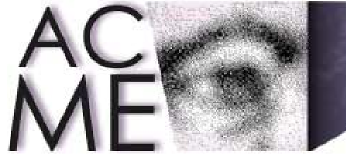

Insurgent Urbanism in a Railway Quarter: Scalar Citizenship at King's Cross, London[1]

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Abstract This article links current debates on 'glocalization' and the politics of scale to the processes of urban revitalization in inner cities. It argues that inner-city revitalization can be seen as a scalar narrative, whereby new regimes of governance seek to reincorporate a locality into circuits of global capital; in effect, seeking to produce a 'glocality'. Using the case of King's Cross, London, a historic railway quarter and site of the imminent, international Channel Tunnel Rail Link terminus, this article demonstrates that resistance to urban revitalization can be understood as a counterpolitics where community activists seek to protect the current local scale. The efforts of the King's Cross Railway Lands Group, which used community planning techniques to generate an 'insurgent urbanism' against the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and subsequent redevelopment, are described and analyzed in detail. While these efforts ultimately failed, it is suggested that the group's utopian vision unleashed a powerful notion of local place that has earned King's Cross a place in London's contemporary emotional geography.

Introduction

Over the last three decades, urban revitalization has been stretched in a myriad of ways to explain change in Western cities. It variously describes 'back to the city movements,' the acceleration of urban historic preservation, the colonization of abandoned sweatshops by artists, the conversion of decaying docks into waterside shopping malls, and the residential displacement of the ex-working class by yuppies. In doing so, urban revitalization, often in tandem with gentrification, aims to address the multifaceted

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production of the postmodern, postindustrial landscape. Its suppleness as a term has enabled discussions on the transformation of urban economies and their reliance on service industries, the internationalization of finance and labor, the flexibility in production methods and sites, and the globalization of consumerism (Boyer 1994, Deutsche 1996, Fainstein 1994, Smith 1996, Sorkin, ed., 1992, Zukin 1991).

These tensions, and their immersion in the processes of urban revitalization reflect what some authors have called "glocalization" and the production of "glocal spaces" (Brenner 1999; Robertson 1995; Swyngedouw 1997). In this essay, I argue that we must conceptually link the processes and formations of glocalization with those of urban revitalization, and that urban revitalization is itself a "scalar narrative," as Swyngedouw describes glocalization (1997: 142). Through this scalar narrative, new regimes of neoliberal governance, such as public-private partnerships, attempt to reincorporate the neglected inner city into circuits of global capital; in this way, a 'glocality' is produced. To illustrate my argument, I discuss in detail the case of King's Cross, on the northern fringe of central London. Over the last fifteen years, King's Cross has become one of the UK's largest and most contested redevelopment sites. The driving force of this development, and by extension, the imminent glocalization of King's Cross, is the construction of the international terminus of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, a high-speed train service linking London to Paris and Brussels.

The first construction proposals, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, were vehemently opposed by local and national historic conservationists and local residents, both of whom refused the *scale* and *content* of the redevelopment proposals. These residents became activist planners who deployed a range of community planning techniques that generated, I argue, an insurgent urbanism, projecting their own vision for the King's Cross area and safeguarding what they considered to be local scale. While these efforts have failed, and the second wave of proposals has been successful, with construction of the link having begun in late 1998, they nonetheless reveal the fissures in neo-liberal scalar narratives of urban revitalization and glocalization. Rather than surrender to the teleology of globalization, the activists at King's Cross represented and enacted what Dolores Hayden calls the "power of place" (1995), thereby shaping new possibilities of citizenship and modes of democracy in late modernity.

Urban revitalization: A scalar and cultural narrative

If a recent exchange between Sallie Marston (2000) and Neil Brenner (2001) in the pages of the *Progress of Human Geography* is any indication, how to theorize scale, and deploy it as an analytic in the production of space, is fraught with tension. Marston, arguing against the continued emphasis on the triumvirate of capital, labor and the state (221), demands that geographers pay more attention to social reproduction and consumption in the social construction of scale. Marston first charts various developments in scale theory, including Kevin Cox's (1998) work to theorize local politics via scale theory, Neil Brenner's (1997) emphasis on the state's interventions in producing scale to Neil Smith's notion of the politics of scale. Second, Marston describes a range of cases including her own work on the scalar production of the American urban middle class 'homemaker' in the expansion and corporatization of US capital at the turn of the last century. In direct response to Marston, Brenner (2001) worries about the "unreflexive" slippage of the notion of scale into other concepts such as place, territory, locality and scale (593, 597, 600, 605). In addition, Brenner is unhappy about the use of Smith's

notion of the politics of scale. He attempts to resolve this by outlining singular and plural meanings of politics of scale. The former would apply to the politics at a particular level, such as the household. The latter, rephrased as "the politics of scaling" would serve as a "catchphrase for summarizing the proposition that geographical scales and scalar configurations are socially produced and politically contested through human social struggle rather than being pregiven or fixed" (599-604).

While Brenner's methodological gatekeeping has some benefits – for example, the politics of scaling allows analysts to signify the processuality of the politics of scalar structurations, he evades Marston's argument for considering social reproduction and consumption in scale theory. Moreover, while attention to social reproduction and consumption may point towards a consideration of agency in the production of scale, and consequently entertain understanding the production of scale as a cultural discourse, both Marston and Brenner are fixated by the structural determinations of the debates of scale theory.[2]

One way out of this quagmire is to consider scale, following Katherine Jones, as an epistemological construct employed by geographers, and a representational trope (1998: 27-28). Another avenue, and with heuristic value for my investigation of urban revitalization in inner city London, is to consider Cox's plea to "liberate ourselves from an excessively areal approach to the question" of scale (1998: 21), and to conceptualize activity within and across scales as networks of associations (2). Armed with a more reflexive construct of scale, through which agents, be they multinational corporations, federal agencies, non-profit organizations, citizen coalitions, and planning consultants, represent differing levels of scale – body, household, community, urban, regional, national and global – (Smith 1992:70), we can take on Swyngedouw's concept of glocalization as a scalar narrative (1997:142). For Swyngedouw, glocalization is

> (1) the contested restructuring of the institutional level from the national scale both upward to supranational and/or global scales and downward to the scale of the individual body; the local, the urban, or regional configurations, and (2) the strategies of global localization of key forms of industrial, service, and financial capital (Swyngedouw 1997: 156).

For city boosterists and revitalization executives, and a range of residents, urban revitalization facilitates the achievement of the modernist "utopian promise of the city," (Boyer 1994:29), that is, its endless materialization and inscription of yet one more project that communicates progress. Composed of the movements of forces of global, national and regional scales downward into local scale, and of local agents and institutions responding to localization and seeking to defend or transform their own sense of local scale, urban revitalization is a specific, and significant version of glocalization. As such, urban revitalization is itself a scalar narrative, in which formerly industrial inner cities, in the course of their revitalization are *rescaled* spatially, economically and culturally in

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[2] I thank David Prytherch, one of the reviewers of the original manuscript, for this observation.

order to be reincorporated as a zone for globalized capital. Moreover, as both Brenner and Swyngedouw take pains to argue, this entails a "reregulation" of the state at the level of the local and the regional. Brenner elaborates:

> On the one hand, state re-scaling can be viewed as a neoliberal strategy of 'deregulation' to dismantle the nationally configured redistributive operations of the Fordist-Keynesian order, frequently by undermining the social-welfare functions of municipal institutions. On the other hand, just as crucially, state re-scaling has served as a strategy of 'reregulation' to construct new institutional capacities for promoting capital investment within major urban growth poles, often through locally or regionally organised workfare policies, non-elected quangos and other entrepreneurial initiatives such as public-private partnerships. Under these circumstances, the role of the local and regional levels of the state is being significantly redefined (Brenner 1999: 440).

In fact, in the UK, it is in the name of inner-city revitalization that a slew of programs – such as City Challenges, Urban Redevelopment Partnerships, and now the Single Regeneration Budget – have been initiated by the British government since Thatcher took power in 1979. Consequently, urban revitalization is coterminous with the expansion of neoliberalism and a global financial and cultural economy in Britain.

The battle for the "local" or for "community" in these inner cities under revitalization is often couched in a rhetoric of solidarity that may seem either outdated or fanciful. However, it is precisely this battle that opposes the rescaling of the local and its reregulation in the form of undemocratic investment partnerships with regional and national private and public sectors. In short, it is the battle that seeks to defend the current understanding and experience of the local against the imposition of glocality that is itself a representational, and hence spatiopolitical strategy. Moreover, this opposition is not merely political or spatial; it is intensely cultural. For embedded in the processes of revitalization and rescaling is an ongoing elaboration of the late-modern or postmodern cultural practice of *urbanism* – that is, the processes of planning and managing city spaces – which provides the iterative aesthetics of revitalized "glocal" cities.

Fredric Jameson has invoked contemporary architectural practices as emblematic of aesthetic and space-making practices that demonstrate the postmodern as the cultural logic of late capitalism (1991, 1999). Moreover, architectural historian M. Christine Boyer describes the elaboration of urbanism as a cultural narrative in the making of what she calls the "figured city." The figured city, she explains in detail:

> [I]s *imageable* and remembered, because its parts are easily recognized and structured to form a mental image (Lynch 1960). Whether these are well-designed spaces of strong visual identity; special districts controlled by contextual zoning or design guidelines; historic districts whose spatial forms are regulated or frozen by ordinances; shopping malls, festival marketplaces, and theme parks whose visual décor and ambience are clearly managed and maintained; or cluster developments of luxury housing, vacation retreats, or retirement communities: their sense of place rests on clearly articulated and comfortingly familiar themes. Although seldom related physically, these spaces are linked imaginatively to each other, to other cities, and to a common history of cultural interpretations. I

> have also been haunted by the *disfigured city*; that is, by the invisible city covered over by this figured city. To alter one's perspective is to see the figured city surrounded by abandoned segments. But usually the disfigured city remains unimageable and forgotten and therefore invisible and excluded. Being detached from the well-designed nodes, the disfigured city actually has no form or easily discernable functions (Boyer 1995:81).

The figured city, which is often produced through the process of gentrification, expresses our contemporary cultural narrative of urbanized capital, or more simply, what we typically perceive and expect a city, particularly a 'global' one, should look like and be about. The components of the figured city that Boyer itemizes are easily recognizable, being forms that are produced in cities around the world, producing a globalizing cultural narrative of urbanization. In contrast, the disfigured city is composed of residues of earlier cityscapes that are not incorporated into contemporary legible space. They remain illegible and unintelligible. Moreover, Boyer's cryptic description the fragments of the disfigured city may speak to contours of earlier urban forms, visions and scales that are no longer relevant, as well as latent collective memories of community and place.

At risk of committing Brenner's "unreflexive slippage" in which scale runs into other concepts of locality, place, and space, I want to assemble the proceeding discussions of scale, glocalization, urban revitalization and urbanism together. I do so to frame my probing of the production of glocal space, and the scalar configuration of local, spatial politics at King's Cross over the last fifteen years. In addition, I risk tainting the methodological purity of scale theory by not only addressing the question of the politics of scale or scaling "largely in terms of what it means for our understanding of local politics", as does Cox (1998: 3), but injecting questions of culture. As such, I describe the opposition to the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and the alternate planning proposals for the King's Cross area as spatiopolitical attempts to defend local scale and to secure an arena for cultural expression, that of a specific everyday life formed in a postindustrial, neglected London district. In this way, I ask a range of questions. These include how inner city communities claim urban spaces against the seemingly inescapable march of glocalization and how community planning provides a spatial device to resist rescaling. I also ask how the production of glocality blurs easy distinctions between the production or imposition of scale and the transformation of space, as well as why urban revitalization is a cultural and scalar narrative.

Ecologies of a Railway Quarter

King's Cross and St Pancras stations, which anchor the King's Cross district pictured in Figure 1, compose a heavily used transportation quarter, including inter-city rail, commuter rail, and Underground uses (also see Figure 2). Even for the commuter busily switching trains or tube at King's Cross, easily the most common experience of the quarter, it is clear that a new place is emerging at King's Cross. However, the exact contours and sensibilities of the 'new King's Cross', dependent on the success of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, remains to be seen. Since the first wave of proposals for a Channel Tunnel rail link into the King's Cross area and a new identity for this much neglected remnant of industrial, Victorian Britain in the late 1980s, the claims to 'King's Cross', its spaces and the meanings ascribed to them, have accelerated. Alongside, a

range of actors or organizations has strove to determine visions for King's Cross, often in direct conflict with one another.

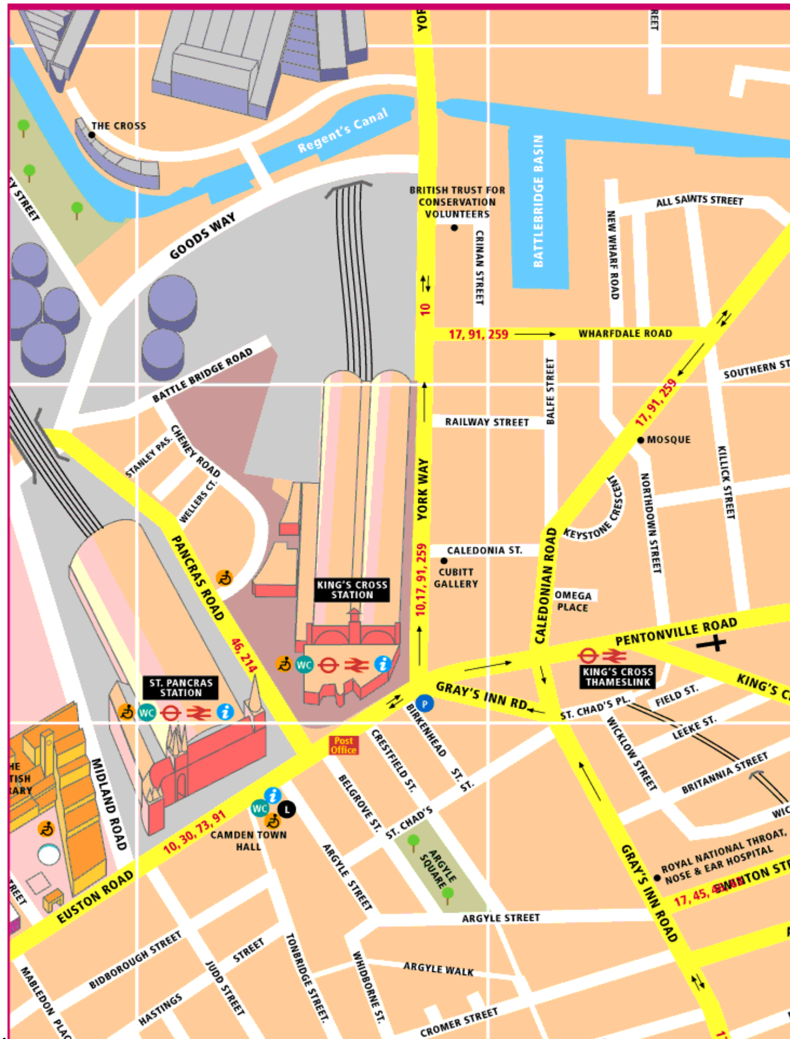

Figure 1: King's Cross area. © King's Cross Partnership. Reproduced with permission

Rail Link Engineering, the Channel Tunnel Rail Link's builders, Argent St George, the area's developers, and the King's Cross Partnership, a public-private partnership charged with local revitalization, are speculating on incorporating this longtime railway quarter into the patchwork of expensive real estate known as 'Central London'. Their publicity materials and websites are crowded with their plans to create a 'vibrant, urban quarter' at King's Cross. Indeed, when the Partnership's remit for revitalization ends by 2003, the main construction of the terminus, and the associated works of rerouting of underground rail passages, destruction and alteration of St Pancras station, and the transformation of the Railway Lands to the north of the stations, will

hardly have started. Moreover, revitalization executives and marketers would do well to remember that 'change' at King's Cross has been in gestation for at least fifteen years, from the first proposals for the Channel Tunnel Rail Link.

Indeed, King's Cross has gone from central London's forgotten fringe to the site of Norman Foster's speculative "Office City" proposals for redevelopment in the late 1980s. Over the late 1990s, King's Cross became a heavily reregulated zone of multi-agent revitalization in process, spearheaded by the impending construction of a new rail line, but managed by emergent principles of a British version of the "new urbanism." Organizations such as the Urban Villages Forum have adapted preservation and urban design principles for their member firms that promote the creation and sustainability of 'urban villages' in inner-city 'brownfield' sites. These principles include building mixed-income and mixed use developments, through rehabilitating historic buildings, maintaining the 'human scale' and encouraging the expansion of the creative industries, all to draw new visitors and businesses to regenerate local economies. Yet, King's Cross has also been the site of the elaboration of an insurgent urbanism based on community planning principles that sought to define a locally relevant redevelopment. It is the rise and fall of this urbanism and the scalar politics it assumed that I now turn to describe.

As a point of departure, I consider the complexity of the interrelated spatial and cultural forms that have made a historic railway quarter at King's Cross, even if its original function has long disappeared. For the reader, this will be helpful in imagining the complexity of urban space at King's Cross. More generally, it supports my argument that *urbanism*, the discourses and practices of planning and managing city spaces, and thus inclusive of revitalization, is a cultural logic, as Boyer (1995) has suggested. This cultural logic is itself embedded in late capitalist techniques and practices of transforming the marketability and value of space through specific uses (Kearns and Philo, eds., 1993). It then goes without saying that it is this logic which any insurgent urbanism will have to counteract.

I begin with deciphering the legacies of earlier urbanisms at King's Cross that anchor the experience and composition of contemporary local space. I move to describing the rise, elaboration, and then fall of insurgent urbanism in the Railway Lands, spearheaded and steered by the King's Cross Railway Lands Group. Embedded in this narrative is that of the first wave of proposals for the Channel Tunnel Rail Link at King's Cross, which was defeated in the House of Lords in 1991. That is, the insurgent urbanism of the Railway Lands emerged out of the struggle to oppose the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. While the King's Cross Railway Lands Group's attempt to build a community-centered model of revitalized urban space in the King's Cross Railway Lands ultimately failed, I argue that the King's Cross Railway Lands Group were successful in defining local people as *urbanist agents*. Urbanist agency, that is agency of planning, implementing and managing city spaces, presents a significant modality of practice that hitherto had been unseen in King's Cross. Moreover, it has consequences to the contemporary elaboration of revitalization and rescaling practiced by the now dominant forces of Argent St George, Rail Link Engineering and the King's Cross Partnership.

Reyner Banham's classic *The Architecture of Four Ecologies* (1972), in linking varying topographies and environmental ecologies to corresponding architectural and social forms, can serve as a framing device. I borrow the term ecology to signify the difference between at least three urban forms in the King's Cross Railway Lands. These

are: the Victorian industrial railway quarter of the Railway Lands; the social housing estates around the perimeter of the Railway Lands built from the mid nineteenth century through the 1930s; and, Victorian and Edwardian terrace-row, street level building of small businesses in narrow streets that is typical of the UK. These ecologies reflect earlier forms of industrial capital and welfare state governance which were instrumental in producing the entanglement of national, regional and local scales that make up an expansive railway quarter and which produced King's Cross as a place.

Figure 2: Aerial map of King's Cross vicinity. Marked in yellow are areas slated for Channel Tunnel Rail Link construction and redevelopment. From west to east, facing Euston Road, are the British Library, St Pancras and King's Cross stations. Photograph © Argent St. George and is used with permission

The railways form the most unique and significant local ecology. The two main railway stations that stand by side, ornately Gothic St Pancras station and stark, symmetrical King's Cross station are still used for passenger traffic. While King's Cross is busy, St Pancras is underused and has been for several decades. The purpose-built Granary, the western and eastern Coal Drops, and the Coal and Fish building take up the bulk of the Railway Lands. However, they fell into disuse and disrepair from the late 1960s, when the Regent's Canal, that runs across London's midsection, was no longer used to transport goods brought down to King's Cross by rail. The spatially peripheral and economically ancillary ecology of former manufacturing premises along the eastern perimeter of the Railway Lands, speak to the related industry that formed around the

working railway quarter. Relatedly, philanthropic worker's housing was built behind King's Cross station and to the southeast. More generally, around the perimeter of the stations, large working-class housing estates demonstrate the ongoing elaboration, both locally and nationally, of an urban ecology of social housing.

Yet, the aesthetic appreciation of the artifacts of the industrial past, and their preservation as the case of St Pancras station below indicates, is very contemporary. Significantly, much of this work began to be seriously documented only in the 1980s, instigated by historians in the former Greater London Council's Historic Building Division and Gavin Stamp, a prominent architectural historian who lived in King's Cross during the decade. His report to the Greater London Council committee in 1984 was a departure point for the architectural conservation of King's Cross and part of a movement to re-evaluate the worthiness of industrial buildings more generally (Stamp 1984). More exhaustive archaeological surveys of the area, and assessments of the quarter's buildings for historical designation were only carried out when the first proposals to build the Channel Tunnel Rail Link link were leaked in 1987 (interview with Robert Thorne, 1998; also Duckworth and Jones 1988; Hunter and Thorne, ed., 1990; King's Cross Conservation Areas Advisory Committee 1989).

Importantly, historic preservation and the mobilization of national conservation societies, in its evaluation of *local* historic relevance, became the first element in elaborating a scalar narrative at King's Cross. Although preservationists by and large focus(ed) on the larger architectures and technologies of King's Cross railway and industrial ecologies, that is, the more formal elements of its specific locality, there were smaller elements that reflected an informal rescaling of the local at King's Cross, away from its railway and industrial past to the messiness of a growing post-industrial ecology that resembles Boyer's image of the disfigured city. These include furniture stores, taxi repair garages, luxury car washes, fast food joints and convenience stores, video arcades, foreign exchange/hotel booking outlets as well as the small, independent Courtyard Theatre. These were accompanied by a gentrifying subquarter around Battlebridge Basin, off the Regent's Canal that had attracted developers in the late 1980s to convert decaying wharfside buildings into telltale various gentrified uses. These include luxury housing, restaurant, and offices for emergent creative industry, such as DEGW, an architectural firm, and an office of Macmillans publishing.

Yet, most important in the elaboration of a counter-narrative of a local sense of scale that opposed the threat of a gentrified neo-urbanist village, and intrinsic to the current vitality of King's Cross, has been the work of the King's Cross Railway Lands Group. Originating in the protest over the first wave of proposals of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link terminus into King's Cross station in 1988, the King's Cross Railway Lands Group devised alternate spatial logics for the King's Cross Railway Lands designed with the participation and for the benefit of the community. In their effort to *figure* community, to respond to the challenge of revitalization, I argue that the group illustrated the potency of what I call "urbanist agency", that is, the agency of planning, implementing and managing city spaces.

Since narrating the rise, expansion, and then retraction of this urbanist agency requires copious amounts of detail, I have tried to organize the story into four parts. The first involves the group's founding in opposition to the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and its political campaign in the House of Lords to defeat the project. The second involves the

beginning of a community planning activism with a public consultation exercise, and the effort to translate these results into an alternative planning application for the King's Cross Railway Lands. This is the pinnacle of King's Cross Railway Lands Group's manifestation of insurgent urbanism and its elaboration of a scalar politics. The third part occurs after the defeat of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and comprises the second phase of insurgent urbanism, the Interim Uses Initiative. This also involves the King's Cross Railway Lands Group's advocacy of the community trust model to sustain local scale. The fourth describes the beginning of the decline of King's Cross Railway Lands Group, which continues to this day, with the founding of the King's Cross Partnership, the nationally funded public-private partnership that has become the dominant face of urban revitalization at King's Cross.

The recent struggles over defining revitalization visions for King's Cross emerged from the proposals to construct the Channel Tunnel Rail Link terminus into King's Cross in late 1980s. However, there are at least two earlier cases which are important precedents, and which illustrate the slow growth of urbanist agency at King's Cross, until its acceleration in the early 1990s.

In 1967, British Rail announced its intention to demolish St Pancras Station. In addition, it would sell off King's Cross Station and the surrounding land British Rail would amalgamate rail services with a newly built more 'modern station.' Opposition to this scheme was spearheaded not by any local community planning or conservation group, but by the Victorian Society.[3] The Victorian Society defeated British Rail by using what historic conservationists in Britain call 'spot listing.' Spot listing involves putting pressure on the Minister responsible for historic buildings to immediately designate or upgrade a designation of a building of 'special historic or architectural interest.' The procedure saved St Pancras from demolition when it was upgraded in 1968 from the now discontinued category of grade III listing to that of grade I (St Pancras files, Victorian Society archives).

By pushing for listing, however, the Victorian Society was compelled to look for new uses for St Pancras Station, and the Midland Grand Hotel, now known as St Pancras Chambers, which forms its massive frontispiece. However unintentionally, this move accomplished two things. First, it marked the trespassing of conservation onto urban planning. In the years after the saving of St Pancras, the Victorian Society actively canvassed support for alternative uses for the seemingly redundant St Pancras. These included plans drawn for a national railway museum, a community sports center, and a scheme to return the Midland Grand Hotel back into use that would be worthy of its name (an idea that has been revived as part of the current Channel Tunnel Rail Link construction proposals). Second, the preservation activism of the Victorian Society was the first of a series of events that began to place public and media attention on the disused Railway Lands.

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[3] The Victorian Society was found in 1958 to preserve buildings built during 1832-1914. Along with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Georgian Group, and the Twentieth-Century Society, it campaigns on behalf of historically listed buildings and districts under threat of alteration or demolition across the UK, and is by a law a requisite consultant when these buildings face such threat.

Such attention resurfaced in the 1970s, with the debates over building the new British Library. The British Library opened in 1996 in Somers Town, adjacent to King's Cross, a neighborhood of near exclusive council housing blocks, with a population now dominated by the retired elderly and an incoming young Bangladeshi families. The site was chosen in the 1970s, after better-organized citizens further south in the Bloomsbury district refused an expanded library there. As part of a sweetener for Somers Town residents, who would have to endure some *twenty* years of construction, council housing would be built on part on the northern part of the site. This has not happened nor is it likely.

If in retrospect, the saving of St Pancras is a symbol of the new found respect for Victorian architecture (Samuel 1994: 126-127), the British Library case represents the emergence of an antagonism among local residents in how land and property are developed in their immediate neighborhoods. The King's Cross Railway Lands Group would mobilize such antagonism and translate it into a scalar politics of community planning in the early 1990s. The concerns over housing and community uses, unheard in the 1970s, would become central to the platform of the King's Cross Railway Lands Group a dozen years later.

The Formation of the King's Cross Railway Lands Group

The King's Cross Railway Lands Group remains proud of its origins at a packed meeting of some 400 people at a local theatre, Theatro Technis in 1988. The meeting had arisen in protest of the leaked proposals of British Rail to redevelop the semi-derelict railway lands at King's Cross by building the British portion of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. As a condition made by the Thatcher government, the link would have to be funded by the private sector. The scheme was awarded to prominent architects, Norman Foster & Associates, who planned to subsidize the construction of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link by massive office development on the Railway Lands. The link, to come from south-east England through east London, would have entailed massive destruction of residences and small businesses, on the eastern side of King's Cross, as well as the demolition of the eastern half of industrial buildings, including the Granary, along the Regent's Canal.

As part of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link terminus construction, the underutilized land north of the stations was to be restyled as a new Office City, a 'European' quarter at the heart of Britain's largest industrial railway landscape. The Channel Tunnel Rail Link thus represented new regimes of governance: at once the neoliberal deregulation of private sector development and the imposition of an expanding European Union regime. In an important sense, since the Channel Tunnel Rail Link links London (and the UK rail network) to Paris and Brussels (and thereby the Continental rail system), it was an effective symbol of the emerging scale of a unified Europe, and the related rescaling of local spaces that this would entail.

It was precisely this sense of loss of determination of local scale that mobilized the residents and small businesspeople of the King's Cross Railway Lands Group, historic preservationists, housing activists and local political figures. Opposition to the Norman Foster plans involved intertwined issues of historic conservation and city planning. A group of concerned local resident historians and architects coalesced and quickly formed the King's Cross Conservation Areas Advisory Committee in 1989. Members came from various conservation-minded societies and together produced detailed briefs of the

architectural and historical value of the buildings in the King's Cross Railway Lands (King's Cross Conservation Areas Advisory Committee 1989). These discussed the merit of the particular industrial buildings as well as the integrity of the several conservation areas at King's Cross. Since conservation areas contain listed and historically interesting unlisted buildings and are the responsibility of the local authority's conservation team, the King's Cross Conservation Areas Advisory Committee was able to talk effectively about the sense of place and the character of the district.

Rather than blanket condemnation, the briefs differentiated areas that needed protection from those that could be sensitively redeveloped. King's Cross Conservation Areas Advisory Committee's efforts were buttressed by similar objections by historians at English Heritage, the quango (quasi-autonomous nongovernmental organization) responsible for the historic buildings in England, and the Victorian Society. Importantly, the concerns of the conservationists were shared by the local King's Cross Railway Lands Group activists. Beyond the intended massive destruction of small business and homes, and the loss of industrial heritage, whose importance was only beginning to be determined, it was the scale of Norman Foster's plans that angered both constituencies. These included an extensive office development surrounding a low-level international terminus and twin office towers where a group of industrial buildings stood in the northeastern section of the Railway Lands.

Both the conservationists and the King's Cross Railway Lands Group activists argued that the steel and glass 'Office City' proposals totally disregarded the existing spatial form of the Railway Lands. More symbolically, the Office City suggested the articulation of global and national scales that disregarded the existing leftover industrial and postindustrial ecologies at King's Cross, which formed the 'local.' For the conservationists, this meant that rather than rehabilitating and recycling existing buildings, or constructing new structures sympathetic to the varied scale of King's Cross, the Office City would destroy the diversity and mixture of use of the Railway Lands. For the community planners and activists of the King's Cross Railway Lands Group, Foster's plans had no engagement with the needs and aspirations of King's Cross's current residents and workers, an area of poor housing and high unemployment. The plans pitched a new 'European' commercial and financial center for London without any consideration of established senses of place and community.

In response to these circumstances, the King's Cross Railway Lands Group set out to generate larger community opposition to the project. Changes to railway lands and priorities, under a British legal statute then in force, required the successful passage of a bill through Parliament. In the public inquiry held in the Houses of Commons and Lords, the group assembled various spokespeople to explain local opposition. They joined the Victorian Society, English Heritage, and the King's Cross Conservation Areas Advisory Committee in giving testimonies in front of Parliamentary Select Committees adjudicating the bill. Rather than being merely dismissive of redevelopment in general, the group's testimonies were backed up by well-researched, locally generated proposals for alternatives. In fact, I would argue that it was the search and refinement of alternatives that distinctively mark the King's Cross Railway Lands Group's field of strategies. For the group not only campaigned for an alternative redevelopment at King's Cross. They actually submitted their own application for a community-led regeneration of the area with the local planning authority.

Planning for Real: Protecting Local Scale in the King's Cross Railway Lands

The impetus for the planning application was steered by Michael Parkes, part-time planning consultant at King's Cross Railway Lands Group since 1990, who had held a community planning workshop during the original meeting at Theatro Technis. Parkes had been working in Spitalfields, east London with a host of Bangladeshi organizations interested in devising a community development plan (Parkes 1995). He had run the free-service planning charity, Planning Aid for London, for a time. Inspired by the broad interest generated by the meeting, and with the financial support of an interested property developer, Martin Clarke, Parkes took up the challenge and began to orchestrate a Planning for Real exercise with the King's Cross Railway Lands Group for the King's Cross Railway Lands in 1989.

Planning for Real is a technique developed in the late 1960s by Tony Gibson, in which people living and working in an area affected by a redevelopment scheme actively participate in the planning process. It involves constructing a model of the area, and then creating differently colored cards indicating various kinds of land uses (Parkes 1990: 60). These include residential (affordable housing and housing on the open market), workspaces (offices, light industrial uses), leisure (sports facilities, community centers), open or green space. People determine how they prefer land being used by placing appropriate cards on the different parts of the model.

In the King's Cross version, such cards were deployed, as well as others that asked how existing, including derelict and historically listed buildings should be better used, and whether landmarks in local conservation areas needed preservation. Parkes reports that some 330 people participated in the process, and nearly 3200 option cards were employed. The Planning for Real exercise was also accompanied by consultation about which existing local needs, for housing, green space, children play areas, etc., should be met in any regeneration scheme, in order of priority. Over the summer of 1990, the exercise -- including the model, itself built with the help of secondary school students-- was taken to five local elementary schools. The King's Cross Railway Lands Group staged a Planning for Real exercise in each school.

The results were published as The People's Brief (Parkes 1990) and made available to a consortium of architects that Clarke had assembled. The consortium used the information to develop an alternative plan for the railway quarter, that included a Channel Tunnel Rail Link terminus at King's Cross, but with land uses that reflected a vision for King's Cross grounded in a resolutely local scale. The plan would then be filed with the local municipality. As Parkes told it, at one of a series of presentations with the community, disagreement broke out over the amount of affordable housing provided versus the number of offices. People, including members of the King's Cross Railway Lands Group, disputed the architects' proposed route for the Channel Tunnel Rail Link into King's Cross. Along with other concerns, these led Clarke to withdraw financial support and the consortium disbanded.

However, with the help of two young architects, Parkes used the consortium's work as a blueprint for two planning applications that were filed with Camden in late 1991. These incorporated work done by planning economist and King's Cross Railway Lands Group member, Michael Edwards, which calculated the amount of offices necessary to subsidize much needed affordable housing. With these figures in hand, the group devised one application, mapping the Planning for Real results onto two proposed

revamped Railway Lands. One had no rail link terminus at all. The other, presciently, had the link skirting around the Railway Lands and coming into St Pancras.

Though at the time of filing, the railway bill was still being heard in Parliament, two facts were becoming clear. First, there was a growing assumption that the redevelopment proponents, London Regeneration Consortium, had greatly overestimated their ability to raise funds to finance the Channel Tunnel Rail Link construction. Second, also related to the first, was the collapse of the London property market, which soon revealed a surplus of offices. With the help of Randal Keynes, the King's Cross Railway Lands Group persuaded peers on the House of Lords Select Committee to directly ask the promoters of the railway bill whether they could finance construction (interview with Randal Keynes, spring 1998). When the promoters confessed in Parliament that they could not, the bill fell apart.

The Interim Uses Initiative

The combined fall in the property market in 1991-92 and the defeat of the railway bill gave the King's Cross Railway Lands Group some breathing space. The ensuing removal of development pressure on the Railway Lands provided a window of opportunity to develop strategies for temporary uses on underutilized sites and buildings on the Railway Lands. These could potentially address the concerns for affordable housing, employment, green space, leisure, and the conservation and re-use of the many historic industrial buildings, all elements in the group's attempts to *figure community* that were voiced in the People's Brief.

The government, being pressured from the European Union to complete the UK section of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, announced its preference for a new link proposal in 1993 and set about establishing a new railways bill. Meanwhile, the King's Cross Railway Lands Group was busy investigating temporary uses for existing buildings in the Railway Lands. The group solicited assistance from a host of organizations ranging from a self-build housing trust to Urban Economic Development, a progressive and creative inner city development company. In this way, they were able to propose a set of mechanisms and strategies in which these temporary uses could be realized. The group also studied current uses of premises in the Railway Lands, including patterns of ownership and leases, which gave a sense of the oligarchic property-holding structure in the district.

It was also at this time that they began to contemplate a more entrepreneurial approach to community planning and development, the community development trust. In this model, community residents acquire and manage local resources and services -- anything and everything from housing provision, workspaces, day care centers to small business assistance and job training (see Monaghan 1994; Wilcox 1997). The King's Cross Railway Lands Group published the whole range of possibilities as the *Interim Uses Initiatives* (1993), a document that remains central to the group's vision and figuration of the Railway Lands as a community-managed 'urban village.'

The Interim Uses Initiatives attempted to elaborate a politics of scale that valorized using resources already at hand (such as old buildings), obtaining a range of expertise, and articulating a way forward that was reliant on neither the municipal planning authority nor large commercial interests. In this sense, it represented a shift in the usual practices of urbanism in London. It was an *insurgent local urbanism*, one that combined the utopian

impulses of the group and the focused urgency of community sentiment with a program for concrete action.

Anthropologist James Holston uses a notion of the insurgent to talk about the potential of multiculturalist and identity politics, themselves intensified in urban areas, to redefine a concept of citizenship, based on the city rather than the nation (1996). In his discussion of insurgent citizenship, Holston argues that the 'estrangement of the social,' a legacy of modernist architecture and city planning, can thus be mitigated. In its making King's Cross an arena for insurgent politics based on lobbying, widespread local consultation, as well as devising alternative land use plans, the King's Cross Railway Lands Group activated a notion of citizenship that explicitly identified itself with an urban area. As a body of largely-non professional collective of people and organizations, the group ventured into the territory of urbanism, usually occupied solely by municipal planning officials, urban planners and designers, architects, and developers. As such, the group's urbanist agency allowed for the animation of spatial politics in a historically working-class, ex-industrial and railway quarter. Lastly, it transformed a rhetoric of class familiar in British social and political life to one based on community. Such politics focused on improving local amenities and opportunities for an increasingly socially diverse King's Cross, and demanding that the management of local resources be further decentralized to the community level.

One of the best local examples of the potential of this community planning activism, and which repeatedly was mentioned in informal conversations with group members, particularly Parkes, involved the Coal and Fish Offices (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Coal and Fish Buildings under repair. Author photograph.

The London Wildlife Trust had commissioned a study to investigate how the Coal and Fish could be brought back into use, and thus serve as an excellent catalyst for Railway Lands regeneration (London Wildlife Trust 1988). The buildings had sustained a great deal of damage, including losing its roof, in a fire in 1983. National Freight Corporation, the owners of the Coal and Fish, had planned to demolish them. The local council, Camden, with pressure from concerned residents, used the collection of building's location in the Regent's Canal Conservation Area to block demolition permission, one of the major control mechanisms that Conservation Area legislation provides. It went to public inquiry, which ruled in favor of Camden. National Freight Corporation appealed, but failed to win.

Despite the fire, a structural survey confirmed that the Coal and Fish were structurally sound.[4] King's Cross Railway Lands Group commissioned Urban Economic Development to do a report on the viability of the Coal and Fish as a community-managed building. This report, published in the Interim Uses Initiative, focused on how the substantial amount of money required for refurbishment could be raised by a trust created to develop it as a community resource (Parkes and Mouawad 1993: 116-31). From its first discussions in 1991, King's Cross Railway Lands Group saw the Coal and Fish Offices as ideal for a local urban studies and heritage center run by a community development trust. The report also explored the feasibility of a range of community uses, such as an urban studies and heritage center, exhibition rooms, and offices for community groups, which would need to be subsidized by retail-generating uses such as a waterfront café, and renting space for functions (125-26).

Unfortunately, all these plans were thwarted in the summer of 1998, when National Freight Corporation put up scaffolding on the Coal and Fish with the intention of doing the external repairs themselves, at a cost of about £600,000 ($1,000,000). By November 1998, National Freight Corporation was actively pursuing a tenant, which would simultaneously serve as a public relations vehicle for a company with a shoddy local reputation as well getting someone else to help foot the million and a half dollar bill required for internal refurbishment. More significantly, the Coal and Fish was lost to the development trust ideal that the King's Cross Railway Lands Group had cherished for a number of years. It was a symptom of the changing politics of determining urban regeneration at King's Cross that I discuss below, which has left the group with a smaller piece of the revitalization pie.

The Decline of the King's Cross Railway Lands Group

In 1993, the British government revived the plans for a Channel Tunnel rail link, this time following a proposed route that was less destructive and went into under-used St. Pancras station. However, there were complications. The construction of the link was tied to a series of rail improvements.[5] Although the new route was less destructive, it would still involve partial or total demolition of at least fourteen listed historic buildings in the

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[4] Alan Baxter & Associates is an architectural and structural engineering firm that has been heavily involved in the Channel Tunnel Rail Link debate, producing nine reports for a variety of clients. In 1991, they proposed a less destructive design for a rail link terminus at King's Cross. They have acted as consultants regarding the impact of King's Cross redevelopment on the area's listed buildings for Camden, and in 1994, studied the first proposals of St Pancras as an international station for the King's Cross Railway Lands Group. Currently, they are part of the design team converting St Pancras station into the international Channel Tunnel Rail Link terminus, including returning the working on the plans to convert the St Pancras Chambers into a luxury hotel, its original use.

[5] This included upgrades to escape routes in the London Underground, of which King's Cross-St Pancras is the busiest station and where a 1987 fire left thirty-one people dead. It also involved re-situating King's Cross Thameslink station, a well-used (and lucrative) north-south rail service running from Bedford in central England through London down to Brighton on the south coast, underneath St Pancras station, under which the route runs.

King's Cross Railway Lands, and moving other listed structures, including the gasholders. It would also require the demolition and rebuilding of the west flank of St Pancras, in order to allow for an extension of the existing railway shed, double the number of platforms, and facilitate the building of the new Thameslink commuter station.

Moreover, the alteration and demolition of listed buildings of listed buildings would be governed by a 'Heritage Deed' as part of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link Act, rather than by existing preservation guidelines in the 1990 Town and Country Planning acts. Conservationists, coordinated by the Victorian Society, protested during hearings in the House of Lords. They argued that the fact that the Heritage Deed all but removed building controls for the listed buildings, including watering down the statutory consultation process with conservation advisory bodies (which normally would have included the English Heritage and the Victorian Society (interview with William Filmer Sankey, fall 1997, spring 1998).[6]

For the King's Cross Railway Lands Group, the standstill that allowed for the flourishing of creative ideas for figuring community in the Railway Lands was being lifted, and now being sanctioned with the express support of the Tory government. Yet, the group, rather than continue to push plans for community-centered development, unfortunately shifted to focus on transport.[7] The shift in focus opened already existing faultlines among members and supports, past and present of the King's Cross Railway Lands Group. Some of the buildings scheduled to be demolished included Culross Buildings and apartments 1-10 of the Grade II-listed Stanley Buildings. Since the 1970s, both had developed a strong community of residents, who had squatted the then derelict apartments built in the last century and, in exchange for doing up the properties themselves, earned short-life leases from their owners. Stanley Buildings belonged to Camden Council; Culross, as former property of British Rail, was gifted to London and Continental Railways by the government as a sweetener to help make the rail link happen. For the tenants of Culross, unlike that of Stanley, this would mean no compensation

[6] With the Heritage Deed, only a relationship of advice between the construction undertakers and the conservation bodies was set out. Whether it was taken would be up to the design team at the chief contracts of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link construction, London and Continental Railways. Unlike English Heritage, then director of the Victorian Society, William Filmer-Sankey, did make a statement during the inquiry. Without the support of English Heritage, little could be achieved in terms of St Pancras Station. However, the Victorian Society did manage to get assurances that the gasholders would be dismantled, stored, and then re-erected.

[7] For instance, under the Channel Tunnel Rail Link provisions, trains coming to St Pancras would stop at Stratford, in east London. However, part of the financial incentive for the rail link was European Union money that would encourage suburban commuters in Kent to come to London by train. As a result, St Pancras had to be extended to accommodate suburban and international trains. The King's Cross Railway Lands Group argued that this was wasteful, that suburbanites could make use of existing public transport at Stratford to come into central London. They thus argued that trains ought to split at Stratford, with only international passengers coming into St Pancras. They also argued for the revival of CrossRail, much supported by the financial denizens of the City, a comparatively expensive, underground rail through the center of London, with connections to Heathrow Airport (King's Cross Railway Lands Group Carrion 1998; press release December 1998).

package. Unsurprisingly, the issue of money led to a weakening of ties of interest between the King's Cross Railway Lands Group, an umbrella organization, and one's tenants' association. While the group campaigned on larger transport issues, its members in Stanley or Culross Buildings were fighting for compensation deals. Even though both groups had an ostensibly shared interest in the environmental effects, the tenant associations were waging a variety of NIMBY politics, albeit in the inner city.

To make matters worse for the group, soon after the Channel Tunnel Rail Link Act was passed, the King's Cross Partnership was formed. The Partnership included the two local councils, Camden and Islington, Channel Tunnel Rail Link construction and engineering representatives, the large property interests in the Railway Lands as well as representatives from the local banks and police. The Partnership won their bid from the Single Regeneration Budget. This budget had been formed in 1994 by pooling central government resources for certain training, education, and housing and environmental improvement programs targeted for deployment in disadvantaged areas across the country. Successful bidders for these public funds have to show that they would manage programs within a multi-sector 'partnership' model, favored by the then Tory government and continued by New Labour (Jessop 1998). The partnership model fits an explicitly entrepreneurial urban redevelopment strategy and in Britain tends to be composed of 'lead partners' such as the mayor and the regeneration officer from the local council(s), executives from prominent local businesses, Training and Enterprise Councils, and local community organizations. The arrival of the Partnership was thus a second attempt to reregulate the production of King's Cross' locality, and the impending importance of national and regional scales in determining this production. The King's Cross Partnership won £37.5 million of public funds, which is being matched with some £250 million from private-sector sources, making it is one of the richest Single Regeneration Budgets in Britain. The area it is supposed to serve faces high unemployment, poor housing and health, higher school dropout rates for youth, and considerable minority populations.

The Partnership had no patience for the King's Cross Railway Lands Group's politics and aesthetics of local scale. Rather, it sought to mobilize a logic of commercial enterprise as well as contemporary discourses of regulation and surveillance that fetishizes the rhetoric of safety, focusing on installing video cameras and other such initiatives. These rightly alienated the Partnership from most sectors of the King's Cross community. During late 1995 to early 1998, the King's Cross Railway Lands Group benefited from this antagonism, frequently voiced in the group's newsletter. However, as the only umbrella organization concerned with planning and development in the area, its past work was an important resource for the Partnership, if only to be incorporated and depoliticized, and thus, *descaled*.

For example, the group was invited to participate in the discussing the Site Implementation Study along with the various fora the Partnership had set up on social and community, economic, and design issues, respectively. This study tried to assemble a blueprint to regenerate the Railway Lands (Building Design Partnership Planning and KPMG, 1997). It discussed transport issues, the oligarchic property structure and current land uses in the area, the historic nature of the industrial railway landscape, the logistics of the rail link, as well as the vagaries of London's economy, in order to lay out and assess a variety of regeneration themes for the area.

These included what the King's Cross Railway Lands Group call 'big-hit' themes, where regeneration is led by a major economic or cultural use, such as a convention center or a football stadium, as well as one which emphasizes community uses, favored by the group, and based on Camden Council's Community Planning Brief (London Borough of Camden, 1994). Although the group was invited to participate in the first Site Implementation Study consultation, they were closed out from the others. Moreover, the consultants' report was written without the benefit of King's Cross Railway Lands Group's past insight into organizing and managing a more equitable, community-involved use of the Railway Lands. In this sense, the Site Implementation Study consultation symbolizes the first major displacement of the King's Cross Railway Lands Group in being the lead innovator in shaping community development initiatives.

That displacement hastened after the firing of the chief executive at the end of 1997, and a more concerted effort on the part of the Partnership to better play the 'community card.' By this, I mean the Partnership provided a sense of inclusion and ownership to community groups through giving funding for social service and educational programs. Yet, by doing this, it felt that it was supporting community development enough without actually having to surrender decision-making power. Most of the various fora at which members of community groups could attend were consultative. Voting never took place as decisions continue to be made at the Board level.

Moreover, there had been widespread anger that resources - some £11.5 million in the first two years -- were being frittered away on expensive surveillance cameras for King's Cross station and a circus of consultants. This has gradually changed so that community groups now see the King's Cross Partnership as something like a cash-cow, giving vital milk to a cash-starved community and voluntary sector. These groups compete against each other for what is actually a small percentage of the Partnership's resources. For the Partnership, supporting the community in 1998 translated into small grants to an Indian dance company, needle exchange programs, central heating improvements and flower beds for council tenants, or a neon sign for an art gallery.

In fact, public consultation is often an exercise in not listening. For example, on behalf of King's Cross Railway Lands Group, I attended meetings over streetscape improvements being funded by the Partnership in a very graffitied and very Bangladeshi section of Somers Town. There were two sets of consultations, a bilingual Bengali-English one for the Bengalis and an other in English only for everyone else. My group involved a dozen or so young Bangladeshi women; a Bangladeshi translator; the project director from Camden's planning department; local ward councillor Sybil Shine and me. After two or three meetings, we 'agreed' on "conservation quality" York stone paving for a marked-up, poorly lit alleyway and a single bench in a potential 'pocket park' so as not to encourage youth/gang congregation. The project director repeatedly told the women, via the translator, that none of the £165, 000 (approximately US $250,000) was for safety improvements that were priorities for them. This and so many other vignettes illustrate all-too familiar scenarios of the King's Cross Railway Lands Group, and other similarly placed groups, to develop vehicles that would allow their counternarratives of urbanism, their insurgent attempts to refigure their local disfigured landscapes and revive local ecologies.

This requires changing the register of urbanist agency, from that of activist and critic to one of a business and or property stakeholder; that is, to protect local scale

economically, and thereby control the contours of glocalization, from below. In this way, the social capital generated through planning activism becomes converted into localized economic capital. One example of this has long been bandied about informally among the group's leading members: that is setting up a community development trust to take on the hard work to fundraise and rehabilitate suitable properties in the Railway Lands, such as the Coal and Fish building. The trust, at the very least, would provide a vehicle through which community-focused initiatives of affordable housing, leisure and work units could be carried out.

At a certain level, the King's Cross Railway Lands Group's various efforts at implementing a community-focused ecology for a post-industrial Railway Lands failed miserably. Yet, unlike any other collective force in the area, the King's Cross Railway Lands Group mobilized "the power of place," (Hayden 1995) at King's Cross. This power was drawn from the area's monumental architecture and rich industrial history as it was from the legacies of housing activism and bohemianism that formed a social memory for many of King's Cross' longstanding residents and supporters.[8] The King's Cross Railway Lands Group was able to mobilize this rich sense of place and locality to launch a scalar politics that generated, among other things, the alternative planning applications and the Interim Uses Initiative. However, they did not have the wherewithal to take their vision further and spatialize it in the Railway Lands.

Conclusion: Local Politics and the Utopian Promise of the City

The Planning for Real exercises, the alternative planning applications and the Interim Uses Initiative were the core elements in an elaboration of a robust local aesthetics and politics of space at King's Cross during the 1990s. This spatial aesthetics and politics mobilized an urbanist vision that sought to defend local scale as residents and businesspeople saw and defined it, against the 'glocalist' fantasy of developers and regeneration experts. Indeed, it represented the understanding that to struggle for a community-led development at King's Cross was (and is) a scalar politics and that urban revitalization without local control would mean an effective loss of scale.

Furthermore, the scalar politics at King's Cross was couched, not in the jargon of anti-globalization and localization, but in the shared belief in the utopian promise of the city. If urban revitalization itself is a cultural narrative of modernist utopia dressed in postmodern office towers and gentrification, the community aesthetics and politics of space at King's Cross was its inversion, sharing the same conviction of the potential of refiguring an aged, neglected railway quarter. Moreover, it was through their insurgent

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[8] Important to the aesthetics and politics of scale at King's Cross, and crucial to the longevity of the King's Cross Railway Lands Group were the twinned legacies of housing activism, namely squatting in the 1970s and early 1980s, and a related bohemianism, which made for a local culture of dissent. These legacies themselves reflected the elements of the "ex-working class", that class that had roots in the historic blue-collar working class, but due to postindustrialism and the expansion of the service sector and higher education, were generally employed in the lower rungs of the new service economy.

counter-urbanism that the King's Cross Railway Lands Group and its member residents and businesspeople sought and mobilized a latent power of place at King's Cross, to an extent that had never been done so in living memory.

The mobilization of power of place by the struggle to defeat the first wave of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link by a motley crew of conservationists and community activists and the subsequent insurgent urbanism of the King's Cross Railway Lands Group, importantly, *effectively defined and communicated the local scale of King's Cross*. These conservationists and activists did not take the local as pre-given, but produced and represented it according to their interests. Moreover, through their refusal to rescaling, they activated an agency to *represent* local scale, not only to themselves, but to agents situated in other levels of scale, such as municipal authorities, property owners, national government agencies, and the consultants, developers, and builders of the rail link. In this way, they sought to resist the imposition of a vision of a glocalized King's Cross from above, seeking, through such proposals as the community trust, to define glocalization locally. Moreover, this power of place, itself a utopian gesture, was done by appreciating and deploying the already existing railway, industrial, social housing and small commercial ecologies in the quarter. All these ecologies were reflected in each of the planning applications, the final, composite result of the Planning for Real exercises and the Interim Uses Initiative. In short, it was in referencing them that a local scalar politics could be defined.

As a result, King's Cross, by the late 1990s, was not only significant as the impending site of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and the largest redevelopment site in London. King's Cross had become crucial to the spatiopolitical and emotional geography of London. The efforts to oppose the rail link and the legacy of community planning activism signified the elaboration of an urbanist agency that produced locality and linked it to the cause of defining alternate futures. As such, despite their failure, these efforts introduced a new form of citizenship in the struggle of globalization and glocalization in the UK, a citizenship concerned with defending scale: a scalar citizenship. With the repackaging efforts of the King's Cross Partnership and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link developers underway to produce a revitalized King's Cross, a new 'historic' zone for tourism and hyper-consumerism in London's ever-hungry globalized financial and cultural economy, that may be the ultimate success of the King's Cross Railway Lands Group's insurgent urbanism in a railway quarter.

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