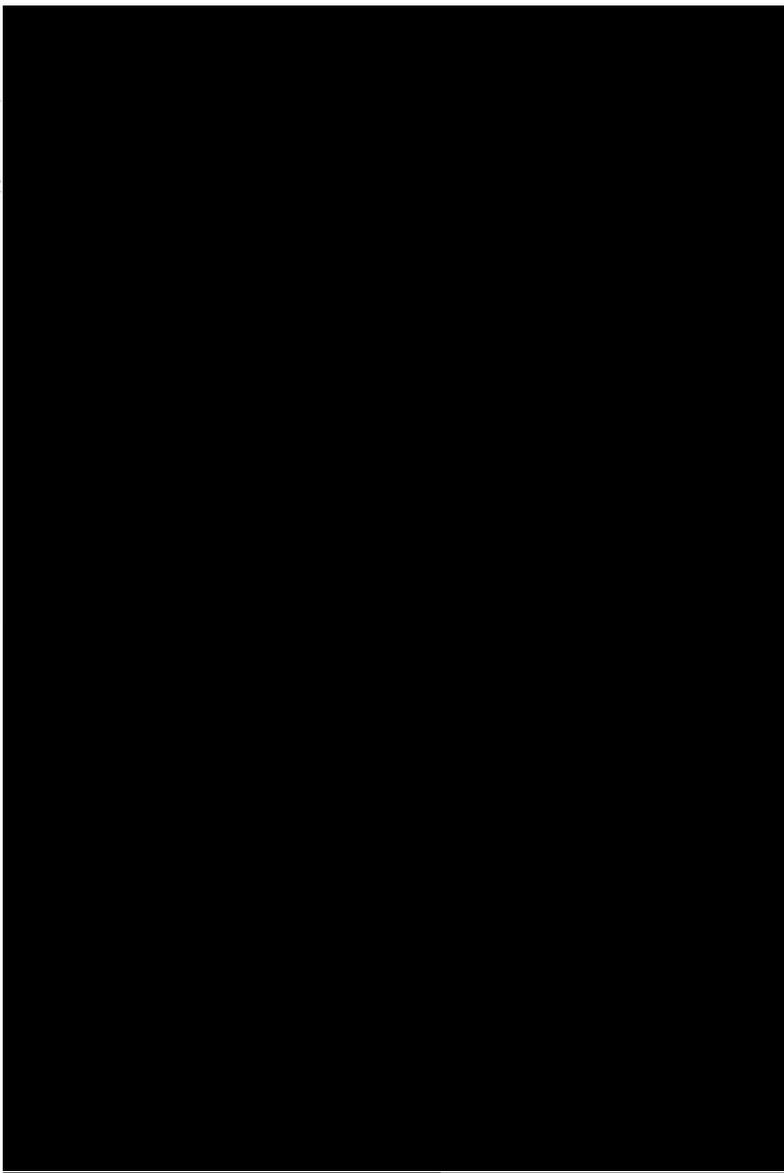




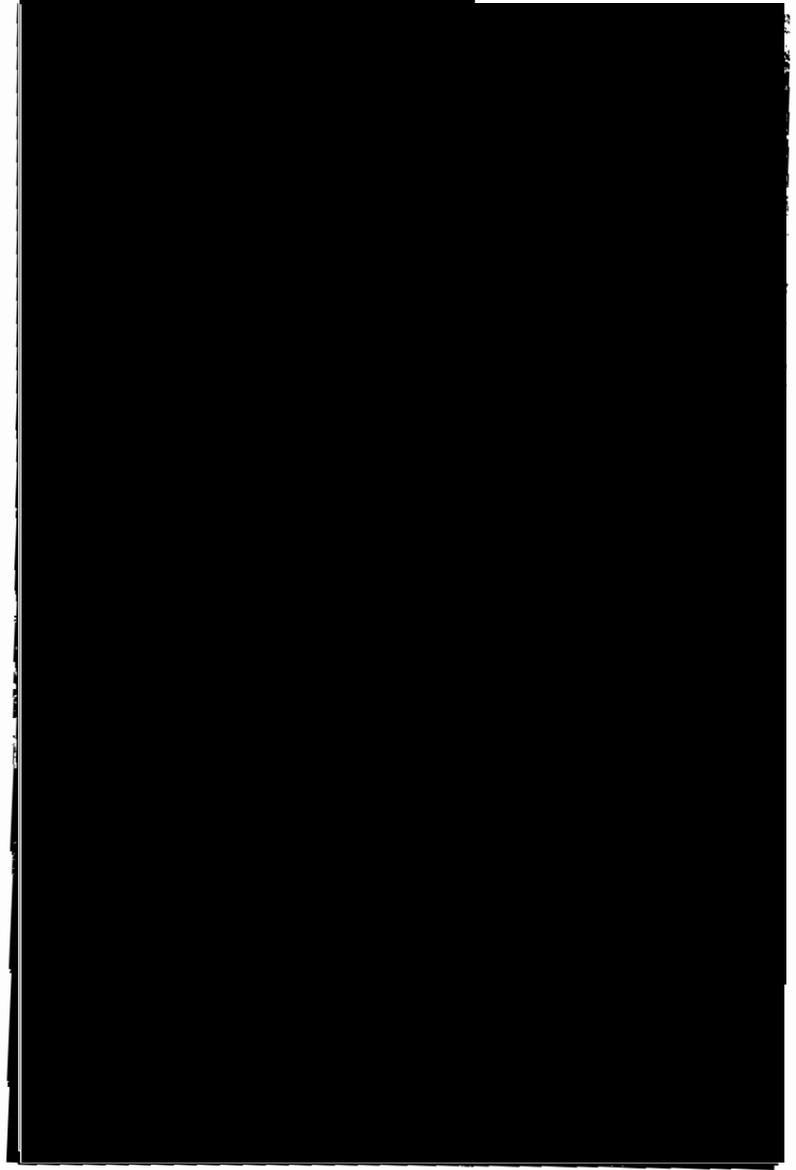


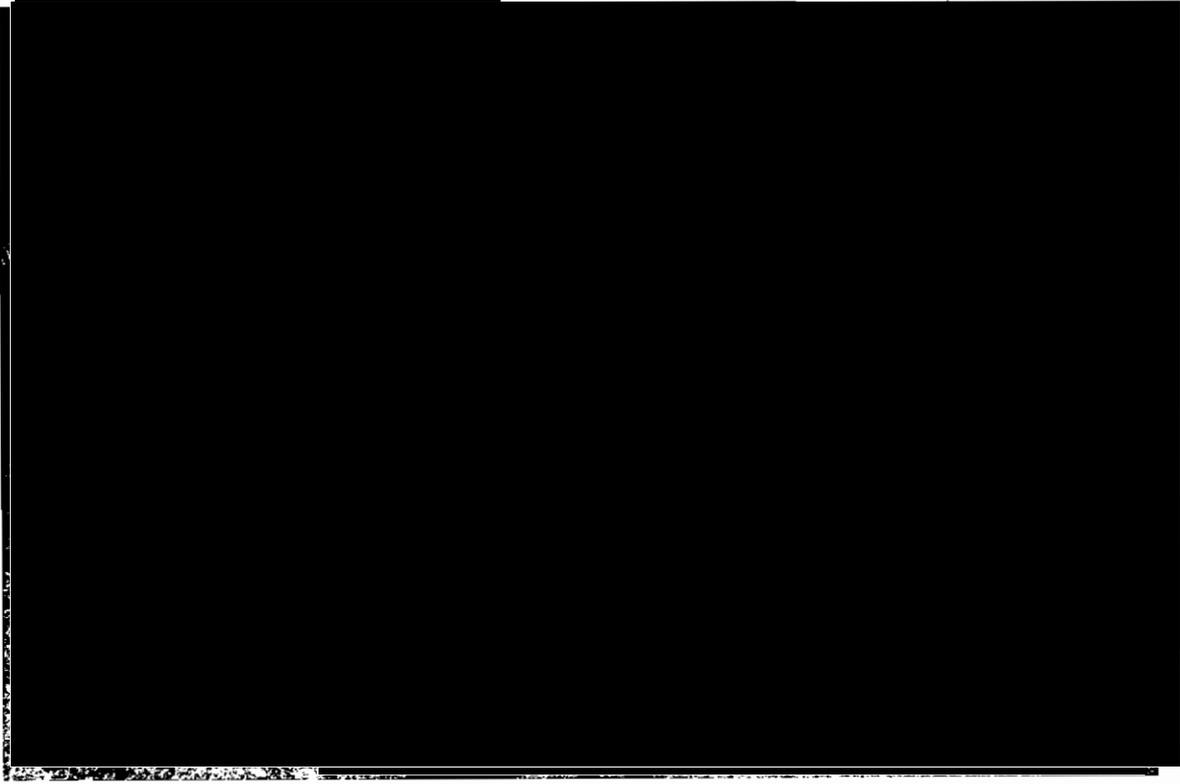


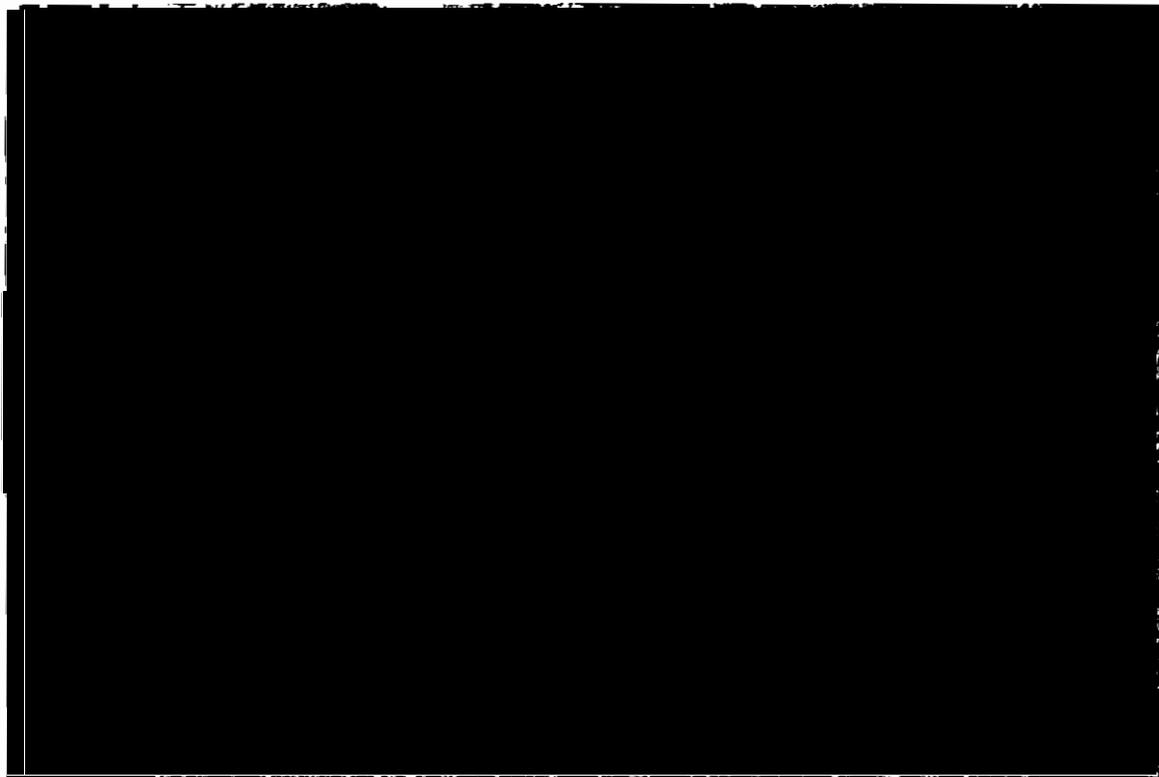


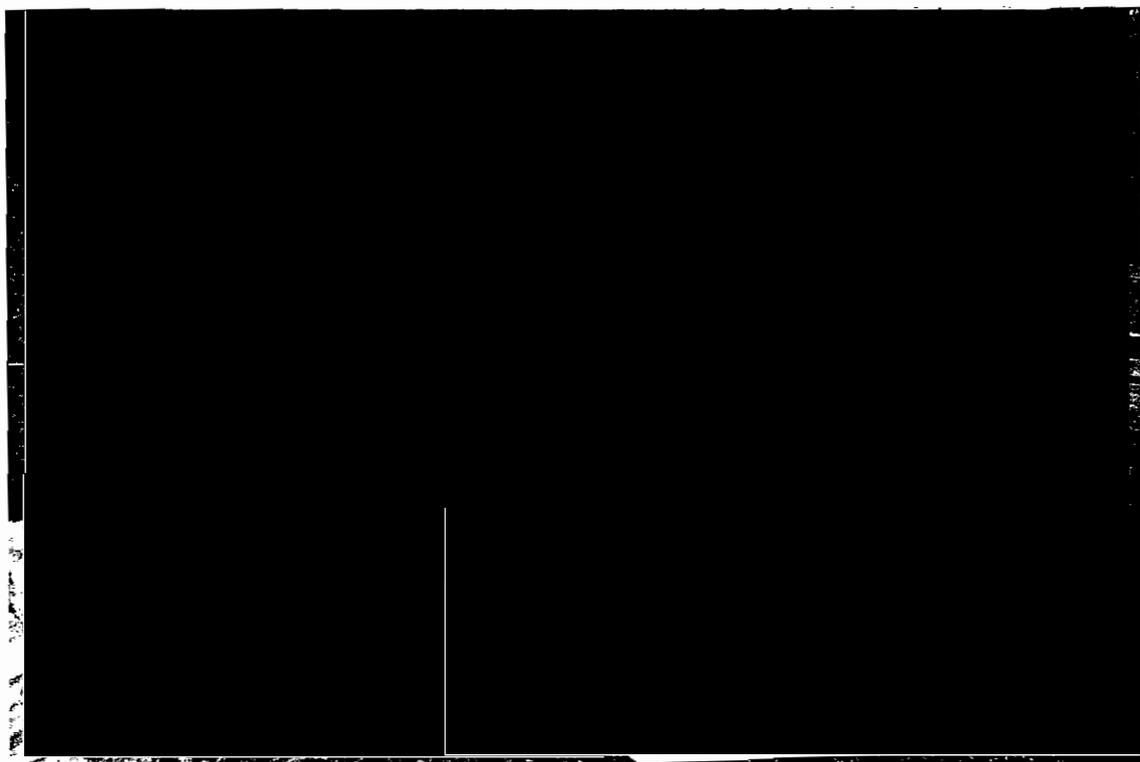


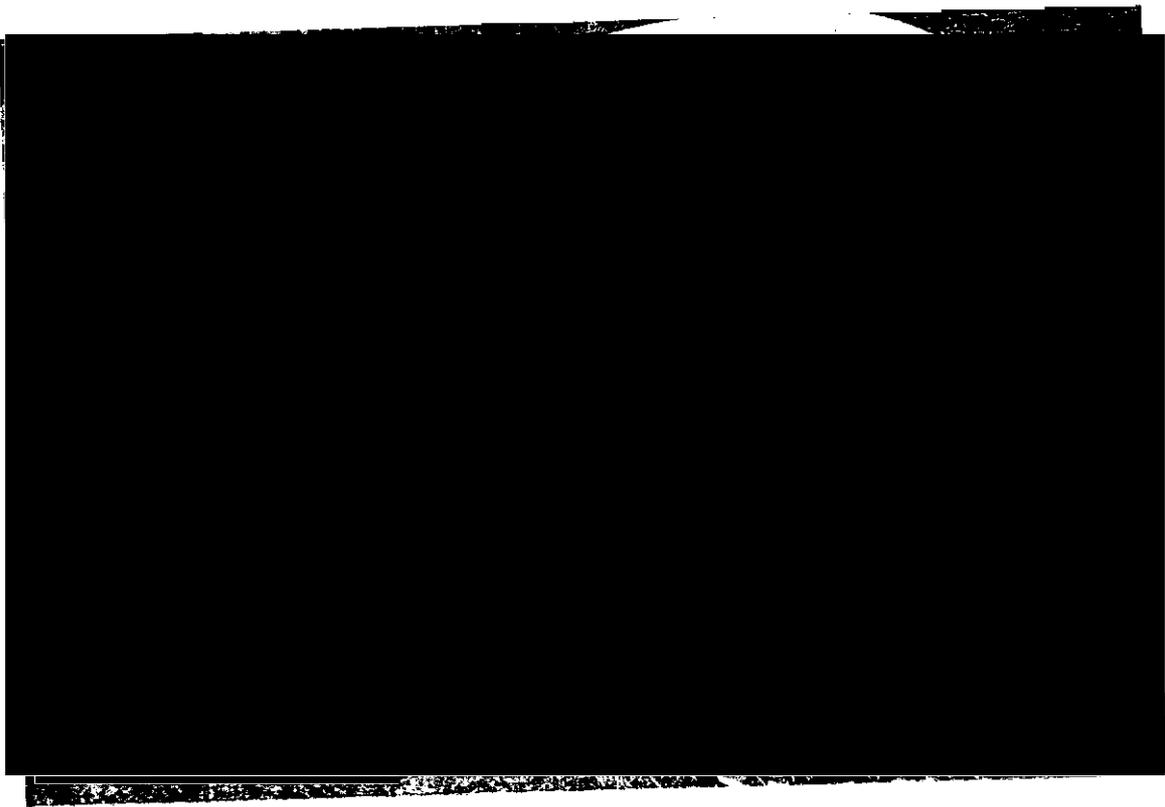












**Appendix 21: Town-Green Application Sample Witness Statement,
2007**

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF REGISTRATION OF A TOWN GREEN

Land known as [redacted] Community Garden



The land marked on the above map as the [redacted] Community Garden is known to me. The location of my home is marked X in red.

I have used the [redacted] Community Garden for leisure purposes since2003.....(date) [delete if inappropriate]

I have known other people use the [redacted] Community Garden for leisure purposes since ..1983.....(date)

I support the registration of the [redacted] Community Garden as a Town Green, to preserve its use by the inhabitants of [redacted] for ever.

I authorise this statement to be used in evidence to support of the application for registration as a Town Green.

Signed [redacted] Date: 18/11/07 Print Name:
Address [redacted] [redacted] House number & road name]
[redacted]

Appendix 22: Excerpt from Community Newsletter posted through residents' letterboxes: 10. 11. 2009.

Community News

[Redacted text]

everyone.

[Redacted text]

Ad [Redacted text]

[Redacted text]

[Redacted text]

[Redacted text]

[Redacted text]

[Redacted text]

Town Green Application

The final [Redacted] City Council determination on whether to register the "[Redacted] Community Garden" (at the junction of [Redacted] Road and [Redacted]) will take place at a meeting of the Council's Rights of Way and Greens committee on [Redacted] at [Redacted] at the Council House. Please come along and offer your support if you are able.

**Appendix 23: Extract from dissenting questionnaire from Town-green
Application (originally forming page 352 of application), 2007.**

EVIDENCE QUESTIONNAIRE IN SUPPORT OF REGISTRATION OF A TOWN GREEN

NAME	[REDACTED]
ADDRESS	[REDACTED]
POSTCODE	[REDACTED]
TELEPHONE	[REDACTED]

1	Your address when you used the land or knew it was used by local inhabitants	[REDACTED]
2	Have you signed the reverse side of Map A confirming it relates to this evidence provided by you?	Yes/No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
3	Please confirm that you agree with the boundaries of the neighbourhood within a locality on Map A edged in green.	Yes/No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
4	Please mark location of your house on Map with an X	<i>Done</i>
5	By what name is the land shown on Map A known? Has it been known by any other name, if so, what name?	[REDACTED]
7	How many years have you known the land?	From...1956...to...2007.....
8	Between which years did you use it?	From...1960...to.....
9	Do you consider yourself to be a local inhabitant in respect of the land?	Yes/No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
10	During the time you used the land has your pattern of use remained basically the same?	Yes/No (bomb site) <i>My children played on it 60's 70's in the 70's</i>
12	To your knowledge are there any public paths crossing the land?	Yes/No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
13	How do/did you gain access to the land?	<i>Through gap in fence.</i>
14	Why do/did you go onto this piece of land?	<i>to tidy up site; papers, tins, etc.</i>
15	How often do/did you use the land?	<i>about twice a week</i>
16	What activities have you taken part in?	<i>Gardening, writing letters.</i>
17	Does/did your immediate family use the land?	Yes/No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
18	If yes, what for?	<i>help with tidying planting.</i>
19	Do you know of any community activities on the land?	<i>We've watched children make models</i>
20	If so, please list them and state for how long they have taken place... <i>Student: studying.....</i> <i>children conker competition.....</i> <i>Gardening, planting, relaxing.....</i> <i>a place to have friendly conversation</i> <i>with local people passing by</i>	from...01...to...07..... from...2001...to...2007..... from...1986...to...2007..... from...!...to...!.....
21	State which, if any, you have taken part in.	<i>...gardening... planting</i> <i>...relaxing... enjoyment.</i>
22	Do any seasonal activities take place on the land?	<i>Conker comp GARDENING</i>

Appendix 24: Interviewee data, observational data & primary documentation data.

Interview material

The following list is the anonymised interview schedule. AA refers to ‘*Anonymized Actor*’ and the number is ascribed numerically (and ‘randomly’). The ethnicity of actors was not recorded. The interviews took, on average approximately ninety minutes; each interview began with an overview of the research, the purpose of the research and the options available to the interviewee in terms of withdrawing from or halting the interview as well as a reading of the ethical consent form and signed approval by the interviewee. The interviews were transcribed manually by the researcher.

AA01: 2011	Gender: Male.	Age group: 45-64.
AA02: 2011	Gender: Male.	Age group: 65+.
AA03: 2011	Gender: Male.	Age group: 25-44.
AA04: 2011	Gender: Female.	Age group: 25-44.
AA05: 2012	Gender: Female.	Age group: 25-44.
AA06: 2012	Gender: Female.	Age group: 65+.
AA07: 2012	Gender: Female.	Age group: 45-64.
AA08: 2012	Gender: Male.	Age group: 65+.
AA09: 2012	Gender: Male.	Age group: 45-64.
AA10: 2012	Gender: Male	Age group: 65+.
AA11: 2012	Gender: Female	Age group: 65+.
AA12: 2012	Gender: Female	Age group: 25-44.
AA13: 2012	Gender: Female	Age group: 45-64.
AA14: 2012	Gender: Male	Age group: 25-44.
AA15: 2012	Gender: Male	Age group: 65+.
AA16: 2012	Gender: Female	Age group: 65+.

Observation material

Observational categories were based around the principal moments of ANT translation, particularly nature₁, nature₂, nature₃ and community₁, community₂, community₃.

List of Documentary Sources

City Council Draft Planning Brief, 1986.

Land Registry Search () Certificate Ref:

Town-Green Committee Report, 2009.

A5 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 03.09.2012.

A5 sized Leaflet posted through local residents door 10.11.2010.

A6 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 16.11.2011.

A4 sized leaflet posted through local residents door 13.10.2012).

Various leaflets posted through local residents doors, as submitted as evidence (i.e. 'EXHIBIT 3: GARDENING AND MAINTENANCE SESSIONS') in town-green application.

A4 sized Community Association publication (8 pages) posted through local resident's door 11.11.2012.

A6 sized leaflet posted through local resident's door 02.12.2011.

Poster pinned to tree at entrance to informal space 13.08.2012.

Community Newsletter posted through residents letterboxes: 16. 06. 2008

Community Newsletter posted through residents letterboxes: 02.07.2008.

Town-Green Application Form, 2008.

Town-Green Application Resident's Letter, 2007.

Photographs of 'Official' Communitygarden/town-green sign in situ (2010).

Sample questionnaire from Town-green Application, 2007.

Photographic evidence (submitted as part of Town-green Application) 2007.

Town-Green Application Sample Witness Statement, 2007.

Community Newsletter posted through residents' letterboxes: 10. 11. 2009.

Appendix 25: Glossary of Terms

ANT (Actor-Network Theory)

Actor-Network Theory attempts to relate how entities (actors) form networks (and vice-versa, how networks form actors). ANT describes how almost any object or entity is an actor in this network, for example examining humans in the same way as scallops or hinges.

COMMUNITY₁₂₃

Community₁

This describes the entirety of adult human actors at the onset of the research process regardless of their interest or engagement with the informal space. Community₁ includes a wide range of actors: residents, visitors, passers-by, relatives of inhabitants of the locality and occasional persons working in the area.

Community₂

Community₂ refers to those residents who will form the alliance as an active part of the communitygarden. Community₂ only includes those actors who are willing to contribute and participate (through a wide variety of means) in the production of the communitygarden.

Community₃

This is a much more specific collection of human actors: specifically those who meet the legislative requirements of the Commons Act (2006). Community₃ is restricted specifically to '*inhabitants from the locality*' who have engaged in lawful past-times or sports on the land for the prior 20 years.

NATURE₁₂₃

Nature₁

The '*natural*' state of the informal space before translation: brambles, weeds, slugs, snails, ants, wasps, bees, mice, rats, trees, ivy, mushrooms, mud, lichens, moths and nettles.

Nature₂

Nature₂ describes the configuration of the biological and organic actors when constituted as a '*garden*' (situated within the cultural context of an English garden). This would be mostly an expanse of grass, with certain species of flowering plants, typically arranged in flowerbeds (which must be devoid of grass).

Nature₃

Nature₃ denotes the assemblage of flora and fauna fit the definition of '*green*' as stipulated in the Commons Act legislation (2006). In this study, nature₃ is akin to nature₂, but is a geographically smaller area.

HYBRID₁₂₃

Hyrid₁

Hyrid₁ specifically refers to '*new*': cultures, species practices, entities or variations thereof, such as through some transgression between once isolated domains. Examples of hybrid₁ in this research include some of the species of flora used in the communitygarden and the communitygarden itself is a form of hybrid₁. For hybrid₁ the referent is the *outcome*.

Hybrid₂

Hybrid₂ concerns the transgression of traditional boundaries of scientific and academic disciplines. Hybridisation occurs through the crossing, blending or eliding of different fields of knowledge. For hybrid₂ the referent is the *epistemology*

Hybrid₃

How research is '*practiced*' is the focus of hybrid₃. Research practices, methods and strategies are appropriated from a range of heterogeneous domains in order to access a wide variety of data sources and to allow the research to '*follow the actors!*' For hybrid₃ the referent is the *process*.

REFLEXIVITY

Reflexion is the practice of a researcher using the process of reflecting back on their own biases and motivations within the research project, and reflexive about their own position within the research field throughout the research process.