

The London School of Economics and Political Science

*Exploring London's food quarters: urban design and social process in three food-centred spaces*

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**Declaration**

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## **Dedication and acknowledgements**

I dedicate this thesis to Dr Matthew Hardy, my inspiration, guide, and support over many years, and in memory of my mother, Joy Parham, sociologist, wise teacher and passionate advocate of learning.

I would like to acknowledge the excellent contribution of my supervisor, Dr Fran Tonkiss, whose wit, good humour and incisive criticism made the process of thesis research and writing far less painful than it might have been. To Professor Leslie Sklair, thank you for stepping into the supervisory vacuum in the early days. To Ricardo Vasconcelos, Dr Iliana Ortega-Alcazar, Dr Alasdair Jones and Dr Eva Neitzert, thank you for all your kind help and good company over the years at LSE. To my colleagues at CAG, thank you for all your support throughout the process.

## **Abstract**

### **Exploring London's food quarters: urban design and social process in three food-centred spaces**

This thesis considers three food-centred spaces in London. Drawing on theoretical perspectives from sociology, geography, urban design and morphology, it explores the spatial and social transformation of the Borough Market, Broadway Market and Exmouth Market areas through the revival of their food markets. Using a mix of methods including interviews, observations, mapping and urban design analysis, the case study-based research situates these neighbourhoods along a continuum of food quarter development. The work reflects on the quarters not only as fast gentrifying locations in which renewal is grounded in new forms of conspicuous food consumption, but as places that also support changing – and potentially less alienating - relationships between sustainable urban form, urban design context and convivial social processes focused on food. It is argued that the aspatiality of much sociological research into foodscapes tends to underemphasise the connections between the physical and the social, which in the three food quarters are nuanced and complicated. On the one hand, food quarters are experienced by some, after Bourdieu (1984), as ‘mini habituses’ (Bridge, 2006) in which identity construction is linked to distinction based on food, and modelled on particular forms of food consumption. On the other hand, despite sometimes ‘idealised narratives’ (Butler, 2007) of community formation, food quarters may also make a contribution to developing more sustainable cities, by supporting and nurturing convivial socio-spatial food practices that sometimes transcend commodification. In particular, the thesis explores how compact city design, founded on a strong sense of place, underpins local economic vitality, and informs the richness of experiences of food and eating. The thesis concludes that despite some gentrifying effects, the food quarters are in certain respects defying dominant spatialised trends evident in London, to develop in a more convivial, gastronomically rich and sustainable way.

## Table of Contents

**Title page**

**Declaration**

**Dedication and acknowledgements**

**Abstract**

**Table of contents**

**List of tables and figures**

### **Chapter 1: Researching the food quarters** **10**

Introducing the thesis aims

The research scope

Why study food?

Food and urban sustainability

Food and convivial cities

Food and everyday life

Social space, physical space and food

Structure of the thesis

### **Chapter 2: Contextualising the food quarters** **26**

Introduction to the research framework

Relevant theoretical approaches to food and eating

Food and sociological research

The food system

Food and spatiality

Food quarters as sites for regeneration and gentrification

Food quarters and urban design issues

Chapter conclusions

### **Chapter 3: Examining the food quarters** **61**

Introduction to the methodological approach

Using case studies

Methods used within the case study approach

Spatial aspects of the research: using visual methods

Applying methods from urban design

About the case study sites

About the research plan

Chapter conclusion

#### **Chapter 4: Designing the food quarters**

**89**

Introduction to the morphological and urban design context

Morphology and design at Borough Market

Morphology and design at Broadway Market

Morphology and design at Exmouth Market

Chapter conclusion

#### **Chapter 5: A case of ‘designed’ food quarter transformation at Borough Market**

**141**

Introduction to the Borough Market Quarter

Tracing Borough’s triumphant story of economic revival

Exploring Borough’s growing role as an alternative food space

Considering Borough as a uniquely designed social setting for food

Analysis and conclusions from Borough Market’s transformation into a ‘global’ food quarter

#### **Chapter 6: A case of ‘bottom-up’ food quarter development at Broadway Market**

**169**

Introduction to the Broadway Market quarter

Constructing Broadway’s story of community-based, food-led renewal

Exploring the urban design implications of food market regeneration

Identifying a ‘submerged’ account of Broadway Market as sustainable space

Describing Broadway’s range of socio-spatial practices: connections to urban design

Analysis and conclusions from Broadway Market’s community-led food quarter development

#### **Chapter 7: A case of food-led renewal of a different kind at Exmouth Market**

**197**

Introduction to the Exmouth Market quarter

Exploring Exmouth Market’s decline and food-led revival

Connecting up regeneration and urban design

Exmouth as a street for eating: passeggiatta and proximity

Analysis and conclusions from Exmouth Market’s food-centred renewal

#### **Chapter 8: Summing up the food quarters**

**223**

Drawing comparative conclusions about the food quarters

Contextualising the food quarters: the legacy of urban continuity and coherence

The food quarters as public focal points in fine-grained urban fabric

Urban regeneration centred on food space: the intertwined roles of economic development and design

Understanding the food quarters as new kinds of food space

Problematising gentrification: competing narratives and paradoxical conclusions

Situating food quarters as expressions of urban sustainability

Proposing food quarters as sites for increased conviviality

Food-centred practice and design as a new phenomenon in urban development?

Summing up the food quarters

**Appendix 1: Methods and evidence gathered** 253

**Bibliography** 273

**List of tables and figures**

## **Chapter 1**

Figure 1.1: The sustainability trefoil

## **Chapter 2**

Table 2.1: Main characteristics of traditional and modern food systems

Table 2.2: The processes, phases and loci of the food system

Figure 2.1: Solid-to-void typologies

Figure 2.2: Urban form relationships

Figure 2.3: Examples of serial vision

## **Chapter 3**

Table 3.1: Completed Interviews Matrix

Table 3.2: Design elements explored using master planning methods

Table 3.3: Design elements explored using master planning methods

Table 3.4: Urban Design Synthesis

Figure 3.1: Figure-ground diagrams of 1. Aigues Mortes (left) and 2. Munich (right)

Figure 3.2: Catchment analysis

Figure 3.3: Ped sheds in traditional and conventional suburban development

Figure 3.4: Borough Market

Figure 3.5: Broadway Market

Figure 3.6: Exmouth Market

## **Chapter 4**

Figure 4.1: Borough Market and surroundings

Figure 4.2: Rocque's map of 1746, detail

Figure 4.3: Horwood's map of 1792-1799, detail

Figure 4.4: Stanford's map of London and its suburbs, 1862 (detail)

Figures 4.5 to 4.8: Developing urban form in the area of Borough Market

Figure 4.9: Ordnance Survey map of Bermondsey and Wapping of 1894 (London Sheet 77)

Figure 4.10: Ordnance Survey map of Bermondsey and Wapping of 1914 (London Sheet 77 - detail)

Figure 4.11: Borough Market floral hall frontage to Stoney Street

Figure 4.12: Publicity material from 'London Bridge Quarter'

Figure 4.13: The 'Shard' by night

Figure 4.14: Figure-ground of Borough Market and surrounds

Figure 4.15: Housing elevations on Borough High Street - from Tallis's 1840 survey

Figure 4.16: From a 1948 survey by the London County Council (right)

Figure 4.17: Monmouth Coffee Store (with green canopy) corner of Stoney and Park Streets

Figure 4.18: Neal's Yard Dairy Map of the Borough Market Area

Figure 4.19: Serial vision view of the market, looking south

Figure 4.20: Serial vision view of the market, looking south

Figure 4.21: Visual examples of fine-grained local built fabric on Stoney Street

Figure 4.22: Visual examples of fine-grained local built fabric on Stoney Street

Figure 4.23: Area to the north and east of Borough High Street

Figure 4.24: Area south and east of London Bridge Station

Figure 4.25: Railway viaducts across Bedale Street

Figure 4.26: 500 metre radius ped-shed for Borough Market

Figure 4.27: Public Transport Accessibility Level Map for LB Southwark (detail)

Figure 4.28: Activity at the corner of Stoney and Park Streets

Figure 4.29: Servicing at small scale outside the Floral Hall

Figures 4.30 - 4.33: Details of the streetscape at Borough

Figure 4.34: Ordnance Survey map of Broadway Market

Figure 4.35: Detail of Rocque's map of London and the Country 10 Miles Round (1746)

Figure 4.36: Ordnance Survey map of Dalston of 1870 (London Sheet 40: Scale 1:4340)

Figure 4.37: Ordnance Survey map of Dalston of 1913 (London Sheet 40, Scale 1:4340)

Figure 4.38: Ordnance Survey map of Shoreditch of 1914 (London Sheet 51, Scale 1:4340)

Figures 4.39 and 4.40: Public housing blocks to north and east of Broadway Market

Figure 4.41: Figure-ground of Broadway Market (north orientation)

Figures 4.42 and 4.43: Mixed-use at Broadway Market

Figures 4.44 and 4.45: Views of Broadway Market looking north-east and north

Figure 4.46: 500 metre radius ped-shed for Broadway Market

Figure 4.47: Broadway Market access map (on the left)

Figure 4.48: Road closure on Broadway market (on the right)

Figure 4.49: PTAL map of LB Hackney (detail)

Figures 4.50 to 4.53: Details of Broadway Market streetscape

Figure 4.54: Ordnance Survey base map of Exmouth Market

Figure 4.55: Detail of Horwood's 1792 map

Figure 4.56: Horwood's 1819 map, detail

Figure 4.57: Stanford's map of 1862 (Sheet 7 - detail)

Figure 4.58: Ordnance Survey 1894 map of Exmouth area (London Sheet 50: Scale 1: 1430; detail)

Figure 4.59: Ordnance Survey 1914 map of Exmouth area (London Sheet 50: Scale 1: 1430; detail)

Figure 4.60: Figure-ground of Exmouth Market (oriented north)

Figure 4.61: Exmouth Market view looking north-east

Figure 4.62: Focal point, St Saviour's spire

Figure 4.63: Lack of enclosure in view from north-eastern end of Exmouth Market

Figure 4.64: 500 metre radius ped-shed for Exmouth Market

Figure 4.65: Public Transport Accessibility Level Map, LB Islington (Exmouth area to south of map)

Figures 4.66 and 4.67: Walking, cycling, and parking along Exmouth Market

Figures 4.68 and 4.69: Outdoor seating at Exmouth Market (note the coffee chains have arrived)

## **Chapter 5**

Table 5.1: Key to Borough Market Food Uses Map

Figure 5.1: Borough Market quarter (500 metre radius map)

Figure 5.2: Interior showing stall structure, prior to main roof renovation

Figure 5.3: Visitors arriving and leaving the market from Borough High Street

Figure 5.4: Physical space and social ambience in the green market

Figure 5.5: Borough Market Food Map

Figure 5.6: Borough Market Food Cluster Map

Figure 5.7: Monmouth Coffee/Stoney street corner as a focal point

## **Chapter 6**

Table 6.1: Broadway Food Map Key

Figure 6.1: Broadway Market quarter

Figure 6.2: Broadway Market newsagents selling large number of copies of The Guardian

Figure 6.3: Graffiti on the market street featuring the anarchist symbol

Figure 6.4: Browsing and strolling at Broadway Market

Figure 6.5: Strolling at Broadway Market

Figure 6.6: Eating in the street at Broadway Market

Figure 6.7: Eating in the street at Broadway Market

Figure 6.8: Art practice at Broadway

Figure 6.9: Art practice at Broadway

Figure 6.10: Street based music at Broadway Market

Figure 6.11: Street based music at Broadway Market

Figure 6.12: Broadway Market food shops and land uses

Figure 6.13: Broadway Market food stalls map

## **Chapter 7**

Table 7.1. Key to Exmouth Market Food Map

Figure 7.1: Exmouth Market food quarter

Figure 7.2: Early rounds of SRB funding paid for initial physical upgrading to the street

Figure 7.3: Farringdon 'triangle' end of Exmouth Market

Figure 7.4: Fine grained, human scaled, enclosed street space at Exmouth Market

Figure 7.5: Food Map of Exmouth Market (Black squares on the map are stalls)

## **Chapter One: Framing the food quarters**



## **Introducing the thesis aims**

This thesis explores aspects of food production, distribution and consumption as they are played out in three urban sites in London. It posits the development of emergent ‘food quarters’, centred on Borough Market, Broadway Market and Exmouth Market, and argues that each models new forms of interconnection between physical design and social processes in which food is at the core. Through the case study research, focusing on these previously run-down market places within polycentric London, the thesis explores how compact city design informs the richness of experiences of food and eating. It frames this experience within more spatially dominant approaches to city design, which appear to close off convivial food options and choices that would support urban sustainability. Yet, the work does not suggest that the rise of such food quarters is entirely unproblematic. It investigates the paradoxical relationships emerging between sustainability, urban design and social processes focused on food on the one side, and food-led gentrification on the other. It argues that relationships between the physical and the social in the three food quarters make a contribution to developing sustainable cities, by supporting and nurturing convivial food practices. Yet, the rise of new kinds of food spaces and practices at each food quarter also support and underpin gentrifying tendencies by providing a setting for individuals to play out a habitus that is socially exclusive. The overall conclusion is that food quarters act as both gentrifying sites in which to model distinction and authentic places for more unmediated conviviality in everyday life.

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 suggests that the backdrop to the food quarters’ renewal is urban development in which conviviality and sustainability are increasingly compromised (Haughton & Hunter, 2003; Frey, 1999; Brotchie & Batty et al, 1995). Recent research on the growth of obesogenic environments, the prevalence of food deserts, and a crisis of obesity in children, reflect how food often interconnects with city form in negative ways, when undertaken within a context of conventional design approaches to urban growth and renewal (Lake & Townshend, 2006; Neal, 2006; Whelan; Wrigley; Warm; & Cannings, 2002). Yet European experience also offers more positive examples of the intersection of food and cities, where walkable, food market-centred quarters typify much existing urban space. Theorists have used the term “fat city” to describe connections perceived between decisions about spatial form that contribute to sprawl and those that create the conditions for obesity (Marvin and Webb, 2007; Sui, 2003). By focusing on the way food quarters are developing in London, I develop the notion of fat cities somewhat differently. Drawing on previous research (Parham, 1998, 1996) that predates the more recent, negative use of the term, I explore the paradox of places that are at once fat in the sense of drawing on rich food resources, yet supporting forms of place-based sociability that challenge dominant ‘obesogenic’ spatial modes. Bologna, for example, is known in Italy as the *città grassa*, or fat city, because its regional cuisine is based on butter, cream, Parmegiano Reggiano, prosciutto, tagliatelle, ragù, tortellini, lasagne, and mortadella. At the same time, the research I undertook there suggests that its citizens tend to be thin and long-lived, and I speculated that this may be allied to factors including highly walkable space, convivial social patterns

that stress moderation and balance in food consumption, and a strongly-developed focus on high-quality food sourced from the peri-urban region around the city (Parham, 1998).

### **The research scope**

Like many PhD researchers, at the initial stages the proposed scope of the work was far too broad to be encompassed within a manageable thesis programme. However, it is worth very briefly revisiting those broad research interests in food and cities because they have helped to contextualise and frame the topic that, as explained in Chapter 3, finally became the focus of the primary research. Since I began to explore theoretically this research area in the late 1980s, the study of the many roles food plays in urban life has moved from the margins to become a much more central concern in a range of academic disciplines, in sociology as noted above, in geography, political economy, environmental science and related sustainability policy development, and within urban design theory and practice. Increasingly, there is research interest in the “gastronomic possibilities” of urban space (Parham, 1992: 1). Moreover, it has become clear that changes in one food sphere have results in others. Supermarket based consumption, for example, has many ripple effects along the food chain by shaping the agriculture that supports it and the food consumption patterns it determines (Eisenhauer, 2001; Bowlby, 2000). These consumption patterns in turn have profound effects on the spatiality they help configure (Lang & Heasman, 2004).

From the scale of the shared table outwards, food has transforming roles in both social and design terms in kitchens, dining rooms, gardens, and the shaping of suburbia. There are complex food issues associated with the outdoor room of the food street, and the wider public realm of food markets, cafes, “foodtainment” places (Finkelstein, 1999), foodscapes (Sobal and Wansink, 2007; Yasmeen: 2006), and the gastronomic townscape (Parham, 1992), of which food quarters are an important element. Relevant concerns also relate to the green spaces in cities connected with food production and consumption, including market gardens, allotments, orchards, street trees, and productive urban peripheries (Hinchliffe and Whatmore, 2006; Parham, 1992). Meanwhile, at a broader spatial scale, new forms of food production, exchange and consumption are associated with the fast expanding post urban realm developing around cities, which undermines the more traditional food approaches of the sustainable bio-region (Parham, 1996). All these spatial scales fit within the even wider global context of grossly unequal food relationships between the north and south, caused by a largely unsustainable modern food system (Patel, 2007; Parham, 1996; Tansey & Worsley, 1995). Thus, study of the food quarter is not simply of an isolated phenomenon “about restaurants” as one eminent sociologist suggested to me at early stages of the work. Instead it should be understood as a small part of a much bigger research field (Bell & Valentine, 1997), even though it is clearly not possible to bring all these research concerns about food in an urban context together in one thesis.

### **Why study food?**

Within sociology, studying food and eating has been until recent times at best a marginal area of enquiry (Germov and Williams, 1999; Mennell, 1991) and the relative neglect of food-related issues can be explained by a number of factors including its invisibility to sociologists as an apparently routine, everyday activity that is taken for granted (Beardsworth and Keil, 2004). Equally, this lack of interest reflects the fact that sociologists tend not to see food production and distribution processes at work (ibid). This apparent marginality is also gendered, with food strongly associated with the mundane world of female domestic labour and thus holding “little intellectual appeal to the male researchers and theorists who have historically dominated the profession” (ibid). Over the last twenty years these marginalising perspectives on food studies in sociology have begun to shift, with research on food and eating no longer seen as frivolous (Mennell, 1996), but legitimately focusing on the “meanings, beliefs and social structures giving shape to food practices in western societies” (Lupton, 1996: 1). The sociology of food and eating has become recognised not just as a legitimate sub-discipline, but central to the way boundaries between nature and culture are being rethought (Atkins and Bowler, 2001: ix). Additionally, food studies have benefited from the overall cultural turn experienced in sociology and sister disciplines in the 1990s (Ashley et al, 2004) and from renewed interest in everyday life (Zukin, 2004, 1995, 1992; Stevenson 2003) and the body (Lupton, 1996; Featherstone, 1991).

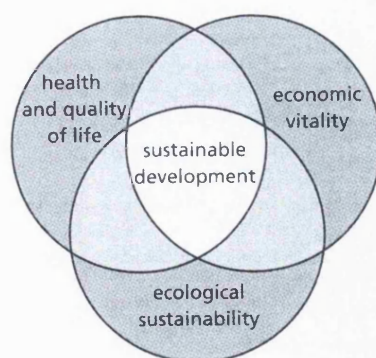
There has been some, albeit limited, focus on the spatial planning and design aspects of food in cities that is discussed in some detail in the next chapter. Zukin’s (1992, 1982) influential analysis of the parallel, connected, rise of gastronomy and gentrification in New York, however, set the tone for much of the academic debate that followed (Bell, 2007; Amin and Graham, 1997). Zukin (1982) argued that vernacular tradition and innovation were being combined in both food and architecture to produce gentrified spaces in declining urban areas which drew on a narrow range of design elements to serially reproduce marketable quarters for ‘loft living’. Discussion of gentrification - and its connections to food - cannot be avoided when exploring the way food quarters have developed. At the same time, both the research presented below and recent theoretical work demonstrates divergent perspectives on these transformations. For instance, work on spaces of consumption (Bell and Valentine, 1997) and specifically on the spatial and economic role of food market-centred areas as potential models for 21<sup>st</sup> century urbanism (Esperdy, 2002; Parham, 1992) suggests more positive possibilities. Likewise, work on convivial spatiality (Bell, 2007; Mayer and Knox, 2006), in part through Slow Food and Slow Cities (Mayer and Knox, 2006; Beatley, 2004) brings a more nuanced analysis to processes of urban change. All are discussed later in this chapter.

### **Food and urban sustainability**

The work explores aspects of the proposition that how food is grown, transported, bought, cooked and eaten presents issues with central material effects on creating a sustainable urban future. For this thesis a critical framing element is the sharply increasing level of unsustainability of urban development and the ways this is reflected in food production, distribution and consumption

(Haughton and Hunter, 2003; Hough, 1994; Stren, White and Whitney, 1992). In particular, the food issues associated with climate change have provided a context for the research into specific food places and practices in London (Taylor, Madrick and Collin, 2005). Theorists of sustainable cities argue that in environmental terms a negative feedback loop has grown up in western post-industrial cities whereby over-consumption of resources including food is matched by overproduction of waste (Rudlin and Falk, 2001). Linked back to food production and forward to food consumption, this presents a key problem for continued global sustainability in a context of massive urbanisation (Patel, 2007; Hough, 1995, 1984). Urban sprawl poses particular difficulties for food in a spatial sense: “by eating into valuable natural habitats, whilst cities also pass on their impacts, making intensive demands on the environmental resources of their hinterland areas” (Haughton and Hunter, 2003: 12). More compact approaches to urban development have been argued to slow resource use and lower impacts (Barton et al, 2003), and are discussed in Chapters 2 and 4.

Sustainability theorists have noted that ways of conceptualising urban sustainability need to transcend the limitations of a purely environmental agenda, to bring in and give sufficient weight to social and economic factors (Evans, Joas, Sundback and Theobald, 2005; Jarvis, Pratt and Cheng-Chong Wu, 2001). Thus, the trefoil diagram commonly used to describe how sustainability reflects and interconnects these aspects (reproduced as Figure 1.1) “does not imply a weak trade-off between social, economic and environmental priorities, but the need to find solutions that marry all three” (Barton et al, 2003: 5). An holistic approach to sustainability is therefore argued for in which there should be a “triple bottom line” approach, as, for example, in the London Sustainable Development Commission definition of sustainable development (Entec, 2006). The analysis of the food quarters reflects this understanding by encompassing the three interconnected and mutually supporting aspects of sustainability: social, economic and environmental, and applying such a sustainability based analysis of particular London conditions.



*Figure 1.1: The sustainability trefoil* Source: Barton, Grant and Guise (2003: 5)

Climate change impacts are accentuating food-related concerns that are explored in this thesis. At the production end of the modern food system, industrialised agriculture and its attendant high food miles

are among other effects exacerbating climate change. Climate change effects on productivity are in their turn sharpening food security concerns.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, predominant food distribution and consumption arrangements in urban areas, dominated by supermarkets, have a specific and largely negative influence on urban sustainability (Sustainable Development Commission, 2008; Cabinet Office, 2008). Food chains account for a fifth of emissions associated with the climate change effects of households' food consumption (SDC, 2008). "Meat and dairy, glasshouse vegetables, air-freighted produce, heavily processed foods and refrigeration are the main hotspots with disproportionately high levels of greenhouse gas emissions".<sup>2</sup> Moreover, in terms of social sustainability, these modern consumption arrangements are a key contributor "to obesity and diet-related disease including cancer, diabetes, heart disease and stroke" (ibid). There is growing evidence that "a healthy and seasonal diet, rich in fruit and vegetables, and containing less processed food and meat is also better for the planet, leading to lower greenhouse gas emissions and less impact on ecosystems" (ibid).

All this suggests that ease of access, in a spatial, social and economic sense, to sources of these foodstuffs is important at individual and systemic levels, yet many urban dwellers are largely cut off from such access. Rather, within an increasingly complex geography of social exclusion in cities (Musterd, Murie & Kesteloot, 2006; Andersen & Van Kempen, 2000; Madanipour, Cars & Allen, 1998; Sassen, 1991; Harvey, 1989), the adverse health effects of the modern food system include rising levels of adult and childhood obesity (Marvin and Wedd, 2006; Lopez, 2004; Sui, 2003) alongside increasing levels of stigmatisation (Sobal, in Germov and Williams, 1999). The sustainability effects of these food processes are far from spatially uniform. In the United Kingdom, national sustainability policies, for example, have not been able to check the spatially uneven distribution of food effects caused by dominant trends in urban expansion and renewal (Batchelor & Patterson, 2007). Climate change mitigation policies, which are aimed to reduce emissions from supermarket operations, have failed to sufficiently take transport issues into account. They would need to include the effects of transporting goods and the impact of planning laws on the use of cars by supermarket customers (SDC, 2008). Nor have they succeeded in instituting a low carbon economy in relation to food (ibid).

Therefore a proposition considered in this thesis is that the compact, walkable, liveable food quarter may assist in avoiding or mitigating some of the unsustainable effects of the way food relationships are played out in urban space. The decision was taken to focus on places that exhibit vernacular and traditional urban forms, broadly within a compact city model (Clos, 2005; De Roo & Miller, 2000; Jenks, 2000) because, despite recent arguments to the contrary (Bruegmann, 2005), the weight of evidence suggests they have demonstrated greater capacity to meet urban sustainability requirements than have urban forms derived from modernist traditions (Barton et al, 2000; Moughtin, 1996; Jenks,

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.pps.org/info/newsletter/Placemaking\\_in\\_a\\_Down\\_Economy/think\\_global\\_buy\\_local](http://www.pps.org/info/newsletter/Placemaking_in_a_Down_Economy/think_global_buy_local)

<sup>2</sup>

[http://www.agrifoodstandards.net/en/news/global/report\\_says\\_too\\_many\\_supermarket\\_practices\\_are\\_unhealthy\\_unjust\\_and\\_unsustainable.html](http://www.agrifoodstandards.net/en/news/global/report_says_too_many_supermarket_practices_are_unhealthy_unjust_and_unsustainable.html)

Burton, and Williams, 1996; Aldous, 1992; Barnett, 1987). In particular, as thesis findings suggest in Chapter 4, food quarters appear better configured in physical design terms than are low density, car dependent places, to deal with the need for adaptation to the climate change effects that are already apparent in London. Given the fundamental nature of urban sustainability as an organising frame for the research, Chapters 5 to 7 are structured around groupings of economic, environmental and social research material in relation to each food quarter. In Chapter 8, these three linked areas of research and analysis have been drawn together more fully, to highlight insights that have emerged from the findings, in an integrated way.

### **Food and convivial cities**

A second framing element for the thesis is the notion of the convivial city (Parham, 1993, 1992). Deriving the use of the term conviviality from Illich (1973), it is argued that sharing food together allows for a daily physical and social re-creation of the self that is also fundamental to the sense of human connection to others. Thus “the physical design of cities can determine the richness of experiences of food and eating; working for or against the expression of conviviality by the way space is shaped and urban development approached” (Parham, 1992: no page reference). Conviviality has been described as “the very nourishment of civil society itself” (Peattie, 1998: 250). Conviviality encompasses feasting, drinking and good company and also

“the opposite of industrial productivity ...to mean autonomous and creative intercourse among persons, and the intercourse of persons with their environment, and this in contrast with the conditioned response of persons to the demands made upon them by others, and by a man-made environment” (op cit, after Illich 1980: 11).

A central feature of convivial cities is the recognition of sociable pleasure taken in many purposeful activities (ibid). In the case of this thesis, these are sociable activities focused on food, directly connecting the use of the term to conviviality’s etymological origins. Another way that conviviality connects to the research is in the evanescent nature of the social energy that emerges in food-related events in the food quarters. These food-related practices create special occasions out of “the mundane materials of life” (ibid: 247); occasions as simple as buying food at the market, sharing a coffee, or enjoying a meal together. Eating and drinking together is at the heart of the notion of conviviality, and this has spatial design implications, which in turn affect the nature of social life and the formation of social groups. Such social groups are established “by eating together conviviality, and by particular forms and settings of conviviality” (Peattie, 1998: 248). As I have argued previously (Parham, 1992: 3):

“Proximity to the cafes, restaurants and markets of the centre, and the densities of people the centre attracts, allows for more chance encounters and a diversity of food and conversation. If the process of sharing food and drink excites the intellect, as well as satisfying the cravings

of the body, it is little wonder that cafes have often been the sites of polemical debate and political agitation”.

Expressions of conviviality also tend to be everyday in nature, reflecting the quotidian, and thus the thesis’s preoccupation with the making of everyday life in ways that go beyond instrumental, economic exchange. And much of the expression of this conviviality takes place in the everyday ‘third places’ (Rosenbaum, 2006; Oldenburg, 1989) between work and home, of cafes, bars, and coffee shops, which are so prevalent in the three food quarters. Both the design (about place) and the everyday (about time) facets of conviviality are explored in sections below.

Conviviality also has a strong, and at times ambivalent, relationship to economic activity. Notions of conviviality have been linked to forms of commercialisation and place marketing, with an attendant risk perceived that conviviality becomes increasingly “vestigial and episodic” through this relationship (Banerjee, 2004: 15). Thus, Banerjee (ibid) argues that place marketers show a “propensity to service conviviality needs in the form of a growing number of third places in invented streets and spaces” that act to co-opt and mystify their consumers. The spatial aspects of this argument are picked up later in this chapter. Meanwhile, Bell (2007), too, is less than sanguine about these processes, and theorises such spaces as hospitable, a term he proposes as closely related to conviviality, which is based on the use of commercialised hospitality to brand places as destinations. Thus,

“urban regeneration, place promotion and civic boosterism are using food and drink hospitality spaces as public, social sites for the production and reproduction of ways of living in and visiting cities and neighbourhoods” (ibid: 7).

As noted at the start of this introductory chapter, these arguments reflect work that suggests places to eat and drink are connected to the development of new forms of city living that gentrify previously run-down urban areas (Zukin, 1991), as well as with ‘gastro-tourism’ (Boniface, 2003; Parham, 1996). Yet these arguments only go some way in explaining the research findings from the three food quarters and similar sites elsewhere. Bell (2007: 19), for example, points out that the forms of hospitality that are being produced in such hospitable spaces are not confined solely to economic exchange, but create a kind of “hybrid hospitality” that is more authentically convivial than mere commercial transactions would allow. It is also worth noting that the development of such convivial spaces has not necessarily pushed out existing food-related uses to replace them with more commodified ones. Instead, as in a Manchester case, studied by Bell and Binnie (2005), in the food quarters a ‘convivial ecology’ has been developed that mixes and combines traditional food spaces such as cafs and eel and pie shops and newer food-related uses, including food market stalls, restaurants and delis. These are sites for what Thrift (2005) calls lighter touch forms of sociality, that allow time for the mundane moments of togetherness that pattern everyday life (Morrill *et al.*, 2005).

Thus, rather than solely reflecting explanations of the rise of such places that are rooted in class conflict (although this is certainly occurring), the research material from the food quarters also ties into arguments put forward about the Slow Food and related Slow Cities movements emanating from northern Italy, which place stress on sustainable urbanism and alternative economic strategies for local places based on food 'territories' (Knox and Mayer, 2006: 322). Slow Food promotes conviviality around food, with its proponents organising themselves into local 'convivia'. "The Slow Food movement is focused on countering the loss of local distinctiveness as it relates to food, conviviality, sense of place, and hospitality" (ibid: 322). Slow Cities meanwhile has grown from Slow Food to focus in on the spatial expression of these convivial qualities within villages and towns. While official Slow City status is conferred only up to a maximum population of 50,000, it is recognised that distinct spatial areas within larger cities could also exhibit similar qualities. Slow Cities makes explicit the linkages between convivial places and sustainability, conceptualising these connections as about economy, environment and equity, and arguing for local economic strategies that reflect the connections between food and place. At least one of the food quarters studied in this thesis has direct links to Slow Food, while a design strategy reminiscent of Slow Cities can be argued for in each quarter, and is discussed later in this chapter.

In London, primary research is yielding positive results about the development of convivial locations that place-branding arguments do not entirely explain (Maitland, 2008). Recent work has focused on the way that emerging tourism areas do not (as in previous mainstream practice) rest upon flagship development providing special attractions, but instead on the qualities of place, in particular their conviviality, that attracts visitors to previously 'undiscovered' urban areas within a polycentric city form (ibid). The three food quarters studied in the thesis are examples of this process of grounding renewal on the qualities of place, and "in these areas, tourism grew as part of a wider process of change, regeneration and gentrification, rather than through the creation of flagship attractions" (Maitland and Newman, 2004). For so-called post-tourists (Lash and Urry, 1994), or new tourists (Poon, 1993), the appeal of such places is founded on conviviality that is relatively unmediated in comparison with the more artful yet repetitive reproduction of planned tourist spaces. Again, this more sophisticated approach links to the pleasures of the everyday. As Maitland (2000: 18) says of his fieldwork subjects,

"For some of them, the exotic may be found in a move away from traditional tourist beats, and the opportunity to experience 'ordinary everyday life' rather than an extraordinary attraction or event that constitutes a 'tourism experience' in a tourist bubble".

Maitland's fieldwork results were based in part on primary research in Islington and Southwark (where two of the three thesis food quarters are also located) and found strong connections between everyday life and a sense of having a convivial experience. "For most interviewees, getting to know the city was a convivial experience — local people and local places to drink coffee or shop were important. The emphasis is on the everyday and an appreciation of the conviviality of the ordinary"



(op cit, 2008, 23). The focus on the ordinary is further discussed below in relation to studying everyday life.

Conviviality can also be seen to connect up with political activity and social activism, particularly at the human scale of the local neighbourhood (Peattie, 1998; Parham, 1992). Again, this is no coincidence. Conviviality tends to occur between people who like being together, often 'bounded' in small groupings. As Peattie (ibid: 251) says, conviviality's "natural habitat... is the bounded terrain of the likeminded". As the food quarters demonstrate, these places have become sites for political expression and action, often directly about food as the subject of activity, or because the foodscape of the quarter is found to be a sympathetic environment in which to operate. Banerjee (2004: 17) also reports from recent US experience, that not-for-profit groups are emerging to run "community improvements - from affordable housing to small business development - and thus infusing conviviality and creating third places even in poorer neighborhoods that the conventional market sees as too risky for investment". The findings from Broadway Market in particular, but also to some extent from both Borough and Exmouth demonstrate a similar process underway, in which charities and small scale community-based enterprises have taken the lead in food-led renewal. Bell (2007: 12) points out that "the ways of relating that are practised in bars, cafés, restaurants, clubs and pubs should be seen as potentially productive of an ethics of conviviality that revitalizes urban living". I would add that most notable in this revitalisation process are ways of relating convivially in the *public space* of the street and market space of the food quarters.

I should note at this point that if the research was founded on a purely sociological approach, the thesis might identify issues about making convivial places but not prescribe action. As discussed in Chapter 3, the need for reflexivity about my own views is acknowledged. It is notable, however, in cited work on conviviality how many theorists conclude by making proposals for implementing policies in support of more convivial places. I therefore make no apology for doing the same. As mentioned at the start of the chapter, I have argued previously that,

"opportunities for conviviality in the city rely upon an extended set of gastronomic possibilities. And these possibilities can be widely conceived in city planning and design. They relate as much to kitchen layout as to market gardening, to the psychology of the cafe as to policy for metropolitan growth (Parham, 1992: 1).

Moreover, I suggested that such opportunities for conviviality could be enhanced by urban design choices that support gastronomic strategies for cities (Parham, 1992). Thus, although "conviviality cannot be coerced,... it can be encouraged by the right rules, the right props, and the right places and spaces. These are in the realm of planning" (Peattie, 1998: 248). It may be that a hybrid form of hospitality might well be developed for both theorising about and making more convivial places in future (Bell, 2007).

## **Food and everyday life**

This thesis is a study of everyday life. It explores the interconnectedness of social and physical aspects of the everyday, as they are played out through food. At the same time, food is more than simply a language or a sign of something else. Food is viewed as a fundamental, material part of urban culture, which in turn is seen as a legitimate field for study (Simmel, 1903). The thesis is preoccupied with the interconnection between time, space and everyday life (Lefebvre, 1991, 1974) in that it considers the primary research material in the light of the notion that recurrent material practices shape space-time. Just as De Certeau, Giard and Mayol (1998) describe and analyse spatial practices with reference to food in their study of the Croix-Rousse neighbourhood in Lyon, the socio-spatial practices of place-users in Borough, Broadway and Exmouth Market areas have been closely studied to explore how that shaping of space over time takes place through food relationships. This is, says Luce Giard (1998, xxxv), about “the creative activity of those in the practice of the ordinary” and encompasses the aesthetic experience of the food market, with its capacity for sight, touch and smell. The thesis material suggests that food both shapes place and is shaped by it.

The research has shown that these three food quarters create more than just a “simple material product” (Lefebvre, 1991: 101). Rather than functioning as merely space for consumption, they provide room for “specific social needs to be met” (Lefebvre, 1991: 101). The food quarters can be argued to help to expose the mystification operating in much of everyday life, in which plenitude, represented by increasing consumption, is mistaken for real human richness (ibid). Consumption certainly occurs at the food quarters, but they also work as “places of simultaneity and encounters, places where exchange would not go through exchange value” (ibid). Thus, Lefebvre’s work has been useful to the thesis in bringing not only an acknowledgement of the role of consumption and a sense of the spatial to the study of everyday life, but a desire to support places where human interaction is not solely predicated on money based exchange.

Meanwhile, Bourdieu’s (1984) notion of the habitus discussed at length in the next chapter also offers some insights in relation to the research material. It not only helps to frame the way individual behaviour supports the food quarters’ day-to-day life but opens up areas that are more problematic, especially those relating to gentrification. At the same time, some issues with applying Bourdieu’s theoretical framework uncritically have been identified. This may be too static and fixed a concept to be entirely helpful in explaining the dynamism evident in the practices of everyday life (Mennell, 1992). A more poststructuralist approach, emphasising “contingency over structure in explaining outcomes” (Fainstein, in Miles, Hall and Borden, 2000: 145), has helped to map the way spatial practices in everyday life shift over time and space. The food quarters provide a number of examples in which that sense of identification seems to be occurring, based on shared aims and values in relation to food and sociability, rather than as ways of claiming distinction by differentiating and excluding. Linking ideas about taste to the notion of conviviality, Bell (2007; 19) points out that,

“Commensality is not always a disguise for competitions over taste and status; it can also be about social *identification*, the sharing not only of food and drink but of world-views and patterns of living”.

Research in the food quarters demonstrates a range of social practices being undertaken in which food plays a central or substantial part. These social practices are based in the routine encounters and shared experiences of small urban spaces (Gehl, 1996; Whyte, 1980), that include walking, browsing, shopping, eating, talking, making art practice, doing community politics and tourist visiting. All of these practices both reflect the structured patterns of a number of individuals’ *habitus*’, yet some show examples of dynamism and change. At each food quarter this is especially clear in the development of new forms of social practice in relation to food distribution and consumption. Equally clearly, not everyone is experiencing the food quarters in the same way. While not wishing to overplay or make rigid demarcations along the lines of race, class and gender, it is evident that substantial issues around class, in particular, are being played out in the food quarters, often directly through food. At each quarter, the study of social practices raises issues in relation to class, broadly in the context of regeneration and gentrification, and of tradition and modernity, with food a key area of contestation. Studying social practices in relation to food has acted as a way in to understanding each quarter as a regenerating space. While regeneration has been a paradoxical social process, giving rise to both positive and negative effects on the three food quarters as social spaces, the positive effects on everyday life seem to have predominated.

### **Social space, physical space and food**

Another way of looking at the everyday in relation to food is through the design of place, and the thesis crosses discipline boundaries in order to make connections between social and physical space, in part through urban design analysis. This is because a central concern is whether, and if so, how, the design of physical form may shape the social construction of space in regard to food. So, as well as reflecting theoretical areas that fall within mainstream sociology, the thesis draws on theory and research methods from urban design, including identification of design elements (Carmona, 2003; Moughtin, 2003; Hayward & McGlynn, 1993; Jacobs, 1993; Broadbent, 1990; Bentley et al., 1985; Bacon, 1982; Alexander, 1977; Lynch, 1985, 1961) and master planning analysis (Urban Design Compendium, 2007, 2000). Urban design characteristics and elements of space are described in Chapter 2, methods discussed in Chapter 3, and form the basis for design analysis of the food quarters in Chapters 4 to 8.

As pointed out earlier in the chapter, the study of the food quarters has a very distinct spatial design backdrop at the broad level of the city region, of the rapid, and largely unsustainable, development, expansion and renewal of urban space (Hayden, 2004; Gillham, 2002). This is, in the main, within a design idiom of separation of land uses, and in a context of relatively low density, car-dependent growth (Dreier, Mollenkopf & Swanstrom, 2004), in which commodified malls and shopping centres

are the predominant foodscapes. Fat city and Slow City inflected design, instead creates ‘ordinary places’ in keeping with the European city model. This presents both a distinct break with post-war urban design experience, and a challenge to this dominant design mode, as it brings some of its shortcomings into stark relief. Predicated on human-scaled, highly mixed, walkable and fine-grained urbanism, the food quarter’s location is generally found in traditional urban fabric but its elements are capable of being built into new areas too. Clearly, the food quarter is not the only model of a more sustainable approach to city design occurring in the UK, but it is currently unique in connecting urban design to pressing food sustainability issues and opportunities for increased conviviality.

Yet, while urban designers and architects referenced in Chapter 4 are conscious to varying degrees of the significant role urban design plays in the food quarters, place-users tend to describe physical design or form in much vaguer terms. Understandably, they mostly focus on how places feel or look rather than seeking to analyse what design qualities the food quarters may have which would lead to that atmosphere. However, the many observations and interviews undertaken as part of the research demonstrate that place-users’ social practices in the food quarters are closely tied to the physical shape of these everyday spaces. As noted above, an important backdrop to this thesis therefore is recent work that has coalesced around the design of “ordinary places” (Knox, 2005: 1). It appears that ordinary settings like those found at the three food quarters, can help develop slow places in a fast changing world (Mayer and Knox, 2006; Knox, 2005). They do so by giving attention to design “strategies for local economic vitality that contribute to more equality and community stability” (ibid) and this, in turn, relates to their role as food places. Through these attributes, the three food quarter demonstrate a strong sense of place, and as Knox (2005: 1) suggests,

“Central to good urban design is the capacity of the built environment to foster a positive sense of place in the ordinary places that provide the settings for people’s daily lives. Sense of place is always socially constructed, but in ordinary places—physical settings that do not have important landmarks or major symbolic structures—the social construction of place is especially important”.

## **Structure of the thesis**

This thesis comprises eight chapters. Following this introduction, setting out framing elements for the research, the next two chapters cover the theoretical and methodological basis for the research, and the subsequent five chapters then encompass different aspects of the research and analysis process and findings.

Chapter 2 begins by briefly dealing with the inadequacies of normative sociobiological and nutritional approaches to food. It then moves on to consider pertinent theoretical material about both city form and food practices from social anthropology, geography, the growing field of food sociology, and urban sociology. Within sociology, it explores the limitations of functionalism and structuralism and

yet argues for retaining some structuralist perspectives. It is suggested that while urban design theory tends to be applied as a set of qualities or elements to be unreflexively achieved in urban space, its practice does reflect insights into the physical shaping of cities that can be linked back to empirical research and thus retain validity in exploring socio-spatial practices around food. Likewise, perspectives from political economy focusing on regeneration and gentrification are drawn upon to enrich the analysis of food quarters as transforming urban spaces.

Chapter 3 then explores the methods used to research the thesis topic and first it considers at some length the use of case study methods, and issues with that approach. Next it explores methods considered for use in both the social and spatial sides of the research within the framing device of the case study. The four main research methods that were chosen on the basis of their suitability for the nature of the research are outlined and discussed. The strengths and weaknesses of these methods: semi-structured interviewing, unstructured observation, morphological analysis and urban design investigations, including food mapping, are explored. Arguments are made to support the use of design investigations in a sociological context. The techniques used to collect and analyse research material are defined, with an emphasis on the way transparent connections between data and findings have been established. The process by which three fieldwork sites in London were chosen from a longer list of urban quarters in the UK and mainland Europe is then explained and the chosen sites are described. Salient aspects of the research plan are then explained. The chapter concludes with a summary of key methodological points that have been covered.

Chapters 4 to 8 present the research material and analysis from the case study research, first covering morphological and urban design findings, then moving on to consider the food quarters site by site. Chapter 4 deals primarily with spatiality and thus incorporates the master planning methods and morphological investigations that have been made into each of the food quarters. Together the data from these investigations helps delineate the three quarters, and assists in the analysis of their physical conditions. The chapter also acts as a foundation for the exploration and analysis of the relationship between physical design and social practices within each of the quarters, which is then presented in Chapters 5 to 8. Data sources for Chapter 4 include visual records based on site observations, and research material from relevant map and archival collections at the British Library, the City of London Guildhall Library and the London Metropolitan Archive. There is a short reminder about the methodological basis to the kinds of master planning methods that are considered most suitable for exploring the physical form and condition of the quarters. Then, in the subsequent sections of Chapter 4 the methods are worked through with reference to each of the sites in turn: Borough, Broadway and Exmouth Markets and their surrounding areas and catchments. Chapter 4 concludes with a short section drawing out key findings from each of the site analyses, and where appropriate, makes comparisons between quarters and research themes. Particular emphasis is given to the relationship between physical and social space that is explored in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 5 focuses on the results from primary research conducted at Borough Market and its surroundings. Of the three food quarters under study, it is suggested that the Borough Market area constitutes the most fully realised urban food quarter. As set out in Chapter 1, the case study work of Chapters 5 to 7 is refracted through the lens of the sustainable city. Thus in Chapter 5 the data is structured around the economic, environmental and social role of the Borough Market quarter. The findings and initial conclusions in Chapter 5 rely on a number of research data collection methods, explained in detail in Chapter 3. In summary, these methods comprise semi-structured interviews, of varying lengths, with experts and place users, with architects, market trustees, food traders and visitors. Second, there are field notes and photographs taken from informal observational visits over a three-year period up to June 2008. Third, as a subset of the second method, there are a series of 'head counts' used to distinguish various social practices over a typical Thursday to Saturday trading period, in September 2007. Fourth, there is material from food mapping of the market and surrounding spaces undertaken in June 2008. The substantive sections begin with consideration of the food quarter as an economic space, then its exploration in environmental terms, and finally interrogation as a space for social practice. For each section, the chapter draws on the findings from the methods noted above and begins to connect this to relevant framing theories. The end-of-chapter analysis and tentative conclusions prefigure the lengthier discussion in the final chapter, Chapter 8, where all three sites are considered together, and their connections to relevant theory further analysed.

Chapter 6 explores aspects of the relationship between economic, social, and environmental practices and physical space design, this time at the Broadway Market quarter. Broadway Market appears poised between the fully realised food quarter of Borough (the subject of Chapter 5) and the emergent quarter of Exmouth, discussed in the next chapter (Chapter 7). Again, the fieldwork data is presented with the political economy of the quarter examined first, followed by discussion of its urban design character, the environmental aspects of its operation as a market, and then observed socio-spatial practices. While material about the interplay between physical and social space is predominantly taken from direct fieldwork observations, mapping and interviews, primary source data is augmented by local place users', activists' and artists' commentaries, drawn from online sites. These secondary sources are supported by a small amount of other material, gathered from recent journal articles and press reports, where these help contextualise the primary data. Unlike the last chapter, there is no comparative 'head count' data, as Broadway only operates as a market on Saturdays.

Chapter 7 explores food-related aspects of the economic, environmental and social life of the Exmouth Market quarter, providing a comparable range of research material to Chapters 5 (on Borough) and 6 (on Broadway), and following a broadly similar structure for its presentation and analysis. The discussion again draws on fieldwork interviews, informal observations and mapping, augmented by online commentary and press reports. As in the other fieldwork chapters, the material is refracted through a sustainability prism. While the social and economic aspects of sustainability receive substantial attention, there is little direct data gathered about Exmouth's environmental performance. While interviewees tend not to explicitly refer to these issues at Exmouth,

environmental concerns are implicit in many of their views. As in the previous two chapters, the narrative of decline and food-led regeneration is a major theme. The Exmouth Market quarter has been regenerated as a food space even more recently than the two other quarters, and demonstrates many similarities, including the urban design qualities of a particular kind of traditional city form. As at Borough, Exmouth has become a food space based on high-quality, artisanal foods. As at Broadway, the communities of interest within the site's catchment are quite diverse and there are some examples of conflict between long-term working class residents and newer, more middle class arrivals. Unlike either Borough or Broadway, Exmouth's revived market has become predominantly a 'slow food' food court rather than a fully-fledged street market. Like Broadway Market, food-based uses are a focus for some contention.

Chapter 8 draws conclusions about the three London food quarters from the research material. These conclusions are explored in the light of the study's research propositions as defined in Chapter 1 and the theoretical framework in Chapter 2. It will be remembered that the thesis focuses on what is argued to be the development of food-centred place design and regeneration, leading to the emergence of urban food quarters. These quarters are based on existing food spaces, but represent a break from the past, as they seem to show the interplay of distinctively new combinations of socio-spatial practices with largely pre-existing physical design features. Their development is situated theoretically and materially as in distinct contrast to obesogenic sprawl and food deserts that typify the spatiality of much urban development elsewhere. Each is some way to becoming a fully realised food quarter, with Borough furthest along this trajectory. Chapter 8 attempts to review why the food-centred spaces of the food quarters manage to operate as both sites for gentrification and as more convivial, gastronomically rich and sustainable places for making everyday life.

## **Chapter Two: Contextualising the food quarters**



## **Introduction to the research framework**

Chapter 2 provides a theoretical backdrop and framework to the empirical research carried out at three food quarters in London. Information about these food quarters and methods used to explore them are contained in Chapter 3, and the results are presented and analysed in Chapters 4 to 8. As explained in Chapter 1, the thesis concerns aspects of the relationship between city form and social, economic and environmental practices around food. This chapter provides a theoretical context for that exploration. It begins by briefly dealing with sociobiological and nutritional approaches to food. It then moves on to consider pertinent theoretical material about both city form and food practices from social anthropology, geography, the growing field of food sociology, and urban sociology. Within sociology, it explores some of the limitations of functionalism and structuralism while retaining some structuralist perspectives.

The research seeks to apply spatial thinking to the study of food and city form, with particular reference to field work in London. It posits a theoretical gap between food sociology on the one hand and urban sociology on the other, with the latter seen to be curiously aspatial insofar as it touches on material, physical design. It is argued that more can be done to connect food and urban space in meaningful theoretical and empirical ways, at a variety of scales, from city region wide to local area, through study of market-centred spaces as one locus for the food system. In so doing, the notion of socio-spatial practices, as explored by Lefebvre (1991, 1974), Soja (2000, 1993, 1989) and de Certeau (1998, 1984), is suggested to be a useful theoretical construct through which to review the research material. Equally Bourdieu's (1984) notion of the habitus provides a helpful frame for exploring the nature of individual behaviour at the food quarters as spaces of consumption, while Elias's (1982, 1978) work on civilising appetites helps to situate that food related behaviour. Additionally, insights from Butler (2007, 2006), Butler with Robson (2001), and Webber (2007) are all useful in connecting the habitus to spatialised aspects of gentrification.

Perspectives are drawn from urban sociology, insofar as they deal with the transformations in city space, especially since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These are explored as a frame for the focus on spaces defined as food quarters. Arguing that food practices have at least contributed to the shaping of the spatiality of the city, the chapter then connects food and urban sociological approaches with those from urban design and political economy. The role of urban design elements in the design of urban quarters is explored, with arguments made that food quarters share various design qualities with the traditional European urban quarter. These urban design qualities – in part embodied in the European City Model – not only provide a context for socio-spatial practices around food that in turn contribute to conviviality and sustainability, they may also influence those practices in significant ways. It is suggested that while urban design theory tends to be applied unreflexively (Hayward and McGlynn, 2002), its practice does reflect insights into the physical shaping of cities that can be linked back to empirical research and thus retain validity in exploring food practices. Likewise, perspectives

from sociology and political economy, focusing on regeneration, gentrification and spaces of consumption, are drawn upon to enrich the analysis of food quarters as transforming urban spaces.

### **Relevant theoretical approaches to food and eating**

#### *Nutrition and socio-biology*

Before turning to sociological approaches which directly inform the arguments put in this thesis, a brief review of dominant theoretical perspectives on food, of nutrition and socio-biology, will be helpful as these have strongly shaped understanding of food and eating. They act as a supposedly common sense view of food that needs to be cleared away as a basis for the construction of a more rigorous, empirically based theoretical frame to the study. Nutritional or socio-biological perspectives have traditionally dominated research into eating practices (Lupton, 1996). These take a highly instrumental view that relates habits and preferences to the anatomical functioning of the body. Sociobiologists argue that humans are “naturally” programmed to prefer foods that are physiologically good for us; and this programming is largely based on genetic predispositions (Falk: 1991). Nutritionists, meanwhile, are concerned with food in terms of its physiological effects on the body, defining the perfect diet for optimum health, and providing prescriptions to that end (Khare: 1980). Indeed, nutritional approaches have increasingly influenced food manufacturing and common understandings of the nature of food in recent years, and we have seen the related rise of “functional foods” and “nutraceuticals” (Pollan, 2008; Lang: 2003; 1997). For both disciplines, food preferences, tastes and cultural habits are of secondary or marginal concern. However, even in such an apparently biologically based understanding of what is edible and what inedible, what is *culturally* determined as edible or inedible is not simply determined by, or a function of, the wisdom of the body based on metabolic processes and nutritional efficiency (Falk: 1991). In fact “any given culture will typically reject as unacceptable a whole range of potentially nutritious items or substances while often including other items of dubious nutritional value” (Beardsworth & Keil, 1997: 51).

Nutritional and sociobiological approaches appear unable to deal sufficiently rigorously with the dynamic nature of food tastes, preferences and habits over time. Moreover, they have difficulty in coming to grips with the implied issues relating to differences in demonstrated preferences between cultures, ethnicities, genders, ages, classes, and, for the purposes of this thesis, *places* in terms of food. A number of disciplines have noted the weakness of these approaches in conveying aspects of meaning in relation to food and eating, and perspectives from anthropology are first considered in this respect. Durkheim and Spencer appear to be the earliest social theorists to look seriously at food, and some of their preoccupations were taken up by anthropology (Germov and Williams, 1999).

#### *Anthropological perspectives*

Anthropologists recognise the role of biological needs but share considerable territory with sociologists in that they are primarily concerned with the symbolic nature of food and eating practices. They acknowledge the role played by biological needs and food availability, but by elucidating the effect of cultural mores, demonstrate that food practices are “far more complex than a simple nutritional or biological perspective would allow” (Lupton, 1996: 7). It is not surprising that food is a central concern for social anthropologists given their preoccupation with studying small scale, local social systems, often in traditional societies. A key point, given the thesis preoccupation with the ordinary and everyday, is that food is central to framing everyday life:

“Looking at traditional society in this holistic fashion virtually demands that some attention be paid to the processes involved in producing, distributing, preparing and consuming food since these make up a complex of activities which provides the whole framework of life on a daily and a seasonal basis” (Beardsworth & Keil, 2004: 3).

Three theoretical loci have been identified for this work: “food as a sociocultural context for illustrating the logic and principles of different cultural systems”; “food as a mediating material and moral system within societies”; and “food as a set of nutriments representing the overlapping work of biological and cultural systems in human societies” (Khare, 1980: 525). Anthropological focus on food has famously treated food practices as a language that exemplifies sets of binary oppositions between nature and culture, raw and cooked, and food and non-food in human life, with particular attention to the transformations argued to be occurring from nature to culture through cooking (Lévi-Strauss: 1969, 1958). While Lévi-Strauss recognised that taste is culturally shaped and socially controlled, as with other structuralist theorists, he was weaker when it came to changes in taste over time. The notion of food loci, theorised in a more spatialised manner, is considered later in this chapter.

#### *Insights from social geography and cultural studies*

Social geography and cultural studies, meanwhile, have been more recent entrants in the field of food studies and have introduced aspects of the study of identity, consumption and place to the discussion of food and eating. Again, the nutritional aspects of food and eating are deemed inadequate to explain the social, cultural and symbolic meanings of food. Rather, “In a world in which self-identity and place-identity are woven through webs of consumption, what we eat (and where, and why) signals... who we are” (Bell and Valentine, 1997: 3). Equally, food is understood in relation to a range of important cultural processes including those of production and regulation, as well as identity and consumption (Ashley et al, 2004: preface). Food is conceptualised as having a life story that is defined as a cultural phenomenon. This in turn represents “a circuit of culture” in which the above named cultural processes all play a part (Jackson, 1992; Johnson, 1986). At least implicitly, there is a spatial character to this theorising of food, with consideration of shopping, eating in, and eating out, among other activities, but tantalisingly this is not developed or elucidated in a fully spatialised manner.

A critical point to be drawn from this brief survey is that understanding of food cannot be successfully reduced to simply its nutrient or biological role. Food has strong cultural meanings that can change over time and place. Food is central to everyday life and increasingly to the construction of human identity (Warde, 1997; Fischler, 1988) and attitudes to the body (Lupton, 1996). It is also evident that food and eating have become progressively more an interdisciplinary concern. Recent interest in food seems to be “the product of a particular cultural enthusiasm” that cuts across disciplinary boundaries commonly known as the cultural turn (Ashley et al, 2004: preface). This thesis reflects food’s interdisciplinary vitality as it traverses aspects of sociological, geographical, political economic and urban design theory.

### **Food and sociological research**

#### *Moving from the margins*

I next turn to a brief review of sociological approaches to food, as it is from these perspectives that some of the key arguments relevant to the thesis are drawn. The survey above reinforces the view that greater attention has been paid to food within anthropology, social geography and cultural studies, than is evident within sociological literature until recent times, when it has moved closer to the sociological mainstream (Warde and Martens, 2000; Warde, 1997). It is possible to speculate that the take up and study of food related issues by other professions and academic disciplines might have reinforced sociology’s comparative lack of interest in the area (Beardsworth & Keil, 2004: 2). However, sociologists, like anthropologists and geographers, conceptualise food in quite distinct and more convincing ways than either nutritionists or socio-biologists, insofar that they attempt to place food within the social relations that produce it.

Within sociology food has become a legitimate area for enquiry in which at least two major traditions can be discerned. Growing in part out of functionalist anthropological and from linguistic perspectives, the structuralist approaches of sociologists including Bourdieu (1984), and the semiologist Barthes (1972), have influenced more recent work on taste, dining out (Finkelstein, 1989; Warde and Martens, 1998) and the way they interconnect with consumption (Warde; 1997). Meanwhile, historical sociologists (Mennell, 1996, 1992; Symons, 1998, 1982) have built on Norbert Elias’s (1982, 1978) legacy to pursue a materialist approach to food, while others (Valentine, 1998; Visser, 1997, 1993, 1986) reflect Elias’s “civilising” arguments by exploring aspects of eating including table manners, food customs, and eating in the street. It seems that there are broadly two routes through which food related issues have made their way into mainstream sociology. The first is through the analysis of food production and consumption in order to deal with issues of differentiation. These tend to

“illuminate existing sociological preoccupations....Thus the analysis of patterns of food allocation and consumption has been used very effectively to illustrate the ways in which the underlying dimensions of social differentiation (gender, age and class, for example) manifest themselves in the experiences of everyday life” (Beardsworth & Keil, 1997: 5).

The second route demonstrates food-based topics becoming ends in themselves, with specific questions being asked about how food is obtained, selected, shared, and eaten, and sociological methods then applied to these questions. This thesis encompasses both, as I explore aspects of differentiation and specific food questions related to production, distribution and consumption. From these sociological bases I consider themes including the interconnections with the physical shaping of space, and dimensions of social differentiation as manifest through food practices observed at fieldwork sites. Buying, selling and eating food is at an intersection point between a range of processes that are “physiological, psychological, ecological, economic, political, social, and cultural... [and] such intersections present social science with some of their most intriguing questions and challenges” (Beardsworth & Keil, 1997: 6). Thus the research requires that boundary crossing occur *within* sociology as a discipline, as well as borders between sociology and other disciplines. Food-related research findings from historical sociology (Mennell, 1996; Elias, 1994) are used to enrich insights gained from urban sociology (Savage, Warde and Ward, 2003; Gottdeiner, 1994) while theoretical insights from urban design, geography and political economy add to both the food and the urban sides of the research topic.

#### *The impact of functionalist and structuralist theories on food*

It is difficult to study food issues sociologically without reviewing relevant functionalist and structuralist theories, as they have had a powerful influence on the way both sociology, and its sister discipline social anthropology (Mennell, Murcott and Van Otterloo, 1992; Goody, 1982) have approached food analysis. Sociologists and anthropologists who take a structuralist perspective reflect structuralism’s roots in linguistics whereby the deep structure or form of language is of more interest than its content (Ashley et al, 2004; de Saussure, 1916). Thus, structuralists “tend to view food practices and habits as if they were linguistic texts with inherent rules to be exposed. The aim of such research is predominantly to explore the uses to which food is put as part of social life” (Lupton, 1996; 8).

Meanwhile, a second major influence on the development of structuralism in relation to food is the work of the semiologist Roland Barthes (1972) and his followers who have attempted to define a code or grammar underlying food. For Barthes, food items are also items of information, and foods are signs in a system of communication. In Barthes’ view, food objects and practices tend to have “apparently natural or commonsense meanings” attached to them and in this way food is seen as central to other forms of social behaviour (Ashley et al, 2004: 5). Examples from Barthes’ work

provide connotations around a number of foods that are supposed to convey a particularly dense range of meanings relating to health and sickness, social class and even nationalism.

A valuable insight from Barthes is the centrality of food to other forms of social behaviour, closely tying it to modernity and hinting at its spatiality. Barthes describes eating as a behaviour that “develops beyond its own ends” so that it replaces, sums up, and signals other behaviours (Barthes, 1997: 25). He argues that many situations are expressed through food, including “activity, works, sport, effort, leisure, celebration... We might almost say that this ‘polysemia’ of food characterises modernity” (ibid). At the same time, Barthes was very specifically talking about the contemporary food system and expected to be able to derive his food grammar without reference to history. Mennell (1996: 12) complains that Barthes treats the past simply as quarry for mining “potent meanings” but not “in any systematic way in order to understand a society’s grammar of food”. Barthes is compared to Lévi-Strauss in tending to “draw constantly on ‘commonsense’, taken-for-granted historical knowledge, not always of a very accurate sort” (ibid). This suggests that theoretical insights from Barthes should be approached with some caution in considering food’s role in everyday life.

#### *Bourdieu and the habitus*

Bourdieu (1984), meanwhile, links taste in food to social stratification to the notion of the habitus, which he elaborates in a number of contexts. Bourdieu (1993: 86) explains that the “habitus, as the word implies, is that which one has acquired, but which has become durably incorporated in the body in the form of permanent dispositions....something like a property, a capital. And indeed, the habitus is a capital, but one which, because it is embodied, appears as innate.” Bourdieu goes on to say that the habitus differs from a repetitive habit in that it is “powerfully generative....a product of conditionings which tends to reproduce the objective logic of those conditionings while transforming it. It is a kind of transforming machine that leads us to reproduce the social conditions of our production, but in a relatively unpredictable way” (ibid). Elsewhere Bourdieu draws out the “collective or transindividual” nature of the habitus in order to “construct classes of habitus, which can be statistically characterised” (2000: 157). Thus the concept of the habitus, while embodied, describes aspects of taste, behaviour and consumption “which coalesce to create flexible, rather than rigid categories of class, ‘taking account of different concentrations of economic and cultural capital’” (Valentine, in Fyfe, 1998: 196). In food terms, Bourdieu has been criticised for the perceived ahistoricity and lack of dynamism in the approach. First, his snapshot of class stratification around food in France is not thought to justify Bourdieu’s argument that only superficial change is possible (Goody, 1982: 31). Second, the attempt to find a fixed code that underlies people’s behaviour would be worthwhile if the code “enabled us to predict a hitherto unknown surface structure” (Mennell, 1992: 13). However,

“in practice there is no adequate way in which this programme could be carried out. Therefore, because the deep structure is derived from surface elements alone and is

unknowable without them, it is meaningless to discuss one as expressing the other, except in a circular, Pickwickian sense” (ibid).

Bourdieu (2000: 166) answers the first strand of this critique by arguing that the “habitus changes constantly in response to new experiences”, undercutting the view that it is entirely an ahistorical, fixed characterisation, yet also pointing to its durability. He suggests instead

“the adjustments that are constantly required by the necessities of adaption to new and unforeseen situations may bring about durable transformations of the *habitus*, but these will remain within certain limits, not least because the *habitus* defines the perception of the situation that determines it” (1993: 87).

The various structuralisms share a valuable sense that meaning is not wholly a private experience. It is only insofar as they focus on an underlying ‘grammar’ and the prohibition of change (Ashley et al, 2004) that there may be some limits on their usefulness in relation to this thesis, where sites undergoing rapid transformations socially and spatially are being scrutinised. On the one hand the habitus helps to denote the different class positions of place users and demonstrates the high levels of social capital being formed and expressed there through the particular social practices of individuals. On the other hand, no claims are being made that the observed social practices reflect any kind of deep underlying structure with its own unchanging rules. In other words, the notion of the habitus goes some way to help explain site user behaviour but may not sufficiently capture issues of change and transformation in socio-spatial relationships, related to food as an aspect of everyday life, that are also evident at the food quarters. At the same time, work connecting the habitus and gentrification, discussed later in this chapter, starts to make more meaningful connections between individual behaviour and spatial change.

### *Civilising appetites and the gaze*

Another area of sociological enquiry that begins to deal with place-based aspects, reflects theorists following Norbert Elias (1994, 1982), who argue for development of our relationship to food to be understood as connecting in various ways to the civilising of appetites, over time, and across race, class and gender. Elias traces the historical development of the notion of civility and contends that food plays a central role in the process by which behaviour is over time deemed acceptable or unacceptable in public space. Elias suggests that in the Middle Ages the presentation of self was not limited in terms of public eating, belching, spitting, defecation or other activities now frowned on (although spitting seems to be largely exempt from this social policing in contemporary London). Elias shows how a gradual top-down shift occurred in acceptable public behaviour including in relation to food. Social rules of public self-restraint worked their way down social ranks until they became part of normative everyday behaviour, now widely taken for granted. The transition from traditional to modern food systems, as described below, is posited as having had an important impact

in the process of civilising appetites (Mennell, Murcott and van Otterloo: 1992) culminating in “the development of notions of self-restraint, embarrassment and shame” (Valentine, 1998: 193).

Of particular interest in relation to the thesis topic is how the custom of civilised eating serves to regulate the boundary between public and private space. Eating in public can be considered uncivilised (Valentine, 1998: 193) as demonstrating a lack of self-control. Rather, it “betokens enslavement to the belly” (Kass, 1994: 189). Eating in public may even be likened to indecent exposure, whereas, to paraphrase Rudofsky (1980), eating at the table makes the sight of mastication bearable. Moreover, a composed meal at the table requires more sophisticated judgement about the taste of the food and the pace of its consumption than does eating in the street, as well as offering an opportunity for sociability (Parham, 1990; Visser, 1987). Thus, in Elias’s terms, table-bound eating is a part of civilising appetites. All of this somewhat problematises the public eating that can be observed at the food quarters, and again the split between the public and the private is important:

“In addition to articulating a nature/culture dichotomy, taboos about eating on the street also articulate a particular understanding of ‘public’ and ‘private’. The street may be a site of consumption but only a particular disembodied form of consumption is civilised – tomato sauce dripping down the chin is not an appropriate public spectacle” (Valentine, 1998: 195).

These taboos about what is suitable eating behaviour in public space become interiorised. For example, it has been suggested that the tendency towards informalisation in relation to food “requires increased *self*-discipline on the part of ordinary people: if shared formal rules no longer constrain people, then the predictable orderliness of much interaction among strangers must be governed by a strong sense of individual self-control” (Wouters, 1986, quoted in Warde and Martens, 1998: 152). Foucault (1977: 155) argues that the “inspecting” gaze as a means of disciplinary power “plays an important role in producing appropriate public bodily performances” in which each individual becomes his or her own overseer “exercising surveillance over and against himself” (ibid: 155). Thus, fear of the public gaze – being seen to eat in public – “has served to put a moral brake on the pleasures of street food for many potential consumers” (Valentine, 1998, 195). The role of the gaze also appears to link the notion of civilising of appetites with that of the habitus, in that the ritual of polite behaviour on the street is part of the appropriate performance of self, and denotes marks of distinction. Taste is embodied and eating on the street is not in good taste; rather it is ‘common’.

How then can food quarters be seen as ‘civilised’ places? As conceptualised in this thesis food quarters are primarily public spaces given over to food in all its sensual abundance, but also sites that sit within social norms that have developed to suggest public food consumption can be a source of shame and disgust to self and others. It may be that the food market and environs is one of those culturally sanctioned outdoor spaces that is exempt from the construction of eating as a private activity that is normatively seen as uncivilised in public (Valentine, 1998). This relates to social changes in the image of the street to one that Valentine (ibid: 198) calls the “self-indulgent street”.



The argument runs that as the pace of life increases, and work demands grow, people appear to have less time for civilised, slow dining and instead more often eat on the run. As Warde (1999) has noted, so called “convenience foods” provide “a provisional response to intransigent problems of scheduling everyday life”, and although referring to pre-prepared foods taken home to eat, the timing issue he raises remains pertinent. Snacking in the street, on food bought outside the home, becomes ubiquitous. With increasing commodification of food and anonymous eating among strangers, comes a decline in “the social stigma of responding to bodily demands for food with instant gratification” (Valentine: 1998, 200). The codes of fast food have taken over from those of civilised dining. Food courts as their spatial expression present the paradoxical development of ‘slow’ fast food, while movements such as Slow Food and Cittaslow, discussed in Chapter 1 in relation to sustainability and conviviality, attempt to combat these developments.

### **The food system**

I next turn to theoretical areas that have been loosely grouped together under the rubric of “the food system” as I suggest it is useful to consider food production, distribution and consumption patterns at the fieldwork sites “in terms of their historical evolution in particular contexts of economy and the exercise of power” (Atkins & Bowler, 2001: 4). Change in the broader food system can thus inform the focused analysis of the food quarters. For example, various theorists have traced particular food commodities to explicate how global economic systems around food operate, and to explore their in-built inequalities and deleterious environmental effects (Kurlansky, 2002; Schlosser, 2001; Atkins and Bowler, 2001, 1997; Mintz, 1985; Goody, 1982; Salaman, 1949). While such food chain patterns have been conceptualised as a food system, this should not be assumed to exhibit any functionalist-style, well thought-out, formally organised plan or scheme underlying food production, distribution and consumption. It is rather that the food system is a kind of shorthand to represent a “complex of interdependent interrelationships associated with the production and distribution of food which have developed to meet the nutritional needs of human populations” (Beardsworth & Keil, 1997: 33). Food system proponents usefully distinguish between traditional and modern forms of the system and Table 2.1 sets out the main characteristics argued for each.

*Table 2.1: Main characteristics of traditional and modern food systems*

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Traditional systems</i>	<i>Modern systems</i>
Production	Small scale/limited	Large scale/highly specialised/industrialised
	Locally based for all but luxury goods	De-localised/global
	High proportion of population involved in agriculture	Majority of population have no links with food production

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Distribution	Within local boundaries Exchange governed by kinship and other social networks	International/global Access governed by money and markets
Consumption	Swings between plenty and want dependant on harvests and seasons Choice limited and dependant on availability and status Nutritional inequalities within societies	Food always available at a price independent of seasons Choice available to all who can pay Nutritional inequalities between and within societies
Beliefs	Humans at the top of the food chain/ Exploitation of the environment necessary	Debate between those who believe in human domination of the environment and those who challenge such a model

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Source: Beardsworth & Keil (1997: 33)

A key aspect of the modern food system is the debate about human relationships to the environment, reflecting sustainability issues discussed in Chapter 1. The perverse effects of the modern food system, in terms of unsustainability and inequality, and their global interrelatedness have been identified with systemic features. These include both widespread and increasing levels of hunger and obesity that are being exacerbated by climate change (Patel, 2007; Lang, 2004). The critique of the modern food system also contains an implicit recognition that there are spatial factors at work in the process. This stands in contrast to conventional sociological aspatiality which obscures the way that the emergence of the modern food system is in fact closely tied to spatial processes of urbanisation, and the food system's workings intertwine with the urbanism that is produced. For example, in the United Kingdom, industrialisation allowed urban development to occur on a previously unparalleled scale and by the 18<sup>th</sup> century the inability of local food resources to meet burgeoning urban populations' growing food demands precipitated longer distance trade in produce (Oddy, 1990). London was an early example of a metropolitan centre drawing on national and international food sources. In London's case supply side advances in transport made the movement of food from greater distances possible, including from overseas to "London's Larder" at Hays Wharf for city wide distribution, while technological changes in food handling and preservation techniques allowed its storage for longer periods. More recently in London, over the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, food system shifts have been marked by spatial changes resulting in consumption patterns predicated on car based catchments rather than walkable ones, of which more later in this chapter.

*The food quarters as loci of the modern food system*

One of the most relevant contrasts is between patterns of local, relatively small-scale food production, distribution and consumption, which are characterised as traditional within the food system, and large-scale relatively specialised and industrialised forms which are characterised as modern. The detailed study of the food quarters is used to explore aspects of the relationship between traditional and modern scales of production, distribution, and consumption and their implications for sustainable city design. At least five of the key characteristics of the modern food system have spatialised effects reflected in city form. These are, broadly, its high degree and large scale of specialisation and industrialisation; that distribution is based on mass markets and buying commodities; consumption emphasises choice and variety; shortages tend to arise from causes other than from absolute food availability; and that the sustainability of the system is debatable. As the fieldwork results demonstrate in later chapters, the food-centred spaces under consideration challenge key characteristics of the modern food system to varying extents. To give one example, place users are making choices to avoid or limit supermarket consumption and instead to walk to shop for food at street markets whose economic base is largely comprised of artisanal foods or foods with low “food miles” (MacGregor and Vorley, 2006; Lang et al, 2005). The socio-spatial practices evident at the food quarters, and the urban forms that underpin them, thus support claims for greater urban sustainability and conviviality. These quarters can be contrasted with urban forms and practices that are more passively responding to the food system’s inequitable and unsustainable structure. The cultural and social dimensions of the food system can be associated with five main processes, with each representing a distinct phase and focusing on specific, characteristic, spatialised loci (Goody, 1982: 37). These are shown in Table 2.2.

*Table 2.2: The processes, phases and loci of the food system*

<i>Processes</i>	<i>Phases</i>	<i>Locus</i>
Growing	Production	Farm
Allocating/Storing	Distribution	Market
Cooking	Preparation	Kitchen
Eating	Consumption	Table
Clearing Up	Disposal	Scullery

Source: Goody (1982: 37), as adapted by Beardsworth and Keil (1997)

As food moves from production through consumption to clean up, the role that the physical qualities of the loci themselves might play receives scant attention. However, the conceptualisation of the loci for the food system begins to give some spatial shape to the study of food. It sketches out some of the spatialised processes and material sites that may be involved in food and eating. At the same time, it is limited in dealing with the shift in the locus of cooking or its disappearance from the model altogether, as ready meals that are prepared industrially replace individual cooking and even private kitchens in

new apartment developments<sup>1</sup>. Aspects of the political economy of such forms of food consumption form a broader context for market-based food buying and are further considered below. Meanwhile, this thesis focuses on the phases of distribution, preparation and consumption, especially insofar as they occur in public spaces in the vicinity of markets in the food quarters.

## **Food and spatiality**

### *The aspatial context*

Reviewing relevant work from the sociology of food suggests that it is predominantly aspatial. Sociological and ethnographic work refers to “foodscapes” (Yasmeen: 1992) of various kinds and scales, in which food has become increasingly commodified as fashion and entertainment, coalescing into ‘foodtainment’ (Finkelstein, 1999, 1989). However, the spatiality of these spaces is underemphasised. As the outline above suggests, sociological work on food in the structuralist tradition has demonstrated a certain lack of spatial awareness. The consumption end of the food system has received more theoretical attention than have production or distribution elements (as noted in Beardsworth and Keil, 1997: 49; Warde, 1997). Moreover, the emphasis has fairly uniformly remained on actors and the multiplicity of flows and linkages between them. There has been less interest discernable in the sociological literature on any role the settings or loci, within which these dynamics have been played out, may have contributed to their relationships. Thus, although the “many types of places away from home where currently people may eat a meal in Britain” (Warde and Martens, 2000: 21) are acknowledged as providing a multiplicity of food consumption contexts, these are seen to bring forward problems of suitable nomenclature rather than of meaning in themselves. Specifically, it appears that food sociology under-theorises the spatial implications and possible influences of food system loci on the shaping of cities, and conversely, the potential of the physical shaping of the city to in turn affect aspects of the modern food system. For example, Mennell, a key theorist in food sociology, refers to spatiality only once in passing in *All Manners of Food* (1996) where he alludes to a chef buying from the market every morning and this activity informing the quality of his food. The spatial setting for and implications of this act are not explored.

Equally, as explained above, within the structuralist tradition the symbolism of food is a well-developed theme around which social differentiation has been extensively explored (Visser, 1987, 1993; Bourdieu, 1984; Barthes, 1972). While food may be seen more or less convincingly to signify social distinction in terms of nationality, ethnicity, age, class and gender, its capacity to reflect spatial aspects of social distinction appears still to need further work. Bourdieu (1984) does attempt to make distinctions (to Mennell unconvincing ones) between British and French approaches to taste but at the scale of the country as a whole, so the potential effects of supposed national tastes on urban spatiality at a finer grain cannot be readily determined. It is therefore argued that, given its lack of focus on the spatial implications of food production, distribution and consumption, food sociology may miss or

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.trendhunter.com/trends/kitchenless-living>

underplay connections to both city form and social relations shaped by and shaping that form. Some of these connections and possibilities are explored later in this chapter, and again through evidence presented and analysed in Chapters 4 to 8.

### *Food, spatiality and the urban scale*

It is to urban designers, architects and geographers that we should first turn to find at least an implicit acknowledgement that food relationships may be influenced by and have influences on their urban settings. Geographers have considered the social and cultural meanings of food production and consumption at a number of spatial scales including the body, home, community, city, region, nation and globe (Valentine and Bell, 1995). Urban designers and architects meanwhile have noted that these scales necessarily include, among others, the private spaces of the table, kitchen, dining room, house, and garden; the public spaces of the street, square, neighbourhood, town centre, town, and city; the social spaces of markets, shops and eating places; the productive spaces of the footpath, park, allotment, urban fringe, city region, and countryside; and the global spaces of the northern and southern hemispheres (Parham, 1994, 1992, 1991). There has also been limited work on the spaces of cafes and restaurants (Parham, 2005, 2001; Franck, 2002). The relationship of various urban scales to their status as public, private or transitional space has also been explored (Madanipour, 2003). Thus, although Valentine and Bell's analysis (1995) is suggestive in relation to spatiality, it appears to be of limited value in determining spatial impacts or effects of food relationships. While they name a series of scales for their exploration of food relationships, they do not go on to explore the implications of these places representative of different urban scales in a spatial way. Physical places are simply there as locational settings. Place thus appears to be a static backdrop rather than theorised as a player in food relationships. The focus is instead on notions of identity and relationships played out as processes between actors within various sites and settings.

For example, in considering the meaning of food in the home, Valentine and Bell define this as about the way individual identities are constructed (op cit). Similarly at the scale of the community (an amorphous term which is not defined) the discussion centres on interrelationships between various actors. At the larger scale of the city, where they suggest they will deal with the built landscapes of urban food consumption, they do so only in terms of defining various sites for consumption and considering the changing social mores governing consumption in those spaces. While architecture is mentioned, the links to spatial design, and between design and the construction of those mores are not explored. Possible scalar and other linkages between food and spatiality have been proposed, but there are limited fieldwork results on which to base conclusions (Franck, 2002; Esperdy, 2002; Parham, 1998, 1996, 1993, 1992). It appears then that the specific ways in which physical space design may have effects on, or be affected by, food relationships deserve more attention. The fieldwork approach to this exploration is explained in Chapter 3.

### *Ways of exploring spatiality*

Various strands in the sociological consideration of urban space have relevant implications for food. These include theories of the role of place (Logan and Molotch, 1987), implications of the growth of post-urban regions (Gottdeiner, 1994), and the spatial nature of modernity (Savage, Ward and Warde, 2003), including uneven development (Harvey, 2003, 1989, 1987), and the decline of the public sphere (Habermas, 1989), an area which has become a crowded theoretical field in its own right. Space shaping arguments broadly within sociological traditions (De Certeau, 1998, 1984; Lefebvre, 1991; Soja, 2000, 1993, 1989) also help to explore the notion of the primacy of the spatial in understanding aspects of social relations between people. Some relevant perspectives, such as Warde's (1997) work on consumption, food and taste, are in themselves under-spatialised, but help to frame the exploration of the way that food and city form interconnect through the medium of food practices.

Moreover, it is suggested that notwithstanding their relatively small scale, urban areas such as the food quarters are intricately linked in economic, social and environmental terms to a globalised context of urban space that is expanding enormously worldwide. These urbanised spaces can no longer be conceptualised as part of a city-suburb hierarchy or duality as previously configured (Frost 1993; Sudjic, 1991; Rowe 1991; Garreau, 1991; Fishman 1987). Rather, note should be taken of trends towards the rise of huge "megalopolitan" urban regions covering coastal areas and habitable plains (Savage, Ward and Warde, 2003; Konvitz and Parham, 1996; Gottdeiner, 1994; Sassen, 1991). As the world becomes mostly urban, "the predominant form of urbanisation is large scale metropolitan areas that link with their surrounding hinterland over vast territory" (Castells, 2000: ix). Therefore, food quarters should not be considered as isolated spatial units or simply providing venues for discrete units of sociological analysis (Lofland, 1971) but contextualised by these shifts.

Focusing in on the research context of London's changing spatiality, it is worth noting that like many other cities, London is extremely uneven in its development. Sharpening economic, social and environmental inequality is played out in its spatial arrangements. In London, as in other large urban conurbations, specific results of growth and restructuring include the deterioration of some traditional centres, the decline of the public realm, and the spatial resorting of activities to low density city peripheries (Hall, 1992), sometimes operating without traditional centres (Sudjic, 1992). London's changing spatiality reflects issues including white flight on the one hand and re-colonisation of inner and middle ring suburbs by middle class incomers on the other (Travers, 2004). Many inner areas in London initially declined through the creation of a post metropolitan landscape, but some have now experienced regeneration, waves of gentrification (Lees, 2003; Smith, 1996) and 'supergentrification' (Butler and Lees, 2006). Broadly, postmetropolitan regions like London, encompassing both old and newer urban fabric, have undergone a transforming process of urban restructuring, and are now socially fragmented in new ways (Soja; 2000). The food quarters can also be understood as largely comprising traditionally shaped public spaces that sit within an urban world that is changing away from such spatial forms; to develop as part of a spatially complex postmetropolitan landscape (Soja,

2000) with features that often reflect the non-place urban realm (Augé, 1995; Self, 1982; Webber, 1964).

### *The public realm, food and consumption*

The thesis explores the interconnections between the public realm, food and consumption, in the context of well-documented public realm decline as a feature of urban development over the last fifty years (Madanipour, 2003; Jacobs, 1994; Kostof, 1992; Krier, 1979). Again, like sustainability problems associated with the advance of modernist thinking in city planning (Graham and Healey, 1999; Taylor, 1998; Hall, 1992; Holston, 1989), it is argued that public space decline fits with dominant food patterns. These include the expansion of fast food, ready-meals, and kitchen-less flats, and dendritic, car-dominated and car-dependant food space including mall-based food consumption, road pantries, and out-of-town hypermarkets (Parham, 2005, 1996, 1995, 1992; Esperdy, 2002). These developments appear to promote homogenous, “nonurban” lifestyles (Lozano, 1996: 8), and with the same airports, hotels, suburban and post-urban areas, allied to increasing segregation by age, class, and race; real experience and social contact with others is replaced by “fantasy of success and power by proxy” (ibid: 9). In city centres, public space is increasingly substituted for by interaction that occurs in private atriums and malls in corporate headquarters, as well as in hotels and shopping gallerias (ibid, 10). The plethora of private eating spaces in office buildings, to which the public has no access, is one food related manifestation. Defying this dominant trend, traditional public spaces are argued to be extremely important in providing the interface between, and maintaining the health of, private and civil society (Rowe, 1997).

One relevant outcome for the public realm in London is that a great deal of food retailing, like other retail sectors, functions as “big box” or “exit ramp” architecture (Steuteville, 2000), within a suburban or post metropolitan spatial context. Giant shopping centres, such as Bluewater in Kent and Westfield in West London, are symptomatic of this spatial approach to food retailing, in strong contrast to the food centred spaces under consideration in this thesis. The big box food-retailing model is also identifiable in reconfigured spaces in established suburbs, where a suburban retailing model is imposed on and disrupts traditionally shaped, public realm focused streetscapes. The big box is usually centred on an inward facing, privately owned mall space with parking on the exterior and pedestrian space within. In more subtle versions private space is presented as public space and this, as well as characteristic land use separation and homogeneity are perceived to be threats to the social ecology of urban areas (Lozano, 1996), something that dominant design modes in relation to shopping makes clear:

“Shopping, for example, is now a strictly functional act of purchasing that involves a simple trip from one’s home to a shopping centre. However, urban shopping was once also a social ritual that included window-shopping, promenading, meeting friends informally, and exchanging information. There is still some ritual shopping in a few downtown areas, but the

links to community are weakened; many shoppers are suburbanites on an expedition to the city and are thus isolated from the community around them” (ibid: 7).

### *Food-centred space*

In Chapter 4, as part of the process of exploring the food quarters in morphological and design terms, and again in Chapters 5 to 8, in relation to their urban sustainability performance and design expression, there is consideration of some of the food implications of decline and revival of public space expressed through food centred space. As set out above, the context for the way the food quarters operate as public spaces in terms of food production, distribution, and consumption arrangements, is the spatially much more dominant pattern of postmetropolitan development, in which the public realm has been diminished or disappeared altogether (Kolson, 2001; Koolhaas and Mau, 1997; Soja, 1993; Davis, 1992; Sorkin, 1991). Not only have out-of-town supermarkets and hypermarkets burgeoned but this has had particular effects on existing retail spaces including the decline of local high streets, with the loss of food markets and local food shops, like grocers, general stores, fishmongers, butchers and cafes. In the United Kingdom between 1997 and 2002 such stores closed at a rate of 50 per week, and the average person travels 893 miles a year to shop for food (New Economics Foundation, 2002). The fieldwork research explores the view that, by maintaining or reviving food-centred public spaces, the food quarters have, to varying extents, resisted, modified or reshaped postmetropolitan spatiality, in ways outlined in the following chapters. There is, for example, a strong contrast between the decline of public space in postmetropolitan development, and the strength of the public realm in the studied food quarters. Some recent work has reinforced the view that food markets are important *public* sites for social interaction among a diversity of people (Watson and Studdert, 2006; Esperdy, 2002; Parham, 2001) as well as providing high quality, affordable food that reflects a range of food cultures, and is often not available elsewhere (Rubin, Jatana and Potts, 2006). Food markets thus offer:

“possibilities not just for local economic growth but also for people to mingle with each other and become accustomed to each others’ differences in a public space – thereby acting as a potential focal point for local communities that could revitalise public space” (Watson and Studdert, 2006: vii).

Looking at food-centred space also means touching on theories of consumption from at least two theoretical perspectives. On the one hand, food markets are public spaces focused on consumption, and thus reflect the nature of the consumption end of the food system and its commodity chains (Mansveldt, 2005). In the modern food system, consumption patterns deriving from the general characteristics described earlier are both spatially and socially located. While Goody (1982) places food markets (in each case at the heart of the food quarter) in the food allocating phase of the food system, the research suggests that it is equally valid to consider the food market and its environs as also part of the locus dealing with the consumption phase of the food system. Meanwhile, food



centred spaces are also sites for everyday consumption, understood in sociological terms. As Warde (1997, 1) notes, there has been an explosion of interest in consumption within sociology, with some sociologists making “strong claims for the new structural role of consumption practice as a central focus of everyday life”, and debating the ways that class and gender impact on consumption practices (Warde, 1991). This reflects the way that consumption of food has become intimately connected to “the consumer attitude” (Bauman (1990: 204). Because people are increasingly distant from food production, and there are less and less alternatives to buying what we need to eat, the consumer attitude is one of assuming everything can be bought.

“Hence, the problem of obtaining fresh, tasty, healthy, chemical-free or convenient foodstuffs is perceived and addressed as a shopping problem; where and at what price can the items satisfying my standards be obtained. The spread of the consumer attitude permeates common sense and inserts commercial culture into the core of everyday life” (Warde and Martens, 1998: 149).

In the context of this high degree of commodification of urban life, consumption at the level of the individual has also increasingly become tied to notions of identity (Knox, 1992), and individualisation (Bauman, 1988; Featherstone, 1987). Through this, what is consumed comes to symbolically represent aspects of the self. It also reflects the urban: “consumption is not simply a characteristic of urban life; it is a major factor in determining the nature of that life” (Miles and Miles, 2004: 3). One sign of this is that consumption’s symbolic meaning and significance can itself be spatialised. At the level of the city, for example, consumption has become something that can be invested in or promoted. The city is assumed as not only an arena in which consumption takes place, but a commodity in its own right, pursued through the construction of a cultural economy (Miles and Miles, 2004; Zukin, 1995). This is discussed in relation to the formation of food quarters as also cultural quarters later in the chapter.

### *Spaces of food nostalgia or new forms of consumption?*

The production of urban core space as a “high quality consumption product for foreigners, tourists, people from the outskirts and suburbanites” (Lefebvre, 1991: 73) has expanded to encompass less central urban neighbourhoods and each of the food quarters demonstrate aspects of such a consumption process to varying degrees. While it is possible to read such public spaces of consumption as nostalgic simulacra aimed predominantly at inward urban tourism or harking back to an imaginary past (Watson and Wells, 2005), neither of these explanations appear entirely convincing in relation to the food quarters. Far from echoing the past, the food-centred spaces focused on Borough Market, Broadway Market, and Exmouth Market are where *new* ways of consuming are being modelled and adopted (Thrift and Glennie, 1993), as part of a long-term historical process by which consumption changes in character (Benson, 1994; McCracken, 1990). The close links between the history of consumption and that of market shopping and related social practices are an important framing element here. The open air market has been conceptualised as the first order of commercial

architecture (Betsky, 2000), giving way over time to arcades, then department stores, supermarkets and now the internet (Bowly, 2000), as shopping has responded to “the demands of a mass production system that required a more rational approach to selling” (Miles and Miles, 2004: 35), and more recently to sustainability regimes. At the same time, as noted above, the contrast between “faceless and placeless” (ibid) supermarkets and clone town high streets (New Economics Foundation, 2005, 2004), compared with shopping and other social practices at and around the food market, is one of the themes explored through the thesis research.

It was noted above that the food quarters sit alongside, and can be contrasted to, more dominant spatial modes in both urban expansion and renewal contexts. In area redevelopment, for example, there has been a process of imposition of suburban spatial models for retailing on more urban areas, whereby consumption space created in inner urban areas is predominantly modelled on the sanitised malls of outer suburban areas (New Economics Foundation, 2005, 2004). Moreover, gentrifying areas tend to be marked by street upgrading along these spatially suburbanising lines (Savage, Warde and Ward, 2003). In fact, the three food quarters do not fit this suburbanising paradigm in either physical design or social practice terms. All three are spatially urban in nature and provide rich territory for sociability, rather than being bland consumption zones. They are places to go to, as much as through. Thus, a de facto rejection of the suburban mall or clone town (New Economics Foundation, 2005) model of consumption space is connected to their urban design, both as existing places and as sites for design-based renewal.

A related aspect of the food quarters as rather different kinds of consumption space is the way their temporal qualities transcend suburban retailing models’ highly regulated opening times, behavioural controls and regimented social use. Rather, the quarters show considerable diversity in use over time, reflecting the “manifold rhythms forged through daily encounters and multiple experiences of time and space” (Thrift and Amin, 2002: 9), with clear patterns of use over time documented at each site. The balance of everyday activities shifts with the time of day or night, and the day of the week, as well as varying by week, month and annually, according to the timetable of work, leisure, holidays and festivals. Their physical spaces are shaped and reshaped over time, both to reflect changing practices of everyday life and to influence these (de Certeau, 1988). Each, to a varying extent, comprises at once a site within which individuals play out a well-developed habitus, a place for conspicuous consumption *and* a space of social transformation in which less commodified encounters can also be observed.

### **Food quarters as sites for regeneration and gentrification**

An important aspect of the sites’ spatiality, touched on above, and relevant to the research questions, is the role of food quarters as spaces of regeneration and gentrification. Although a contested term (Furbey, 1999), one workable definition of urban regeneration is: “Comprehensive and integrated vision and action which leads to the resolution of urban problems and which seeks to bring about a

lasting improvement in the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of an area that has been subject to change” (Thompson et al., 2006: 17). Regeneration is posited as being about responding to “the opportunities and challenges which are presented by urban degeneration in a particular place at a specific moment in time” (Roberts and Sykes, 2000: 3). These responses tend to be area-based (Lloyd et al., 2001) and are aimed at improving urban conditions, including food related aspects such as health (Curtis and Cave, 2002), with mixed evidence emerging as to their success (Thompson et al., 2006). Much of the focus of regeneration strategies over the last 20 years in the United Kingdom has been on “attracting investors, middle-class shoppers and visitors by transforming places and creating new consumption spaces” (Raco, 2003). By the 1990s, place marketing, focused on retail spaces (Page and Hardyman, 1996), and more recently the development of urban quarters (Bennison et al, 2007), started to be recognised as a mainstream regeneration tool for town centres.

Aspects of the food quarters’ functioning could certainly place them in the category of place-marketed regeneration sites. They can equally be seen as demonstrating significant gentrification effects, in which new land users are moving in who are of higher status than the previous occupiers, and are making substantial changes to the built environment. Moreover, the food quarters are emerging from this process as the cores of neighbourhoods “which are qualitatively distinctive in terms of their residents’ occupational composition, demographic structure, attitudes, lifestyle preferences, tastes, and consumption profiles” (Webber, 2007: 183, based on Butler, 1997; Butler and Robson, 2003a). In order to understand the food quarters’ relationship to gentrification, it is perhaps necessary to very briefly review debates in the sociological literature in which competing explanations of gentrification stressed either the demand side through the production of space, or the supply side focused on consumption (Lambert and Boddy, 2002: 2; Lees, 2000). Two competing views of gentrification emerged, situating the process as either emancipating the distinctive cultural values of a new middle class or reflecting a class based conflict in the “revanchist city” (Smith, 1996) whereby the middle classes claimed back spatial territory previously lost to them. While in either case poorer residents have lost out, on the revanchist side, the processes of regeneration and urban renewal tend to be treated as normative ways of disguising the exclusion and displacement of poor urban populations (Smith, 1996), with effects on both class and identity. As Tonkiss (2007: 80) points out in relation to identity formation, “Recent shifts at the level of class and capital – the accelerated gentrification of certain parts of the late capitalist city – in this sense produce new patterns of spatial stratification and also alter urban meanings and identities”.

Interconnections between gentrification, sustainability and spatiality, in the process of constructing urban identities around food, seem fruitful territory for this thesis. In such a reading, gentrification is still about class, but identity construction rather than working class displacement takes centre stage. As Butler (2007: 164) notes, this presents a challenge to a hegemonic critique presented by US theorists on gentrification, in which the concept is simply rolled out without reference to spatial differences. Similarly, Lees (2000: 393-405) argues that an “ideology of liveability and sustainability” is now being used to justify gentrification and thus “a more detailed examination of the ‘geography of

gentrification' would constitute a progressive research programme and lead us to rethink the 'true' value of gentrification as a practical solution to urban decline in cities around the world". Butler (2007:162) points to the rise of "greentrification", tying gentrification more explicitly to aspects of sustainability, while Smith and Holt (2007: 144) allude to the "apprentice gentrifiers", who demonstrate the importance of aspects of place in provincial towns and cities, as well as in more metropolitan contexts. Butler (2007: 163) also suggests more broadly that residential location has become increasingly important in defining 'who you are', with the spatial context one in which suburbs and other urban locations, as well as city centres, have become places middle class people want to live. Sociological work on middle class households in north, east and south London has in fact shown that

"in an urban context such as provided by London, spatial factors are an important mediating variable in terms of identity construction" (Robson and Butler, 2001: 84).

#### *Gentrifying space and the habitus*

Another very useful framing device for understanding the gentrification process in the food quarters is the way Bourdieu's work on forms of capital and the habitus has been connected to the spatiality of gentrification. It should be remembered from the earlier discussion of Bourdieu in this chapter that the habitus is essentially an embodied concept, and should not be seen as spatial in itself. Bourdieu (2000: 130) explicitly ties his conception of the habitus to social rather than physical space. Yet the way that the habitus interconnects with aspects of spatiality and gentrification is particularly interesting. Accounts of gentrification tend overall to emphasise its urbanity. It is situated as occurring in the first instance among people who may have little economic capital but significant amounts of cultural capital "deployed in lieu of material capital to achieve distinction. Moreover, the cultural capital used in the case of gentrification is the set of values that privileges pro-urban lifestyles" (Bridge; 2000: 206). Paraphrasing Podmore (1998), Bridge suggests that the "gentrified neighbourhood has been seen as the spatial manifestation of the new middle-class habitus" (ibid). Thus the habitus – while remaining tied to the individual – is played out in spatialised ways in and through the gentrified space of the neighbourhood – or in this case the food quarter. A key point is the importance of place. Thus, as Butler points out (2002, no page reference), in certain areas of London, "the habitus (defined crudely as the attitudes, beliefs, feelings and identities) of our respondents" does connect with place and "this run[s] counter to the accepted sociological wisdom that place is a given". One of Butler's most relevant spatial arguments about the place specificity of the habitus, is that middle class assets

"will be deployed in different ways which will give particular areas their own distinctive ambiances and that this can be seen as part of the process of class formation in contemporary London. In this sense, *the habitus acquires specific spatial characteristics which in turn influence those living in its ambit*. In trying to untangle the nature of the urban middle classes

in London, the structure of consciousness is likely to prove important *and 'place' to be of enduring influence*" (Butler, 2002) (my italics)

*Food as a 'field' in the metropolitan habitus: constructing food centred mini habituses?*

For the purposes of this research, another very useful extending out of Bourdieu's concept is Butler's (2001) notion of the "metropolitan habitus". Gentrification is not just about consumption at the urban centre but explained "by the overall 'pull' of the metropolitan habitus which is strongly associated with being a global city and the associated cultural connotations" (2002, online paper, no page reference). Butler refers here to Bridge (2000) who uses Bourdieu's conceptual framework to develop gentrification as a 'field' within the habitus, in the same way aspects including housing, employment, and education have traditionally been seen as habitus fields. Such spatialisation is noteworthy in a thesis looking at food and place because the habitus can then help explain why certain middle class people want to live near each other (Butler, 2007: 163). Butler draws on Savage's (2005) work in Manchester, which suggests that people operate across a series of fields of work, leisure and home, with the habitus seen to cover each of these fields. "The trick, as it were, is for people to triangulate these fields spatially so that they live with 'people like themselves'" (Butler, 2007: 175). Savage, says Butler (op cit: 171)

"demonstrates that Bourdieu's concept of the habitus is an essentially spatial one that creates a series of 'spatial divisions of consumption' which accommodate to people's economic capabilities and their sense of wanting to 'flock' with people like themselves".

Likewise, Bridge's (2006) deployment of "mini habituses" devolved from Butler's metropolitan habitus, seem useful in this research context. It is argued that such mini habituses representing "particular mixes of social, cultural, and economic capital produces a geography of gentrification with different neighbourhoods having distinct neighbourhood milieus" (ibid: 1966). I suggest that in the three food quarters, individuals contribute to an overall metropolitan habitus, but their behaviour in each location is subtly different, with users constructing distinct mini habituses in each food quarter. Each distinctive neighbourhood milieu develops from the metropolitan habitus in a way that seems to support the mini habitus notion and also gives prominence to food as a key unifying factor (Webber, 2007). This has particular resonance in relation to where and how individuals shop for food in the gentrifying spaces of the food quarters, as identity is constructed through the distinctive food practices and liveable spaces of the revived food markets and their surrounding areas. In the context alluded to by Butler (2007: 167), where the whole of Greater London might be considered "ripe for gentrification", identity construction through food consumption at the micro level of the quarter or neighbourhood, is closely linked to economic and environmental changes in the way food is handled at regional, city wide and broader scales. And, in relation to 'new urban colonist' neighbourhoods, the alternative food geographies referred to earlier in this chapter would seem to be in the ascendant:

“Taste, it would seem, is a key unifier in these neighbourhoods, in which cooking and the kitchen play a much more central role than in suburban neighbourhoods of similar occupational status. A particularly large proportion of the population are interested in the food that they eat and its provenance, with people being particularly responsive to opportunities to eat foreign foods whether at home or in a restaurant. Ingredients in home-prepared foods are particularly important and consumers go to considerable trouble to shop at upmarket supermarkets offering variety and freshness” (Webber, 2007: 196).

Meanwhile, although gentrification narratives of displacement may have moved from centre stage, in London social exclusion is on the rise in regenerating areas (Kleiman, 1998). Recent case study work in London gives empirically-based weight to arguments that connect gentrification and exclusion, demonstrating for example that displacement effects were profound in the 1990s, as working class, elderly and inactive groups were lost from formerly working class areas (Atkinson, 2000). As Chapter 6 demonstrates, the Broadway Market fieldwork site appears to be at the stage of gentrification in which a certain middle class fraction is attracted to an urban neighbourhood characterised by diverse populations and relatively affordable housing (Smith, 1996; Smith and Williams, 1986). It is now on the verge of the next stage, one that both Borough and Exmouth (in Chapters 5 and 7) seem to have reached in this gentrifying trajectory. To varying degrees at each food quarter, large-scale capital has moved in to scoop up economic value created by earlier urban pioneers both through food related and residential developments. As Tonkiss (2007: 81) describes it:

“Once the ‘gentrification frontier’ had been opened up, moreover, the attractions of the inner city came to be less those of social and economic diversity than the effects of gentrification itself: renovated housing, new spaces of consumption and middle class residents”.

These processes appear to connect city form and food practices in new ways in which changing relationships between the production and consumption of food and space are both important. On the one side what can be seen are changes to the production of the economic space of the city; while on the consumption side gentrification stresses culture, lifestyle and patterns of consumption (op cit). Instead of seeing this as two separate processes at work, Tonkiss (2007: 82) argues that these “gentrifying fractions” are a consumption class because not only do they own housing and have particular consumer patterns but because “they are also constituted through changing strategies of accumulation as urban economies are restructured around the production of services, culture and information”. In a now well-documented trajectory, at each food quarter the gentrification processes, at least in the first stage, goes hand in hand with “an informal urban politics which reject[s] the cultural homogeneity and social conformity of the suburbs” (Tonkiss, 2007: 85; Lefebvre, 1991). Also at each food quarter it is clear that incomers are making an apparently positive input into local political campaigns, for example to protect existing small food traders from the depredations of property developers. In this way incoming residents are engaged in struggles to protect local class and ethnic diversity expressed through food. This is especially clear at Broadway Market and is described

in Chapter 6. However, although incomers intend to assist those they might displace, the idealised narratives that Butler (2006) refers to may mystify the effects of displacement that are nonetheless occurring. Over the medium term, this process remains one of “social evacuation” in which,

“Displacement removes social problems and rearranges rather than ameliorates the causes of poverty, environmental decay and the loss of neighbourhood vitality. Problems are moved rather than solved” (Atkinson, 2000: 163).

By the time gentrification enters its mature phase it tends to be accompanied by particular styles of residential architecture (Zukin, 1998) that produce a mass production gentrification style (Tonkiss, 2007: 89), currently based on resurgent modernist architecture, recently judged to produce housing of poor quality and inadequate space standards<sup>2</sup>. This has a propensity to homogenise the renewed urban landscapes that are being created, while selling them on the basis of their diversity and chic (ibid). The food market as a designed space or spaces plays a major attractor role early in this process, before the arrival of bland food chains signals the beginning of gentrification’s more mature phase. Thus, in exploring the rich field of social practices embodied in each fieldwork site this gentrifying underside is kept in mind. Likewise, these spatial, economic and social shifts have specific physical design implications and effects that are examined later in this chapter. Chapter 4, meanwhile, provides visual examples of the process from each quarter while later chapters refer to commentary from place users to the same effect.

#### *Food spaces as developing cultural quarters?*

The discussion above serves to introduce the development of food spaces in terms of their regeneration into *cultural* quarters (Cameron and Coaffee, 2005; Montgomery, 2003; Scott, 1997) that are sites for various art and economic activities related to food. The food quarters provide numerous examples of being attractive to people working in art and media as places to live, work and visit because of their food qualities. They are also considered particularly suitable sites for undertaking art projects along food related themes. Some art practice directly focused on the quarters as food spaces was found during fieldwork and it seems that these spaces increasingly operate as part of London’s cultural economy. Not only does more and more arts related economic activity take place in the quarters, they also present a physical and social milieu to which the particular class fraction described above is attracted to live. I suggest that their status as food quarters is central to their being chosen as sites for art practice and arts-related economic activity as food is often a central theme. Moreover, as explained below, the physical design of the food spaces appears to be crucial to their development as cultural quarters. Spatial design is part of their development as a favourable milieu for a particular, food related individual habitus. In turn, being such a food space appears to contribute strongly to development as a cultural quarter.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.london.gov.uk/gla/publications/housing.jsp>

A notable aspect of the food space as cultural quarter is the way that such places are subject to wider strategies linking economic and cultural regeneration, becoming urban spaces that are themselves cultural products. This convergence has been theorised as one of the distinguishing features of contemporary cities (Molotch, 1996) within a distinctively post Fordist cultural economy (Lash and Urry, 1994). The increasing spatialisation of cultural production has been cited in London with particular reference to these processes at play around Borough Market (Newman and Smith, 2000). Art processes were also observed and documented during fieldwork visits to Broadway Market, while at Exmouth Market "new industry formations" (Hutton, 2004: 96) include clusters of art and architectural practices. This seems to fit within the literature on clustering; the new economy of the inner city and on "the rise and rise of culture led regeneration" (Miles and Paddison, 2005) in which culture located within 'new economy quarters' becomes a driver for urban economic growth (Hutton, 2004). This, in turn Miles and Paddison (2005: 833) argue "has become part of the new orthodoxy by which cities seek to enhance their competitive position". The assumption since the 1980s is that cultural quarters will not only support urban regeneration, but also reinforce civic pride and place identity (Hall and Robertson, 2001). Place marketing, described as "the governance expression of this new orthodoxy" (Miles and Paddison, 2005: 834) is now ubiquitous, but the question arises as to how far the food quarters reflect cultural commodification in the following terms:

"Integral to this—and given clear expression in the city through the spread of processes of gentrification and the development of cultural forms of urban tourism—is the commodification of culture and the spread of cultural capitalism" (ibid).

Such strategies are intended to give rise to a localised sense of place. At the same time, their spatial expression is often of a fast gentrifying urban core ringed by disadvantaged suburbs, and their role in contributing to that gentrification is possibly underestimated (Wilks-Heeg and North, 2004). In London, case studies of such approaches demonstrate how much of the place marketing effort around commodification of culture has been directed at incomers rather than those already resident in areas earmarked for regeneration, with deleterious effects on indigenous working class populations (Evans and Cattell, 2000). In the food quarters, some observational work and interviews appear to demonstrate that food plays a central role in a process by which the "aesthetic appropriation of place appeals to other professionals, particularly to those who are also higher in cultural capital than in economic capital, and who share something of the artist's antipathy towards commerce and convention" (Ley, 2003: 2540). More broadly it seems that while there is evidence that the studied food quarters are developing into cultural quarters, attractive to certain fractions of the middle class, they cannot be entirely explained in these terms. Rather, in the next sections, other important framing elements for their development are explored.

#### *Food, regeneration and urban governance*



Each of the food quarters demonstrates an alternative economic path to the commonality of much UK urban regeneration which is top down in nature, and allows limited roles for local players in defining desired outcomes and managing the process (Foley and Martin, 2000; Atkinson, 1999). Although increasing attention has been paid at policy level to community involvement (Burton, 2003; Foley and Martin, 2000; Taylor, 2000), the renewal process underway at each food quarter has brought into sharp relief the serious lack of practical governance capacity on the part of the relevant local authority to drive forward food-led regeneration. In each case, there appears to be a notable absence from local government of either sufficient strategic planning attention to underpin food quarter development, or day-to-day management expertise. In each case local government has placed barriers in the way of food centred regeneration efforts made by local stakeholders. Despite this, at least two of the quarters have developed sets of workable governance arrangements largely through their own efforts, and a third has gone some way towards doing so. At Borough Market a highly successful form of governance is being implemented through a long established charitable trust that now employs professional market managers. At Broadway Market, a group of entrepreneurial local residents and traders is responsible for an outstanding regeneration process, while at Exmouth Market a more informal coalition of 'gastronomic' stakeholders who are running food businesses in the street and area acts as a kind of leadership group, although with more mixed results, as Chapter 7 demonstrates.

Mainstream regeneration processes are generally expected to be partnership-based (Ball and Maginn, 2005; Diamond, 2002); to involve the community in renewal through consultative processes (McArthur, 1993); and to stress local capacity building (Diamond, 2004). However, this kind of public-private-third sector partnership, envisaged in public policy as a model for area-based regeneration, has not occurred in a sustained way at any of the food quarters. It is acknowledged in the literature that regeneration partnerships are often the sites for unresolved conflicts between partners (Diamond, 2004) and asymmetrical power relations (Hastings, 1999, Hastings et al., 1996). The food quarters demonstrate areas of conflict between local authorities and other stakeholders, with uneasy relationships between local government and others seen at all three quarters. Governance partnerships have tended to develop from the bottom up, or to one side of formal arrangements perceived to be grossly inadequate for reviving and managing the food spaces. These arrangements have tended to involve community-based or third sector stakeholders alone or in partnership with private sector entrepreneurs from small and medium sized enterprises rather than bigger businesses. At the same time, local authorities appear to have moved very slowly from a position of managing decline from outside these informal partnerships and coalitions.

#### *The role of community leaders and entrepreneurial figures*

A strong theme emerging from the food quarters is of the key role played by community leaders and entrepreneurial figures, comprising both social entrepreneurs (Thompson, 2002) and more mainstream business people. There is some discussion in the literature about the possibilities for the emergence of new community leaders as decision makers in the context of local governance promoted by existing

government structures (Hemphill et al, 2006). Local entrepreneurship is also a growing trend within regeneration contexts (Porter, 2000). However, in this research, the emergence of community leaders with a vision about the future of their area as a food space has not resulted so much from a conscious focus by government on local empowerment, as a lack of governmental leadership capacity leaving space for leadership to develop from the sidelines or below.

At all three food quarters, local community leaders have been at the forefront in pursuing a food strategy, although not in all cases with a stated intention to develop a wider renewal programme or lead to significant regeneration effects. At the same time, their leadership qualities have been central to the success of both Borough and Broadway Markets and contributed largely to the food-led redevelopment of Exmouth. The leadership displayed can be read as an example of the way that informal urban actors have taken over leftover spaces in cities and reanimated them through bottom up action (Groth and Corijn, 2005). Also notable has been the mix of social and business entrepreneurialism. Social entrepreneurs have been defined as people who have “the qualities and behaviours we associate with the business entrepreneur but who operate in the community and are more concerned with caring and helping than with making money” (Thompson, 2002: 413). Leaders at Borough, and Broadway appear to fall within this category, while at Exmouth there has been an intriguing straddling of the social/business entrepreneurial divide. I define local players, at Exmouth Market in particular, as gastronomic entrepreneurs, as they have both business and social interests that coalesce around food, and these intertwined interests are played out through food quarter development.

### **Food quarters and urban design issues**

#### *Food deserts and food quarters*

One context for the food quarters is the way that food is increasingly a conscious focus for spatial design policy at a national and city wide level, with recent nationally funded pilot programmes making explicit links between obesity and spatial planning and design<sup>3</sup>. This suggests an emerging narrative in relation to food and area regeneration, focusing on the problematic qualities of this relationship, that is yet to be fully integrated with food discussion situated within a gastronomic tourism mode (Quan and Wang, 2004; Richards, 2002). In both cases, as discussed earlier, there is growing economic, social and environmental unevenness in food aspects of urban development. Food quarters are therefore striking in the way and degree to which they return economic value to their local communities (New Economics Foundation, 2005) whereas most urban food space reinforces economic and other inequalities, as the discussion below makes clear. Linking back to the research concerns set out in Chapter 1, it is important to ask why and how food-centred spaces might manage to support urban sustainability, against the grain of most postmetropolitan development which demonstrates a sharpening polarisation between the well-supported and the poorly-served in food

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2008/nov/10/obesity-healthy-towns1>

terms. Much of the work done in this area is within a paradigm of healthy, sustainable and vital cities (Barton et al, 2003; Hancock, 1995) that situates food deserts as places

“where local grocers are disappearing. This can leave those without cars difficult access routes and little choice for their food supply. As a result, health is further damaged in those already at risk, and local producers lack small-scale local outlets” (Barton et al, 2003: 137).

Recent research in the United Kingdom exploring food poverty and the associated emergence of food deserts (Watson, 2002; Webster, 1998) reveals increasing inequality of access to inexpensive, high quality food within expanding, spatially transforming urban spaces (Whelan, Wrigley, Warm and Cannings, 2002). Aspects of these conclusions are contested by some studies where food desert effects have not been found to a significant degree, and it has also been suggested that more fine-grained research is required to further test theoretical assumptions about food deserts in real places (Short, Guthman and Raskin, 2007; Cummins and Macintyre, 2002). However, it seems fair, on the balance of the considerable research findings available, to argue that food deserts are places in which a significant proportion of people are effectively disenfranchised by lack of access to affordable, healthy local food services (Barton et al, 2003, 137). In terms of their spatiality, food deserts may contain substantial numbers of fast food outlets, service station ‘road pantries’, and food shopping based on high cost but lower quality convenience stores. If the food desert contains supermarkets, the food on offer may be of poorer quality and higher price than that in supermarkets found in more ‘gastronomically’ entitled areas and will not be within a walkable radius of 400-500 metres for most. Online shopping opportunities may be restricted or non-existent. Take up of organic food box schemes will be low. All this reflects the spatiality described in an earlier section on trends in post metropolitan development. Thus, while such deserts may be located within well-established areas, they are more likely to be found where traditional urban design principles have not been followed in creating urban form (Lake and Townshend, 2006).

### *Obesogenic environments*

An associated concern is the relationship between food desert-producing retailing and consumption patterns and the incidence of obesity. Poor food access is correlated with rising levels of obesity in disadvantaged urban dwellers and the evidence about the relationship of obesity and retailing patterns is relatively clear-cut (White, 2007). Researchers now speak of “obesogenic environments” (Lake and Townshend, 2006: 262), arguing that:

“The obesogenicity of an environment has been defined as ‘the sum of influences that the surroundings, opportunities, or conditions of life have on promoting obesity in individuals or populations’” (ibid).

The nature of the built form in which obesogenic environments emerge is understood to be a crucial aspect in their creation, with “sprawl urbanism” identified as central to their development (ibid). Given their pernicious spatial, economic and environmental practices, supermarkets are argued to share a large part of the blame for creating food deserts, and to contributing to increasing obesity levels. Supermarkets have been at the forefront of expanding the urban scale of food consumption; avoiding poorer urban areas, a strategy known as redlining, and locating on out-of-town sites (Eisenhauer, 2001). Meanwhile the concept of “Walmartisation” has entered the language, reflecting the economic planning strategies employed by supermarket giants to increase the spatial scale of food retailing, and pointing to its grim sustainability consequences (Gardels, 2004). Car dependence has been built into supermarket retailing strategies as part of their efforts to externalise economic, environmental and social costs on to others (Lang and Caraher, 1998; Raven, Lang, and Dumonteil, 1995). There has been in the UK a recent surge in “fake local” stores (New Economics Foundation, 2002: 2), such as Tesco Metro and Express, and Sainsbury’s Local and Central, driving out individually owned convenience food shops from certain inner areas. At the same time, supermarkets’ stores still tend not to be located in poorer neighbourhoods. Instead, they are predominantly spaced as a smaller number of large stores that are not within walking distance for many. Moreover,

“As ever fewer, larger players such as the big four supermarkets capture more of the market, their power means they are able to squeeze ever-better deals for themselves, at the cost of suppliers, farmers and smaller retailers” (ibid).

Supermarkets’ retailing arrangements have been judged to support the creation of food deserts (Food Standards Agency, 2006), and some UK guidance on urban design provides explicit design proposals to counter their ill effects (Barton et al, 2002; Llewelyn-Davies 2000). These guidance documents tend to follow spatial principles associated with design features found in existing food quarters, although such quarters are not explicitly defined as such. Food quarters’ spatial design presents a range of food possibilities, including street-based or covered food markets and small, individually owned food shops, cafes and restaurants, all of which are within a walkable catchment area. Such places may also contain a top of the range supermarket and a high level of uptake and availability of organic food box schemes and online shopping delivery services. While location is not prescribed, the data from this thesis locates food quarters in long established urban areas which have been developed along compact city lines, based on walkable food catchments, rather than in newly developed parts of post-urban conurbations shaped by post war, modernist planning principles. The next section considers these design issues in detail.

### *Theorising the urban quarter as an urban food quarter*

As noted in Chapter 1, both food and urban sides of the research questions revolve around issues of urban sustainability and conviviality, in part expressed through urban design. In Chapter 1, it was argued that urban sustainability in relation to food is undermined by dominant spatial design patterns

that adversely affect food production, distribution and consumption processes. Conversely, it was suggested that urban sustainability may be supported by food quarter urban design, although food related design has yet to be fully explored in relation to urban sustainability processes. It is equally important that urban design is approached reflexively, with an acknowledgement that it does not exist as simply a free-floating public good but often as a practice that is poorly grounded in theory (Sternberg, 2000), often undertaken uncritically (Cuthbert, 2002; Hayward and McGlynn, 2002) and may itself be subject to commodification as a part of giving cities competitive edge (Gospodini, 2002: 59). Yet, despite these caveats, urban design, if approached with some critical distance, can provide extremely useful insights into place shaping that resonate with the thesis concerns. This chapter has briefly explored how cities' spatiality is rapidly transforming, in ways that have predominantly tended to negatively reconfigure their food relationships (Bell and Valentine, 1997). Such trends are counter-pointed by less conventional food geographies emerging in certain places and these developing spatial alternatives offer different "possibilities to those provided by the 'conventional' industrialised agro-food complex" (Maye, Kneafsey and Holloway, 2007: 1). Like the studied food quarters, they are characterised by short food supply chains, high quality products, and a reconnected, re-localised relationship with consumers (ibid).

It is also argued that urban spaces that exhibit food quarter characteristics appear likely to demonstrate design that is based on a walkable food catchment, within a physical form founded on traditional urbanism (Krier, 2006; Carmona et al, 2003). Food deserts, meanwhile, are significantly less likely to exhibit these features and more likely to exhibit post war zoning-based design characteristics (Short, Guthman, and Raskin, 2007; Wrigley, Warm, Margetts and Whelan, 2002). It will be remembered that a key theme within the thesis is the notion that social, in this context, primarily food relationships, are highly interconnected with spatial processes focusing on walkable, compact urban quarters. Given that human relationships to food are played out spatially day-to-day, it is thought that the critical dimension of space can be explored without physical determinism by examining everyday socio-spatial practices (Soja, 2000; Lefebvre, 1991). In turn, these socio-spatial practices can be better understood if the physical loci for food relationships are explored with reference to urban design concepts and methods, because these assist in revealing the interplay between physical form and socio-spatial practice. Thus, if these design concepts are properly interrogated, rather than being applied unreflexively, they are useful in exploring the complex nature and meaning of food quarters, on the one hand as commodified, gentrifying spaces and on the other as sustainably designed, convivial sites for richly lived experience.

#### *Design elements for the urban food quarter*

The urban food quarter can be understood as both a unit of social science research (Lofland, 1971), and as a physical and social construct spatially based on the European urban quarter (Marshall, 2005; Montgomery, 1998; Moughtin, 1996;). Equally, it is suggested that the design of such neighbourhoods can provide insights into the nature of the urban food quarter with relevance to the thesis topic. This

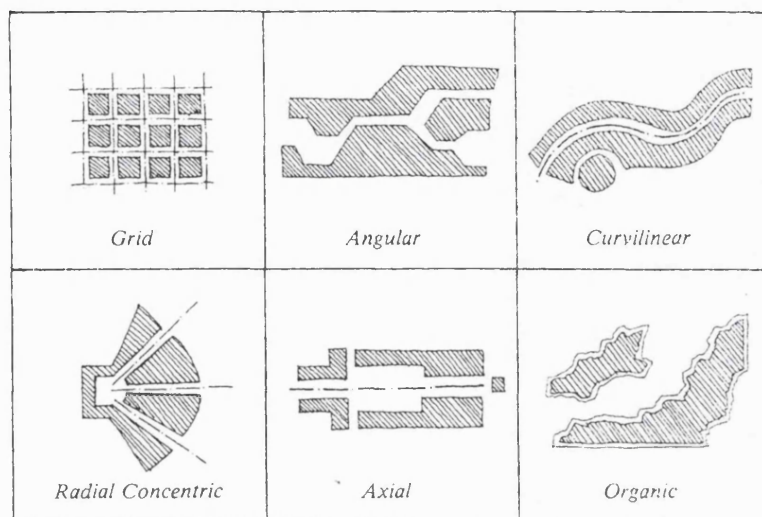
neighbourhood scale of design is a recurring theme in urban design; and is tied to a recurrent “search for community” against “threats of ecological degradation, social fragmentation and spatial segregation” (Madanipour, 2003: 140). Neighbourhood scale design has begun to be explicitly linked to avoiding obesity and promoting health (Cummins and McIntyre, 2005; Jackson, 2003; Sui, 2003; Parham, 1993, 1992). Therefore, one starting place for exploring food quarters as one of the physical loci for the food system is to consider their scale and the configuration of design elements they display within that scale. Some urban designers have focused specifically on design prescriptions for urban quarters (Moughtin, 1996; Kostof, 1992, 1991; Gosling and Maitland, 1984), and such principles of place making provide a ready basis for exploring the design of urban *food* quarters that are roughly similar both in size and in a range of other more subtle design respects. It is, therefore, worth looking at the sets of design qualities or elements thought necessary to build into urban space to achieve sustainability outcomes at urban quarter scale given these food related design implications (as for example, Marshall, 2005; Lessard and Ávila, 2005; Carmona, 2003; Moughtin, 2003; Jacobs, 1993; Broadbent, 1990; Bentley et al., 1985; Bacon, 1982; Alexander, 1977; Lynch, 1985, 1961).

These design elements include experiential qualities of variety, accessibility, vitality, legibility, robustness, identity, cleanliness, biotic support and richness (Bentley, 1990), with vitality judged as “probably the single most sought after characteristic of good urbanism” (Hayward and McGlynn, 2002). Hayward and McGlynn in fact link vitality and civility, in ways that echo the earlier discussion of conviviality in Chapter 1, arguing “the notion of civility is one of the oldest and most successful in the history of society and urbanism” (ibid: 127). Quarters require human scale, pedestrian freedom, lasting environments, and the importance of place is stressed (Tibbalds, 1992). Mixed land use and activities are also a preoccupation (Roberts and Lloyd-Jones, 1997; Tibbalds, 1992) as is connectivity for “joined up urbanism” (Marshall, 2005: 367). Certain designers bring food overtly into the picture, defining design for places that are feedable, serviceable, accessible, and frugal (Mouzon, 2008), or designed by way of various gastronomic strategies for convivial cities (Parham, 1996, 1995, 1993a, 1993b, 1992). Design codes are posited as a possible way to translate these qualities from theory to design practice (Murrain, 2002).

All these perspectives demonstrate an understanding that public space has primacy over the private domain, and urban design clearly subordinates individual buildings to a collective realm more powerful than them. This in turn relies on “an implicit vocabulary of design and a deference to the larger order of things” (Trancik, 1986: 11) that until the 20<sup>th</sup> century was central to town making (Morris, 1994; Kostof, 1992, 1991). Western European cities followed a long-term tradition of an unbuilt space-built space duality in which the built form enclosed urban spaces (Lózano, 1996: 40), providing a positive context for playing out life in the public realm. A more recent failure to recognise the dialogue between un-built space and built form, treating built form as an independent element in a non-spatial vacuum (ibid), has meant that this collective sense of meaning has been lost, and so too has the understanding that “there are rules for connecting parts through the design of outdoor space” (Trancik, 1986: 11). At the neighbourhood design scale, a number of physical design solutions, largely

deriving from traditional design approaches, have been proposed by urban designers to overcome the loss of coherent relationship between built private space and un-built public space. Various solid-to-void typologies can recreate conditions where “lost space” (ibid) or “cracks” in the city fabric (Loukaitou-Sideris, 1996) may be repaired, and outdoor rooms created (Alexander et al, 1977). Some of these are illustrated in Figure 2.1.

*Figure 2.1: Solid-to-void typologies*

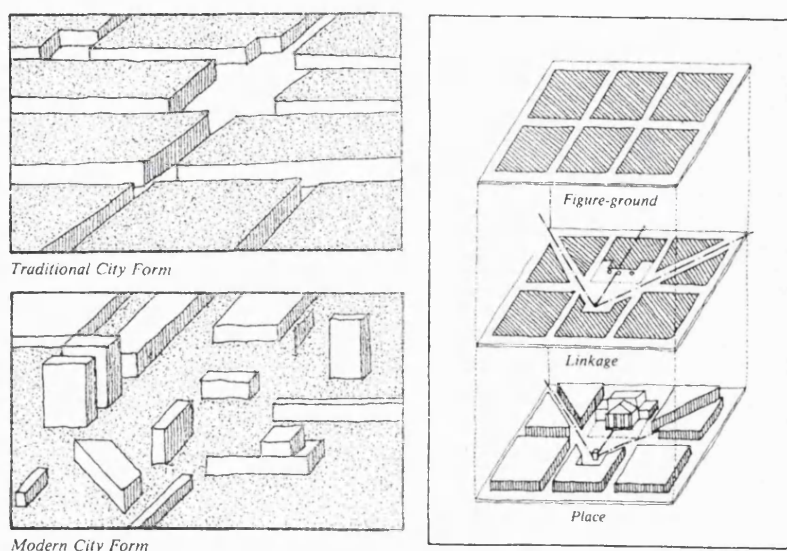


Source: Trancik (1986)

It is possible to contrast the neighbourhood form of traditional cities, in which urban spaces demonstrate a strong solid-to-void ratio (Figure 2.2, top left), with the weak solid-to-void arrangements of modern neighbourhoods (Figure 2.2, bottom left). Traditionally shaped neighbourhoods combine formal design strength (Figure 2.2 right, top) with well developed linkages (Figure 2.2: right, centre) and thus help create a strong “sense of place” (Trancik, 1986; Hillier and Hanson, 1984; Krier, 1979) as shown in the bottom, right section of Figure 2.2. Such space-shaping principles allow the development of outdoor rooms, displaying an appropriate solid-to-void relationship, and based on a careful interplay between positive and negative space (Madanipour, 1996, 2003; Lozano, 1996; Broadbent, 1990; Trancik, 1986; Bacon, 1982; Sitte, in Stewart, 1965, 1945). I suggest these design arrangements are in turn central to food quarter design, in which linked, enclosed outdoor rooms contribute to making a coherent urban fabric. Moreover, a sufficient degree of enclosure of space not only makes available outdoor rooms, perceived as physically pleasant to be in, but provides excellent opportunities for “serial vision” (Cullen, 1994, as drawn in Figure 2.3) in which the person walking through linked urban spaces has the chance to enjoy a series of impressions, including glimpses of larger spaces beyond. In traditional neighbourhoods, such as the those in which the three food quarters are located, achieving acceptable design character is also about designing in, or protecting existing, highly mixed, complex and fine-grained land uses. Again this is inherent to traditional city design, but is counter-pointed by functionalist approaches in late 20<sup>th</sup> century city

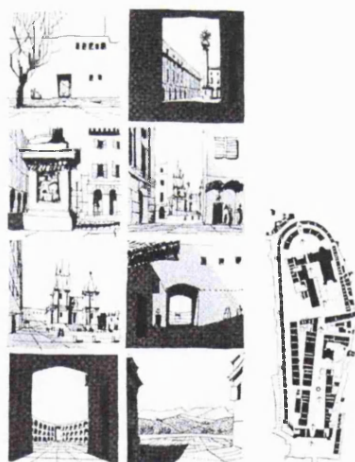
neighbourhoods where the segregation of land uses and the privatisation of public space drains activity and vitality from the public realm.

*Figure 2.2: Urban form relationships*



Source: Trancik (1986)

*Figure 2.3: Examples of serial vision*



Source: Cullen (1971)

#### *Summing up relevant design qualities in food centred design*

A number of urban design principles, qualities and elements would thus need to be present if urban design was to support food centred space. The quarter would need to be centred on a street, or combination of interior, transitional and exterior street spaces, based on a traditionally balanced mixture of positive and negative space. The heart of each quarter would provide a high degree of



enclosure leading to construction of one or more outdoor rooms, while fragmentation and disruption of this coherent structure would need to be of manageable proportions. The food quarter would require an appropriate physical scale and a fine grain, contributing to an attractive townscape (Cullen, 1971) marked by qualities of enclosure, permeability, legibility, variety, vitality, and richness (Bentley et al, 1985; Lynch, 1981). It would display a series of positive urban design patterns (Alexander et al, 1977), focus strongly on a convivial public realm, and be based on traditional streets and squares (Madanipour, 2003, 1996; Bentley, 1999; Moughtin, 1992; Gosling, 1984; Greenbie, 1984; Bacon, 1982; Barnett, 1982; Zucker, 1959). The food quarter would demonstrate a subtle handling of space at the small scale, where the possibilities for visual richness, variety and personalisation of space all play a part (Urban Design Compendium, 2000). The food quarter's capacity to provide positive outdoor space would require perimeter blocks with buildings that edge (or come close to) the street and thus give definition to the shape and function of outdoor space, "to encourage a range of activities to take place...encouraging people to meet, talk and linger" (op cit: 86). Moreover, each quarter would exhibit a complex but compatible land use mix within a gradient building up to a node of intensification of activity, to achieve a compact, walkable neighbourhood (Gehl, 1996, 1987; Roberts and Lloyd-Jones, 1996; Jenks et al, 1996; Calthorpe, 1993). The neighbourhood unit of each food quarter would be transit oriented (Calthorpe, 1993, Urban Design Compendium, 2000) and form a walkable food catchment radius of 400 metres and is therefore approximately 50 hectares (Urban Design Compendium, 2007; Task Force, 1999). Crucially, there should be a comfortable walking distance from its central food market space to its periphery (Moughtin, 1996). Leon Krier (in Moughtin, 1996: 132) suggests a somewhat larger urban quarter configuration housing around 12,000 people at moderate to high densities within urban blocks of four to five stories, where a walk to the market at the centre of the quarter could be accomplished within 10 to 15 minutes. Despite some variation on the question of quarter size, the interplay of all these elements and qualities contributes strongly to the urban food quarter achieving a strong sense of place.

A question has been raised as to the applicability of 'European' design ideas in the arguably different urban circumstances of the UK (Nathan and Marshall, 2006: 1). In this thesis, however, it is suggested that a focus on differences between British and European cities and towns underemphasizes the degree to which European city shaping ideas have influenced city building in the UK over the long term (as discussed in Morris, 1994; Kostof, 1991, 1992; Girouard, 1985). Moreover, urban design ideas based on traditional European urbanism are now being re-imported from the United States and mainland Europe into the United Kingdom through New Urbanist and European urbanist arguments and projects which are informing influential UK urban design policy and practice (Prince's Foundation, 2007; C.E.U., 2006, 2005; 2004; Hebbert, 2003; Calthorpe, 2001, 1993; Duany, Plater-Zyberk, and Speck, 2000, among others). Such thinking is also embedded in influential national and local design guidance currently available in the United Kingdom (DCLG, 2007; DETR, 2001; CABE, 2000) and is making increasingly specific links between spatial design and avoiding obeseogenic environments<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2007/nov/01/health.communities>

Any analysis of the core principles on which New Urbanist development is based in the UK, therefore leads directly back to such European design perspectives. These in turn appear closely modeled on the so-called European City Model (Parham, 2006; Clos, 2005) which can be summarized as compact, dense, favouring mobility on foot or by public transport, bringing services closer, used for many purposes in the same area, home to people from diverse backgrounds, and based on public spaces where public transport dominates and the pressure of private cars is limited (Clos, 2005; no page reference). Both European traditions, as exemplified by Clos, above, and British traditions in place making, have informed the spatiality of British cities including London (Hall, 1988; Howard, 1974; Unwin et al., 1911). As this thesis focuses on London sites, it is worth noting that the broad expanse of London's metroland (Barnes, 1992), and the villages and towns that have been swallowed up by Greater London, reflect a diversity and interplay of design influences over the long term. The food quarters themselves thus reflect the principles of the European City Model in their physical shaping, as well as a degree of overlay of other spatial patterns including the imposition of much coarser post war zoning regimes. The thesis research suggests the urban design picture at the food quarters is both more similar and more complicated than a simplistic contrasting of British and Continental urban forms, attitudes, and design practices would allow.

## **Chapter conclusions**

Chapter 2 has surveyed theoretical areas that frame the research from both sociological and design disciplines, concluding that each has important insights into socio-spatial processes around food. Urban design, despite its predominantly practice-based character, also contributes a useful theoretical backdrop to inform the work. From food sociology, production, distribution and consumption issues, changing food practices and the notion of civilising appetites are all relevant framing devices. From urban sociological theory the context includes the rise of post-metropolitan urban development, the increasing problems of urban sustainability and the decline of public space, while the individual habitus and its links to gentrifying space have provided valuable insights. The food related effects of transformations in urban space are the research context for exploration of particular places that go against dominant urban development modes. Privileging of the spatial is a way into understanding more about the socio-spatial practices of the food quarter. Three sites on their way to being fully realised food quarters are the design settings for exploring relationships between city form and socio-spatial practices, specific to London but with potentially wider food and urban design implications. These suggest that a number of urban design principles, qualities and elements need to be present if urban design is to support food centred space. Finally, while this chapter sets the theoretical context for the research, the methodological approaches to the food quarters are explained in the next chapter, Chapter 3, and together they provide a basis for the in-depth research and analysis in Chapters 4 to 8.

## **Chapter Three: Examining the food quarters**

## Introduction to the methodological approach

This chapter explores the methods used to research the thesis topic. The methods centre on three case study sites defined as food quarters: the Borough Market area in inner south London, the Broadway Market area in East London, and the Exmouth Market area in inner North London. First, the use of case study methods at these locations, and critical issues relating to the approach are explored. Next, the methods considered for use in both the social and spatial sides of the research are considered, within the framing device of the case study. The four main research methods, chosen on the basis of their suitability for the nature of the research, are semi-structured interviewing, unstructured observation, morphological analysis and urban design investigations. These are outlined and discussed and their strengths and weaknesses are examined. Arguments are made to support the use of urban design investigations in a sociological context. The techniques used to collect and analyse research material are defined, with an emphasis on the way connections are established between the material collected and findings established. The process by which three food quarters in London were chosen from a longer list of urban quarters in the UK and mainland Europe is then explained and the chosen sites are described. The chapter concludes with a summary of key methodological points that have been covered.

## Using case studies

### *Why a case study?*

A useful starting point in using a case study approach was to think about what constitutes a ‘case’ and why it has formed a suitable basis for research (Ragin, in Ragin and Becker, 1992). The idea of having a case as an appropriate basis for research tends to be an unexamined precept within the logic of social science analysis (Ragin, 1992: 1) in a context where the case study is a dominant methodological approach to qualitative research inquiry and research design (Creswell, 1998: 7). In this research the focus has been less on a *case*, that is an object of study (Stake, 1995), than on a *case study*, which is the exploration of,

“a ‘bounded system’ or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context. The bounded system is bounded by time and place, and it is the case being studied – a program, an event, an activity, or individuals” (ibid).

In this research the three sites studied represent separate cases within an overall case study approach. These sites therefore comprise a “collective case study” (Stake, 1995: 3-4) rather than being a case study that is “multi-site”, a term that is generally used to describe different aspects of the same case (Creswell,

1998: 61). The research has used a case study approach for both social and spatial aspects of the investigation and for interconnecting these aspects. The case study design has likewise been used to connect the empirical data to the study's initial research questions and ultimately to its conclusions (Yin, 1994).

Another way of looking at the case study approach that proved useful in developing the methodology, conceives of the case study as a kind of blueprint, used for exploring the topic's research questions, for defining what data are relevant, determining what data to collect, and for analysing the result (Philliber, Schwaband & Samsloss, in Yin 1994). Here the justification for a case study approach has been its suitability for the kind of research required to interrogate the thesis topic. Rather than being intrinsic (Stake, 1995: 3) that is, chosen for its uniqueness, the case study approach has been used instrumentally. It helps to illustrate a particular set of issues (Creswell, 1998: 62), in this context, about social and spatial food relationships. Despite certain issues, which are alluded to below, the instrumental case study's claims for sociological relevance are strong in relation to the research. The case study also seems a particularly apposite method for exploring aspects of spatiality. Not only does the case study approach tend to fit well within spatial boundaries, as noted in the previous chapter, the case study can be both a unit of social science research and cover a spatial unit.

#### *The case study's strengths and weaknesses*

In using a case study approach it is important to acknowledge its strengths and weaknesses at the outset and be aware of potential methodological problems it might engender. The case study approach is less a single, coherent form of research than an approach that has been "fed by many different theoretical tributaries" deriving from a range of disciplines, within the social sciences, as well as from medical and criminological models, among others (Stark and Torrance, in Somekh and Lewin, 2005: 33). All these models share the case study's capacity to allow for study in depth, at a particular site, over time, and of a particular process in action. Case study approaches are also useful for dealing with complexity in social activity and the dynamics of social interplay, and for identifying and describing social interaction before analysing and theorising it (ibid). This capacity, to handle complexity and to ground theory in research material collected from actual places, was one of the strengths that made the case study approach seem particularly suitable for the research.

Another aspect of the case study approach that appears to suit the research context is its privileging of in-depth inquiry over broad brush coverage (Creswell; 1998; Stark and Torrance; 2005). The case study approach to the food quarters has focused on depth of understanding rather than for broad generalisations to be made from research findings. It is clear that the in-depth approach has its roots in ethnography as it valorises the immersion of the researcher in the case study, and, generally, qualitative over quantitative data gathering. It was understood from the start of the research effort that this is at once a strength and a

weakness in the case study approach. On the one hand, the case study approach takes “an instance in action” (Walker, 1974) and uses “multiple methods and data sources to explore and interrogate it, leading to rich description” (Geertz, 1973). On the other hand, it is not possible to generalise results statistically from one or a few cases, despite such generalisations often being implied by researchers (Stark and Torrance, 2005: 34). Perhaps, however, some more qualitative generalisation is possible.

### *The perceived problem of generalisability*

The standard view about generalisability appears to be that qualitative methods such as case studies provide depth but poorly representative results compared with quantitative approaches. However, generalisation is only a requirement for a certain “ideal of scientific research” (Alasuutari, 1995: 45) where the research is proposed to answer questions raised by all other cases of a similar kind to the one being explored (op cit: 145). If the intention is only to explain a certain specific chain of events, that issue disappears. In this research the claims are relatively modest. The research material helps explain aspects of the food quarters’ functioning as food spaces, and also suggests possible implications for other places, without claiming a high degree of certainty about this conclusion. In any case, the process of combining raw observations into “meta-observations” does go some way toward resolving the problem of generalisability (ibid). The argument runs that by researching several different versions within the same theme, the object of study can be defined at a “metalevel” (ibid). This in turn allows for variations among the cases included in the data so that it cannot be simply read as an isolated, individual case (op cit: 147). It also reflects the research findings, where three food quarters provide data that demonstrates variations on the same theme. At a ‘metalevel’ the object of study is the burgeoning of a particular social and spatial process centred on food markets of a particular kind. In this way each site no longer represents a completely separate case but rather similar objects of study.

It may be possible to broaden out this aspect of generalisability even further. The case study descriptions presented in the following chapters should feed into the reader’s own images and memories of similar situations, so the judgement about the validity of the case study can be compared with the reader’s experience (Alasuutari, 1995: 145). Following this reasoning, the collective case study presented in this research provides broader qualitative perspectives on food and design issues in cities, based on what Stake (1994: 86) calls “naturalistic generalisation”. Naturalistic generalisation concerns “conclusions arrived at through personal engagement in life’s affairs or by vicarious experience so well constructed that the person feels as if it happened to themselves” (ibid). It is hoped that the case study narrative in the following chapters is sufficiently well constructed to allow the reader to add their own perspectives to the story and input to the analysis. In this way they can help form useful generalisations of their own (ibid). Useful rules of thumb to assist in the validation of naturalistic generalisation have included providing the reader with accounts of things about which they already know something, so they can “gauge the accuracy, completeness and bias of reports of other matters” (Stake, 1994: 87). This has also required

gathering sufficient research material prior to interpretation, so that “readers can consider their own alternative interpretations” (ibid), and giving sufficient information about methods used to achieve triangulation. In the chapters dealing with research material below, a number of techniques have been used to respond to all these rules of thumb. These include direct quotations from place-users and experts, to provide raw material that builds into an account that can be interpreted by readers, and the use of multiple methods to help with triangulation.

### *Achieving reflexivity*

Case study findings are often used to improve decision-making and practice rather than contributing to social theory (Stark and Torrance, 2005: 35). For the sake of reflexivity, it is necessary to be clear from the start about how far and in what ways the research data gathering, analysis and presentation is shaped toward certain policy or practice conclusions. I should therefore state that the thesis research is informed by a strong professional engagement in the issues and a hope that its findings will contribute in a small way to improving urban design practice. Thus, there was no point pretending that research is value free. Instead, the aim throughout has been to be as explicit as possible about my own subjective and professional stance relative to the material being studied. At the same time, the primary purpose of the research is to contribute to the body of knowledge in sociology, design and related disciplines on the topic area, based on sound evidence and accepted social science methods.

### *Drawing case study research boundaries*

During the process of developing the methodology, another epistemological issue which arises in using a case study approach is how best to draw the case study’s boundaries, and decide what should be inside, and what outside, the case study’s edges. This boundary drawing around a phenomenon is not easy (Stark and Torrance, 2005: 34) and crucial decisions about these boundaries will be informed by assumptions within different disciplines, requiring a reflexive scrutiny of those assumptions. It is clear that the case study needs to “pay attention to the social and historical context of action, as well as the action itself” (ibid, after Ragin and Becker, 1992). In this research, the question of site boundaries has both physical space and social process facets that are methodologically addressed in sociological and urban design terms.

An aspect of boundary setting concerns how many cases to research. Within the logic of the case study approach, one in-depth case is considered ‘better’ than two or more shallower ones (Stark and Torrance, 2005: 35). However, comparing and contrasting across cases can equally help to “investigate the range of possible experience”; to compare for example a ‘good’ example with a ‘bad’ one (ibid). This speaks to issues of generalisability, as noted above. It is also methodologically important to ensure there are a number of cases, so that within what appears to be a single phenomenon, variations in the patterns

between cases can be explored. Given that the research topic refers to aspects of the development of food quarters, using three cases has allowed for comparison of different food quarters as part of a collective case study. Details of these food quarter sites and the research decisions that led to their selection are found later in this chapter.

### *Verifying case study results*

Another issue raised by the case study approach is how to verify results. Postmodernist researchers among others have problematised claims for the need to verify results (Creswell, 1998: 215). However, an overarching methodological aim for this work is to achieve sufficient triangulation to meet more traditional sociological standards on the substantiation of the accuracy of the accounts given. Triangulation, in this context, refers to research protocols or procedures that: “do not depend on mere intuition and good intention to ‘get it right’” but help to ensure validation by minimising misrepresentation and misunderstanding (Stake, 1995: 107-108). Creswell (1998: 213) nicely summarises some of Stake’s key methodological insights on this point as follows:

“Triangulation of information - searching for the convergence of information – relates directly to ‘data situations’ in developing a case study. For ‘uncontestable description’, the researcher should expend little effort toward triangulation, whereas ‘dubious and contested description’ requires confirmation through triangulation. When assertions are made and key interpretations are offered, the researcher needs to provide extra effort towards confirmation”.

In this research there has been a methodological stress on seeking alternative viewpoints, where a research area or theme is contested within the data. The amount of contestation was taken as a rule of thumb in deciding to what degree triangulation was required in relation to different parts of the case study research. I decided fairly early on that multiple methods were in fact a useful way to approach this requirement throughout the fieldwork. By using a range of methods, as discussed below, the possibilities for convergence of information and thus substantiation, have been maximised. It has also been important to be clear “in what regard the researcher assumes that the study has general validity beyond the individual case study explored” (Alasuutari, 1995: 156). To return to the points made about generalisability above, for this research the claims for more general validity have a modest reach. They relate to specific socio-spatial practices and design aspects of particular kinds of food quarters, rather than providing insights into the behaviour of all food shoppers or the physical design of all food centred space.

### **Methods used within the case study approach**

#### *Deciding on which methods*



The case study approach can and generally should encompass a range of methods for data collection and analysis within the sociological tradition. Here, the methodological approach has been shaped by the issues discussed in relation to boundedness, generalisability, reflexivity and verification, as well as by the overarching need to find the most appropriate methods to elicit relevant study material. Traditionally, “the emphasis in the fieldwork is very much on coming to know an ‘insider’ perspective by observing participants going about their ‘ordinary’ business in their ‘natural’ setting” (Stark and Torrance, 2005: 34). This research has aimed at such an outcome, but not by the ethnographically mainstream method of long-term immersion in the field. Instead, the approach has incorporated a number of other empirically based sociological and design methods, which are described in detail below.

There have been pragmatic as well as theoretical issues to be considered in making decisions about case study research methods. These have concerned which cases to study, how much time should be used for each, how these sites’ boundaries should be drawn and the methods used (op cit: 35). The next part of this chapter looks at the methods chosen (and those rejected), explains how decisions about which methods to use were reached, and describes the resulting research design. In deciding which methods would work best, the two facets of the research topic - social and spatial - have been kept in mind. These aspects, and the possible links between them, have had significant implications for methods used, with the methods chosen those which could meet the research needs most profitably, by making fruitful connections between sociology and urban design. This was done through a combination of observation and interviews, and various kinds of visual data collection and analysis. An appendix explicating the methods used is found at the end of the thesis.

#### *Fieldwork approach and social research methods*

The research has followed the tradition of condensed fieldwork (Walker, 1974). Unlike the deep immersion of ethnography, the condensed fieldwork approach starts with a process of “progressive focusing” (Ball, 1981) that in this research has comprised an initial survey of possible case study sites in the UK and elsewhere to establish a long list. A first round of desk research was used to identify and explore the nature of particular sites using hard copy and online sources of information. This was augmented by interviews with knowledgeable individuals from food policy and urban design, and site visits where possible. The results helped me to define a short list of selected food quarter sites. Details of this process and the chosen sites are found later in the chapter. For now the focus is on the range of techniques that have been used and providing justification in methodological terms for their selection as approaches to enquiry.

Methods emanating from urban design practice are important in the research, but not sufficient alone for collecting relevant data because they do not yield all the material needed either about the issues shaping the food quarters or about how people respond to or shape the particular physical conditions found within

them. It has been important to understand the food quarters, both within their broader social, political, economic and environmental context, and as places shaped more directly by human use. In order to deal with these two scales, or orders of magnitude (that of the frame, and of the immediate topic), two main qualitative methods were chosen to explore the social process aspects of the research topic. These methods are semi-structured interviewing (Bryman, 2001) and unstructured observation. Both are set within and supported the case study approach (Yin, 1994, 1993). Choosing these methods has necessarily meant rejecting other ways into the research.

#### *Methods deriving from ethnography: participant observation*

The conclusion was reached in developing the methodology that some qualitative techniques, which at first appeared promising, such as ethnography (Bryman, 2001), participant observation (Jones and Somekh, in Somekh and Lewin, 2005; Bryman, 2001), and semiotic analysis (Penn in Bauer & Gaskell 2002; Alasuutari 1995) do not appear to be suitable for this field of enquiry. Ethnography at first seemed relevant because it entails:

“a description and interpretation of a cultural or social group or system. The researcher examines the group’s observable and learned patterns of behaviour, customs, and ways of life” (Creswell, 1998: 58).

However, it became clear that ethnographic approaches would require a level of immersion into the case study sites and populations (Bryman, 2001; Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 2000) that did not seem to be most useful in exploring the research topic. Ethnography appears to work best in studying a single group or population to elicit detailed understanding of its complex internal structures and processes (Creswell, 1998: 58-60). In this case the research effort has instead been focused on how a range of individuals interconnect who are of different ages, classes, genders, ethnicities and communities of interest. Ethnographic approaches did not seem in this context to be the most suitable technique for researching this diversity. At the same time, as Atkinson and Hammersley (1994) point out, ethnographic methods have relied on a participative approach over the long term, and it seemed possible that some form of participant observation might be a suitable method for this research. Participant observation has been described as requiring:

“the relatively prolonged immersion of the observer in a social setting in which he or she seeks to observe the behaviour of members of that setting... and elicit the meanings they attribute to their environment and behaviour” (Bryman, 2004: 167).

It is evident that participant observation can provide “unique insights” by allowing the researcher to observe activities through participating in them, and even becoming immersed in a particular group (Jones

and Somekh, in Somekh and Lewin, 2005: 140). In this way participant observation is clearly allied to ethnographic approaches to fieldwork, which had been rejected as a suitable method. Moreover, the focus of this research is not on one group or members of a setting, but on many individuals who represented a diversity of positions, allegiances and connections relative to the food quarters. On this basis participant observation did not seem to be the most appropriate technique in this instance.

### *Semi-structured interviewing*

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, two techniques, those of semi-structured interviewing and unstructured observation, were chosen for use in the food quarters instead of the methods considered above. The reasons are set out below. Methodological research demonstrated that semi-structured interviews and unstructured observation are among the most commonly employed research methods used in case study research (Stark and Torrance, 2005: 35). In methodological terms, structured or ‘closed’ interviews have tended to be aimed at generating the conditions for generalisation across populations (Barbour and Schostak, in Somekh and Lewin, 2005: 42). Such closed interviews have often been used with questionnaire formats and reflected research assumptions relevant to gathering quantitative data. Semi-structured interviews by contrast tend to build in a degree of flexibility, by including open-ended questions that allow the interviewer to capture unexpected issues and information. This openness means such interviews are less generalisable and more qualitative in their research orientation, suggesting they may well provide a useful method in this context. This view was reinforced by analysis of some of the other strengths of semi-structured interviewing in contrast to structured interviews. These strengths include their capacity to be less structured, more flexible in relation to topic coverage, to emphasise generality, to focus more on the interviewee’s own perspectives, to take a much greater interest in the interviewee’s point of view, and finally to allow for richer, more detailed responses that may alter the direction of the research (Bryman, 2004: 319). All these qualities indicated that semi-structured interviews would work well to generate the kinds of qualitative data needed to explore the research topic.

The emphasis on semi-structured interviewing also supported shorter-term (rather than longer immersion) visits to the food quarters, using intensive interviewing to collect research material. As Stark and Torrance point out (2005: 34), interview findings presented in interviewees’ own words have come to be accepted “as defining ethical and political aspirations” for the case study approach. That raises the question of “who defines what ‘the case’ is a case of - the researcher or the researched?” (ibid). The methodological literature points up the need to problematise interviewing as a technique rather than to assume it is somehow an objective, neutral manoeuvre for gaining access to an undisputed truth. Used alone interviewing can rely on an “overly empiricist analysis” that becomes too much caught up in the immediate perceptions of those interviewed (Stark and Torrance, 2005: 35). This was addressed by looking beyond the immediate to compare different accounts and allow a narrative to emerge. In

methodological terms, this in turn reinforced the need to be reflexive in regard to the interviewing process and to make use of other techniques besides interviewing to increase triangulation.

Similarly, the literature revealed a number of key concepts that might impact on the utility of interviews as a research method. Paraphrasing Barbour and Schostak (in Somekh and Lewin, 2005: 41), such aspects include:

- the “messiness” of encounters with others;
- the ‘performances’ of those engaged in communication;
- the level of ‘commitment’ to being engaged in communication;
- notions of ‘truth’ and ‘reality’;
- ‘suspicion’ about being interviewed;
- the hidden agendas at play; and
- the tactics and strategies employed to unearth information.

The argument runs that the researcher generally has a greater level of social status and knowledge and this could be used to manipulate the interview. Likewise, the researcher could impose their own agenda of concerns on the interview and this could prevent the interviewees raising their concerns (ibid). Another aspect of reflexivity has been to keep these points in mind in developing research questions, undertaking interviews and writing up and analysing the interview results.

#### *The semi-structured interview process*

Accepting all these points as issues to look out for and avoid, it was then possible to then set up a methodological frame for the interview process. For this element of the research, over the course of the fieldwork period a number of semi-structured interviews were organised, conducted, written up and analysed. These interviews fell into two categories. The first set of interviews was with five experts identified in areas pertinent to the research topic selected from a long list of sixteen potential interviewees, because they demonstrate substantial expertise in, variously, food policy, urban policy, urban sustainability, urban design, urbanism and architecture, and knowledge of these areas in relation to London. Some had specific expertise or detailed knowledge about particular food quarters while others had a broad grasp of some important framing issues and ideas which contextualise the quarters and the thesis topic. All or some of the following themes were explored using a pro forma developed for the interviews:

- The theorised relationship of food and the design of urban space;
- Specific urban design issues relevant to food such as connectivity, legibility, robustness, variety, visual richness, grain, scale etc;

- Issues emerging from food markets and surrounding areas and catchments - using examples in London and elsewhere;
- Issues in retrofitting existing food spaces;
- Issues in building new food centred urban fabric - design and sustainability related; and
- Possible differences and similarities perceived between UK and mainland European experience.

The second set of interviews was more specific to each of the food quarters. These interviews were undertaken with twenty-five individuals comprising a variety of place-users at each site including shoppers, stallholders, food shop staff, café staff and owners, and restaurateurs. Each potential interviewee was approached and given a sheet with details about the research project and either interviewed straight away or at an agreed follow up time. For the first pilot tranche of interviews, detailed notes were taken at the time, while the main body of interviews was recorded and transcribed. Most place-users tended to be in a less powerful position in relation to the study process than were the interviewed experts. The exception was some of the restaurateurs interviewed who are celebrities in London food culture. In undertaking all the interviews I was alert to the need to “adopt the pose of the listener in a way that parallels the language and manners of the interviewee and does not impose or objectivize the person who is invited to speak” (Barbour and Schostak, in Somekh and Lewin, 2005: 43).

The interviews with places-users were semi-structured on the basis of a pro forma developed and piloted for the research, and explored themes encompassing:

- Place-users views on local food consumption practices, focusing on shopping, eating and drinking;
- Any food issues place-users perceive in the area, such as food poverty, food miles and other aspects of sustainability;
- Ways place-users used the food quarters, including browsing, strolling, shopping, eating, drinking, and socialising;
- Ways place-users do not use the food quarters in relation to food;
- Views place-users hold about the physical design of the local area, such as features they are aware of, and their likes and dislikes in terms of the built form and public spaces; and
- Any improvements place-users would like to see in the built form, public space, or other design or social aspect.

The spread of interviews, and a short description of each interview subject, are provided in the following table (3.1).

*Table 3.1: Completed Interviews Matrix*

Expert Interviews	Place User Interviews		
	Borough Market	Broadway Market	Exmouth Market
1. Architect and master planner for Borough Market	1. Viennese tourist, middle aged, white male	2. Husband and wife, market users, white American, doctors, in their forties who live with their small child at London Fields	1. Operator of small traditional café, male, thirty something, white, Londoner
Architect and Urban Designer - Space Syntax Expert	2. 'Sausage' Café stall owner, white, British, middle aged	2. Olive seller, twenty something, male, European	2. Manager upmarket café restaurant, white male, twenty-something, Londoner
Urban Designer - Expert on inclusive design	3. Butcher's stall holder, a professional butcher, middle-aged white male	3. Local market user, twenty something, white male, Londoner, upper middle class accent	3. Owner/operator organic café, white male, fifty-something, Turkish, retired engineer
Former Head of Trustees, Borough Market	4. Organic vegetable stall holder, middle-aged, white male, British	4. Female trader, white, middle class London accent, in her forties	4. Chef, food writer and part owner 'landmark' restaurant, white male, thirty something, British
Voluntary Market Manager and head of BMTRA - Broadway Market	5. Italian-Australian, white male, architect and urban designer	5. Fish pie stall seller, twenty-something, white, female, East London accent	5. CD and coffee shop owner, white male, forty-something, Londoner
	6. Food shop and stall manager who specialises in Italian products, Italian, white male, forty-something	6. Tomato stall seller, twenty-something, white, male, Londoner	6. Group of three women queuing at food stalls, twenty-something, British, mix of ethnicities
	7. Australian tourist, just arrived but previously resident in London, middle-aged, white male		7. Local worker in media, twenty-something, white male, Londoner
	8. Couple who live locally 'round the corner' for the last year, twenty-something, white		8. Mixed group of students, four twenty-something, white Europeans
	9. Tourist, American, white, male, in late 30s		9. Local worker in design industry, thirty-something, white male, Londoner
			10. Local office workers, group of three twenty-something women, mix of White, Black and Asian

### *Unstructured observation*

The research into social processes evident at the food quarters also encompasses the technique of unstructured observation, defined as a subset of participant observation (Bryman, 2001). Unlike structured observation, this approach does not require a formal observation schedule by which behaviour is recorded. Instead it aims to record participant behaviour in considerable detail but more informally in order to develop a narrative account of that behaviour (Bryman 2004:167). Unstructured observation seemed a suitable method because it is a form of non-participant observation, whereby the observer watches what is going on in a social setting but does not participate in the way an ethnographer generally would. The method chosen for use in the food quarters is the simple rather than the contrived form of non-participant, unstructured observation, in which the observer is unobtrusive and has no influence over the situation being observed (ibid). A key strength of unstructured observation that made it appealing in this research context is its reflexive acknowledgement that it is inherently subjective (Punch, 2005; Jones and Somekh, 2005). It was thought that unstructured observation would fit well with the need to be as open as possible about acknowledging a subjective stance, and the tensions (and insights) it may bring forward in relation to the data collection and analysis process, given that the subjective observer is,

“guided by prior knowledge and experience and ‘see’ through the unique lens of her own socio-culturally constructed values dependent upon life history and factors such as gender, ethnicity, social class and disciplinary and professional background” (Jones and Somekh, in Somekh and Lewin, 2005: 140).

Over the three-year fieldwork process, I undertook a substantial number of unstructured observations which varied from brief snapshots of activity at each site to prolonged visits and production of detailed notes about behaviours observed there. Some way into the process it seemed useful to undertake head counts of place-users’ behaviours, literally counting up place-users observed undertaking different activities. The intention was to improve understanding about the range of practices being undertaken and the balance between them over time. I worked from a central vantage point at each quarter and recorded the different kinds of activities I could observe over an hour of market operation on up to three days for each food market. The observational categories included walking, sitting, eating, drinking, conversing, shopping, and taking photographs. This series of ‘head counts’ was used to distinguish various social practices on each day of three days trading over a typical Thursday to Saturday trading period, as a schematic frame for thinking more closely about different kinds of behaviour in those spaces.

### *Field notes and photographs*

Field notes and photographs were useful methods for recording observed behaviour, rather than directly participating in the action. The methodological literature suggests some quite complex schema for

structuring notes, informed by a review of the research topic and theoretical framework (Jones and Somekh, in Somekh and Lewin, 2005: 140). I found that there were a number of ways it would be possible to approach the field note's internal structure, such as moving from broad descriptive categories to developing more focused codes and categories, or making a checklist as a way of guiding the making and taking of field notes (Punch, 2005; Spradley, 1980). One possible set of categories I considered was of "space, actor, activity, object, act, event, time, goal and feeling" (Spradley, 1980). I came to the conclusion that these were somewhat overcomplicating the process, and in practice, the notes were largely determined by what was observed. At the same time, I found the following methodological guidance useful:

"whatever the recording technique, the behaviour is observed as the stream of actions and events as they naturally unfold. The logic here is that categories and concepts for describing and analysing the observational data will emerge later in the research, during the analysis rather than be brought to the research, or imposed on the data, from the start" (Punch, 2005: 180).

My conclusion was that a mix of written notes and photographs would work well to record impressions at the sites. From this starting point, five stages were undertaken in the unstructured observation process:

- Seeking clarity about the areas that might need to be recorded;
- Writing field notes;
- Focusing on looking and listening;
- Testing research questions; and
- Making broader links to the theoretical frame for the work (Punch, 2005: 181).

Writing field notes and taking photographs, I gathered research material until I reached what seemed a saturation point (Adler and Adler, 1994). Field notes were a crucial part of the unstructured observation process undertaken at the three food quarters, and were used for recording observation results. They contributed to the primary source material that was then described and analysed following the collection phase. Although a pro forma was developed for the observational field work notes, on a large number of observational visits the need to ensure a naturalistic flow following observed events, meant that a looser set of notes were taken that recorded impressions as they arose. These notes were later sorted into categories as part of the analysis.

#### *Web-based and other secondary sources*

While findings about the interplay between physical and social space are predominantly based on direct fieldwork observations, mapping and interviews, primary source data is augmented in Chapters 6 and 7 in particular by local place users', activists' and artists' commentaries, drawn from online sites. These



secondary sources are supported by a small amount of other material, gathered from recent journal articles and press reports, where these help contextualise the primary material.

### *Analysing the research material*

The research process has followed a kind of loop whereby theoretical ideas from sociology and urban design have both broadly underpinned the research process, and tended to emerge from the material I have collected. In this way theory has helped direct the research but has also been grounded in the material from actual places. The research did not begin free of theory, as demonstrated in Chapter 2, but neither are there immovable assumptions that the fieldwork material has been used to justify. The aim has been to use interview material, fieldwork notes and other investigations from morphology and design, to provide a basis for analysing the research topic's questions, and refining the theoretical assumptions as a result. The notion of grounded theory (of which more below) is therefore relevant to the fieldwork methods. While there are problems about grounded theory noted in the literature, particularly the way it can decontextualise and fragment interview and observation data, these have been addressed in this research by also giving space for narrative approaches to the material (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). The various interviewees' comments help to build a number of narrative streams about the three food quarters that have enriched the analysis.

It has been important to be able to demonstrate as transparently as possible how conclusions were reached from the material collected (Punch (2005: 195), and grounded theory proved methodologically useful. In grounded theory, whether of the emergent (Glaser, 1992) or constructed (Corbin, in Somekh and Lewin, 2005) schools, theory is developed based on actual data gathered through qualitative research. In this context, working within the methodological norms of grounded theory has seemed to offer substantial possibilities to ensure systemisation and transparency between the research material and its analysis. In particular it has supported a degree of induction in the methodological approach. In Chapter 8 some conceptual conclusions have been developed, based on practical findings from the fieldwork material rather than theoretical speculation.

### **Spatial aspects of the research: using visual methods**

Until now this chapter has concentrated on the mainstream sociological research methods that were used in developing the thesis. However, reflecting on the nature of the research concerns at the beginning of the process, it was clear that these sociological approaches alone could not yield all the kinds of material needed in order to adequately explore these themes. This research has been substantially concerned with exploring urban design issues from a sociological perspective, and visual analysis is central to urban design. It has therefore seemed appropriate to collect visual data and to employ visual techniques in both analysis and reporting. There has been growing interest within sociology and related disciplines including

anthropology in representation theory and visual methodologies (Pink, Kurti And Alfonso, 2004; Rose, 2001). As Rose (2001) points out, researching visual methods must be mindful of the existence of scopic regimes, in that what is seen and how it is seen is culturally constructed. Visual methods might be defined as “concerned with the complex processes through which people produce, circulate and read information about the world” (Pearson and Warburton, in Somekh and Lewin, 2005: 164). Thus,

“theories of representation allow researchers to explore how people produce and consume images about themselves and the world they inhabit” (ibid: 164).

This sociological approach to visual analysis seemed promising when developing the thesis methods, but a survey of visual sociology and visual culture references suggests that its methodological repertoire is not an exact fit with the focus of this research. Visual methods used by sociologists and anthropologists tend to be concerned with how images such as photographs, film, and other visual representations of social practices can be analysed (Stanczak, 2007; Rose, 2001; Van Leeuwen and Jewitt, 2001; Sturken and Cartwright, 2001; Prosser, 1998; Hall, 1997; Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996; Hockings, 1995) rather than more directly analysing spatial practices themselves. Space appears sometimes to be used metaphorically as an immaterial context within which content or discourse analysis can take place. It is acknowledged that certain studies have noted, for instance, how spaces and spatial practices impact on the construction of individual and group identity (Carson, Johnson, Mangat and Tupper, 2005). Techniques used by researchers to collect data on spatial practices have included interviews and photographic recording of spaces by their users in the context of collaborative research programmes (ibid). Thus, although some of the research examples found within the visual sociology field did explicitly concern themselves with spaces and spatial practices their capacity to deal with questions about social behaviour in real, physical places was lacking. Even in spatially based examples such as those cited above it was the responses *to the photographic evidence* that were reported as forming the central component of the research investigations and analysis rather than responses to practices in real spaces.

The difficulty in using the accepted approaches coalesced into two problems. In the context of the research topic, firstly, visual sociology was too narrowly focused on photographic images and graphics rather than actual experiences, and secondly it was too concerned with semiotics-based analysis of such images. Taken in combination, these features limited its capacity to provide a suitable research approach for the spatial data collection and analysis in this thesis. It is worth restating that this research has been concerned with studying space, not as a metaphor for something else, but in a material way (after Lefebvre, 1991) in order to better understand its social construction and dynamics. Its methods therefore needed to be able to feed into the analysis of space itself rather than of its representations through photographic or other images. Asserting a material basis for studying space and spatial practice suggested a need to extend or reshape the use of visual forms of representation and analysis sociologically.

Thus for the purposes of this research, visual data was conceived of more broadly and directly than appeared to generally be the case in this sociological area. Instead of data collection and analysis focused on representations such as photographs, spaces and spatial practices were explored in a more direct way. In the absence of sufficient sociological techniques for exploring space visually, methods have been borrowed from urban design, as another discipline not only concerned with social processes in urban space but with a wealth of techniques to deal with capturing data on spatiality. As Tonkiss (2008) notes, approaches within visual sociology are broadly interpretative, whereas urban design offers techniques for visual and spatial analysis that are more structured, systematic and comparative. The urban design techniques that have been used in the spatial aspect of the research are described and justified below.

**Applying methods from urban design**

A number of methods used in the research are drawn from an urban design research repertoire as this is judged to be broadly appropriate for studying spatial aspects of the topic. This is despite awareness that these methods tend to be structured in the form of guidance unreflexively directed towards shaping space (Madanipour, 2003). The normative and unreflexive nature of much urban design theory and methodology is discussed in Chapter 2 and analysed for this reason, as noted in the introduction to this chapter. In adapting such techniques to a sociological context it is important to be critical about the process; taking an open stance towards the research material and process, including the research setting, findings, data selection, collection, analysis and write-up (Tonkiss, in *Analysing Discourse*: 260, in Seale 2001). Equally it is important to recognise that although urban design guidance has taken a pragmatic path it is not necessarily simplistic. Rather, it can be seen as capable of a nuanced, complex and subtle response to urban conditions and issues, if the depth of its sources is acknowledged. Although such guidance does not sufficiently cite its sources to meet academic conventions, it does base its urban design advice on substantial evidence from diverse disciplines such as environmental science, social psychology, visual perception, building design, architecture and transport planning. This may not be evident in a context where primary sources have become obscured or are inadequately referenced.

Based on this line of argument, it is legitimate to include master planning methods among the research techniques for the fieldwork. These techniques have commonly been used in master planning processes to understand the background and context to regeneration sites (Cowan, 2002). Master planning techniques were used to explore each food quarter’s spatial structure, define its movement patterns and explore its existing and remnant built form and streetscape design details. The structuring of a master planning guidance document like the *Urban Design Compendium* (Llewelyn-Davies, 2007) provide a basis for developing the kinds of methods for use at each site. The design elements that can be encompassed by this part of the research are shown in Table 3.2.

*Table 3.2: Design elements explored using master planning methods*

Frame	Context	Urban Structure	Connectivity	Place detailing	Implementation
Role of urban design. Key design aspects.	Community. Place. Natural resources. Connections. Feasibility. Vision.	Movement framework. Mixed uses. Density, facilities and Form. Energy and resource efficiency. Landscape. Landmarks, vistas and focal points. Blocks. Parcels and plots.	Walking. Cycling. Public transport. Streets and traffic. Parking and services. Utilities. Infrastructure.	Positive outdoor space. Animating the edge. Building size and scale. Building for change. Public realm. Safety and sense of safety.	Managing design process. Stages in implementation.

Source: *Urban Design Compendium*, Llewelyn-Davies, 2000)

Another source for these aspects (*Shaping Neighbourhoods*, 2003: Foreword) covers some of the same urban design territory as the *Compendium* and is shown in the two Tables (3.3. and 3.4). Of particular interest is the explicit focus on food, which this master planning guidance places in the resources category of design guidance and considers in relation to healthy lifestyles, healthy economies, allotments and orchards, local shops and markets and city farms.

*Table 3.3: Design elements explored using master planning methods*

Orientation and principles	Neighbourhood checklists	Neighbourhood planning process	Providing for local need	Resources	Urban design synthesis
Policy Context. Neighbourhood as habitat. Neighbourhood in focus.	Community checklist. Investor's checklist.	Collaborative approach. Getting going. Creating a strategy. Making it happen. Case studies.	People and community. Access to jobs. Access to local facilities. Planning for movement. Case studies.	Energy. Water. Food. Waste. Biodiversity. Case studies.	Neighbourhood character. Key structuring elements. Shaping towns and townships. Designing places. Case studies.

Source: *Shaping Neighbourhoods* (Barton et al, 2003: Contents)

Within the urban design synthesis category of *Shaping Neighbourhoods* (2003), a number of urban design advice areas with a direct bearing on issues in this research, as elucidated in Chapter 2, are specifically touched on, as Table 3.4 demonstrates:

*Table 3.4: Urban Design Synthesis*

Urban design synthesis			
Neighbourhood character	Key structuring elements	Shaping towns and townships	Designing places
Local identity.	Mixed uses.	Strategies for renaissance.	Design of the public realm.

Defining and reinforcing neighbourhood qualities. Change and renewal.	The local high street. Space and energy sharing. Graded densities. The green network.	Urban capacity and potential. The spatial framework. Renewal strategies.	Home-patch areas. Conventional layout revisited. A compact neighbourhood centre.
--	--	--	--

Source: Adapted from *Shaping Neighbourhoods* (Barton et al, 2003: contents)

In this research, the intention was not to undertake a complete master planning process using the entire repertoire of techniques. Instead, the research incorporates certain master planning methods, which can assist in defining existing urban conditions within the fieldwork sites, especially as they related to food, and then analyse these. The aim is to gain a greater understanding of each neighbourhood's physical character, by identifying key structuring elements and exploring the detailed design of the public realm, especially of density nodes and connectivity. The approach draws on the techniques of character appraisal and environmental appraisal (Urban Design Compendium, 2000: 24-27). The urban design findings from this work are described and analysed in Chapter 4, and have provided framing evidence for the other primary source material in Chapters 5 to 7. The result of these master planning processes is used to demonstrate existing physical conditions in the food quarters in the terms set out above, and is represented in plans, drawings, photographs, and diagrams as well as text.

#### *Figure-grounds and morphological studies*

As part of the master planning work, figure-ground studies were developed along the lines of the illustrative examples shown in Figure 3.1. Figure-ground diagrams, in which the building forms are shown as black, and the free space as white, are a way of representing urban space used by a number of urban designers (Koetter and Rowe, 1978; Hillier and Hanson, 1984). The purpose of these figure-ground diagrams is to identify what kind of block configuration, scale and level of enclosure is evident in each food quarter, by sharply differentiating built form from the open space of streets and squares.

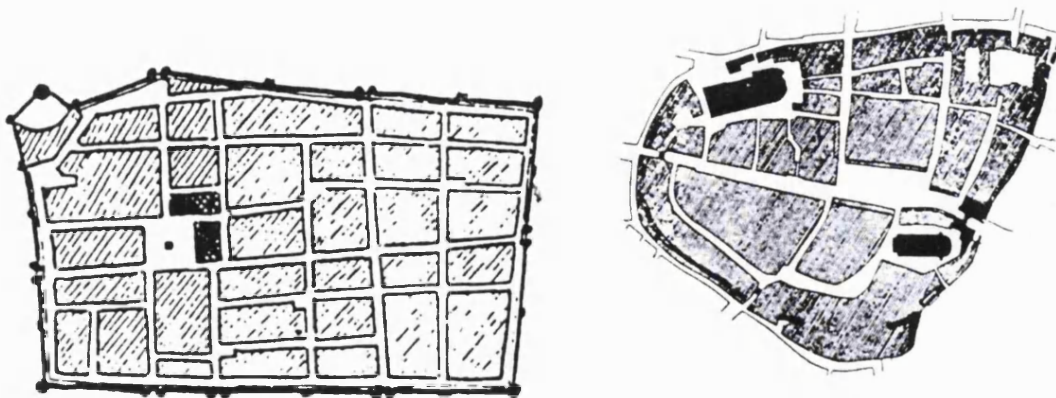


Figure 3.1: Figure-ground diagrams of 1. Aigues Mortes (left) and 2. Munich (right) Source: 1. Morris (1994) 2. Sitte (1965)

This aspect of the work also included a limited morphological study, which demonstrated how food-related land uses developed and changed over time at each site. Morphological analysis based on these food quarter investigations was used in particular to explore whether, and if so, how, compactness and walkability have impacts on the nature of food spaces and processes within the food quarters. Questions explored through morphological methods include:

- How have food-related land uses of shops, markets, cafes etc shifted spatially within the urban quarter over time?
- Which food-related land uses have appeared?
- Which have disappeared?
- Which have been maintained?

#### *Movement assessment and catchment analysis*

These visually based investigations were underpinned by a movement assessment which aimed to help document and explain the access patterns, permeability, legibility and walkability level of the sites being studied. Originally it was intended to use “space syntax” methods (Hillier, 1996) but these proved beyond the research resources. The movement assessment explored “the pattern or arrangement of development blocks, streets, buildings, open space and landscape” (Urban Design Compendium, 2000: 33). It therefore formed the basis for understanding the connectivity of each food quarter’s streets, which in turn helped define which were the most heavily used by pedestrians. The results of the movement assessment are linked to the theoretical underpinnings shown in Chapter 2, where walkability was posited as crucial to richer food relationships. Meanwhile, catchment analysis, based on the approach shown in Figure 3.2, was used to assist in defining the physical catchment in terms of distance that is normally travelled to access different kinds of land uses. In the fieldwork research, the technique was specifically employed in defining likely walking distances for food related urban places, services and infrastructure such as shops, cafes, and food markets. It helped in developing a picture of the kind of catchments that a food quarter could expect to serve in food terms.

Possible facility – Catchment population		
4–10km radius	City facilities	Stadium City
		Cathedral City
		City hall City
		Theatre City
2–6km	District or Town	Sports centre 25,000–40,000
		District centre 25,000–40,000
		Library 12,000–30,000
		Health centre 9,000–12,000
400–600m	Neighbourhood	Community offices 7,500
		Community centre 7,000–15,000
		Pub 5,000–7,000
		Post office 5,000–10,000
150–250m	Local hubs	Primary school 2,500–4,000
		Doctor 2,500–3,000
		Corner shop 2,000–5,000

This chart is indicative and is based upon city-scale urban areas. Catchments will vary in specific areas.

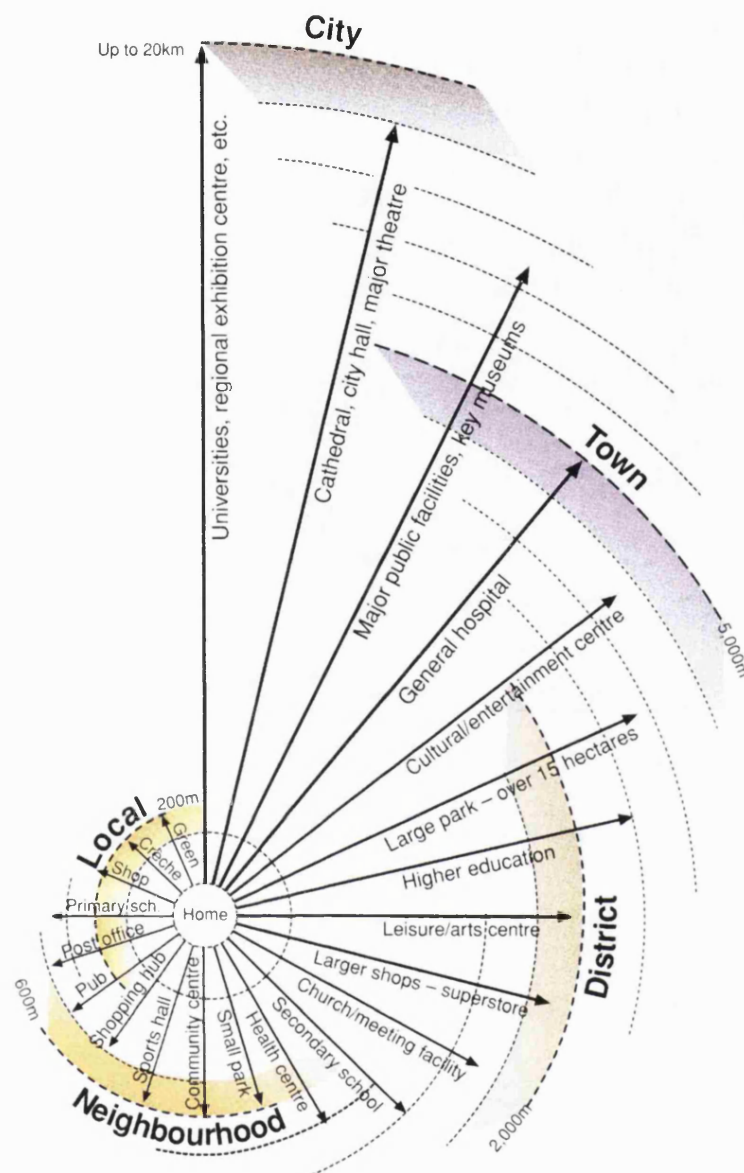


Figure 3.2: Catchment analysis Source: *Towards an Urban Renaissance* (1999)

Part of the catchment analysis was the development of ‘ped-sheds’ (Calthorpe, 1993) for each of the food quarters. These show walkable catchments for services and facilities, and are compared with conventional arrangements in Figure 3.3 which demonstrates that a highly permeable street grid, as in the three sites, can be favourably compared with a hierarchical, “dendritic” (Hebbert, 2005) street layout that makes for longer than necessary pedestrian journeys. By defining typical pedestrian catchments or ped-sheds it has been possible to understand how the urban layouts in each food quarter have contributed to, or made pedestrian access to food facilities and services at the centre of the quarter more or less possible.

Following this method, the thesis research established a range of ped-sheds based on evidence gained through observations, interviews and ‘gastronomic mapping’ as discussed below. These ped sheds are represented in diagrammatic form in Chapter 4.

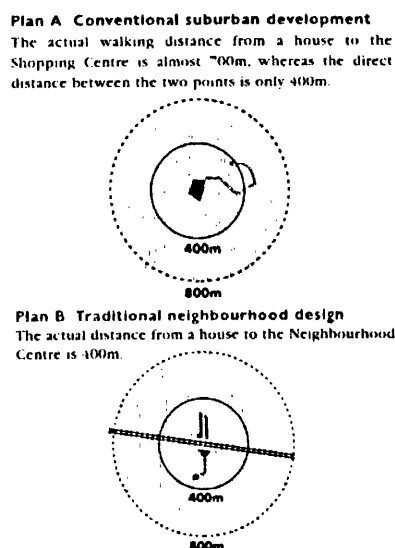


Figure 3.3: Ped sheds in traditional and conventional suburban development Source: Calthorpe (1993)

### *‘Gastronomic’ mapping*

An aim of the research has been to explore the relationship between social and spatial processes centred on food, in urban spaces of a particular design configuration. On that basis it seemed fruitful to explore possible techniques that would bring together both spatial and social elements of the research programme through combined methods. To go back to first principles, the argument is that spatial design processes may have impacts on social, food-related relationships played out in that space, and vice-versa, that social practices may have impacts on physical space. It follows that methods that can capture aspects of this interconnectedness would have utility in the research programme. Thus, to bring together analytically the spatial, ‘places’ facets of the work with the social, or ‘people’ features, the research methods built on previous urban design-based mapping techniques (Lynch, 1961, 1985). Lynch worked on issues of urban identity and pioneered a technique of mapping space with participants who developed mental maps of city space and described their journeys, to define particular urban elements of paths, edges, nodes, districts and landmarks. More recently, Zukin (1992) has also noted the importance of mapping to understand transformations in urban space. I proposed the term ‘gastronomic mapping’ some years ago to describe the way I had adapted of Lynch’s approach to mapping urban space, in order to explore food related elements in the design of local space, and the behaviour of place-users in relation to those elements (Parham 1992).



I have since used and refined the technique a number of times (Parham, 1993, 1996, 1998, 2004) and note recent references to similar techniques reported in the literature (Marte, 2007).

However, gastronomic mapping in this research setting proved unworkable in practice because of the reluctance of potential research participants to take part in the process. Given that a modified form of gastronomic mapping still seemed a valuable input into the data set, even if undertaken by the researcher alone, I developed and produced annotated food maps for each of the three sites based on two data sources. These were unstructured observation results, which generated information about place user behaviour in relation to food, and my own analysis of food-related design elements apparent in each food quarter. Although not conducted as originally envisaged, the mapping results provided useful material which helped me to explore both spatial design in relation to food, and the social behaviours evident in the use of the food quarter spaces. The food quarter maps and analysis are found in Chapters 5 to 7.

### **About the case study sites**

#### *Identifying and selecting food quarters as case study locations*

The chapter next turns to the methods for and outcomes of fieldwork site selection. The choice of food quarters in which to undertake field work was determined both by the nature of material that needed to be collected and other more pragmatic considerations that are outlined below. To collect relevant material meant considering as possible sites a number of urban quarters in relatively densely settled areas of European cities. These needed to be analogous in physical scale and demographic profile to London neighbourhoods and centred on food markets. I undertook initial research into both UK-based and mainland European sites. The potential mainland European-based field sites identified in Belgium, France and Italy included:

- The traditional market area of St Catherine's in inner urban Brussels;
- The Enfants Rouges market area in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Arrondissement, the Anvers market area centred on the Place Anvers in the 9<sup>th</sup> Arrondissement, La Motte Piquet Grenelle market area in the 15<sup>th</sup> Arrondissement, and the Rue Cler market in the 7<sup>th</sup> Arrondissement, all in Paris; and
- The inner metropolitan quarter of Isola, focused on a vibrant food market, in Milan.

None of the proposed long list of case study areas is primarily for tourists, although some, like St Catherine's in Brussels, and Enfants Rouges in Paris, are fashionable destinations for visitors from within the city and elsewhere. Each long-listed site has strong internal social dynamics and demonstrates physical design qualities relevant to the research topic.

As part of a process of progressive focusing noted earlier in the chapter, the long list was refined down and the conclusion reached that although each of these sites was very suitable for case study research, the practical issues of working in other languages, and in funding lengthy stays abroad made them unworkable as main fieldwork sites, either for interviews or for gastronomic mapping with participants, which was still proposed as a method at that stage. At the same time, it appeared probable that collecting at least some material which allowed comparison in the case study between UK and mainland European sites would improve the degree of triangulation, and enrich study findings overall and I retained one site in Paris, the food market area of Enfants Rouges in Paris's 3<sup>rd</sup> Arrondissement. However, on reflection I concluded that Paris-based fieldwork was not necessary to the thesis given that the research themes could be interrogated sufficiently using more local sites. Moreover, my emphasis on interviewing meant that practical issues in working in a second language could cause difficulties. As a result, I decided to exclude the Paris-based fieldwork site.

In any case, a relatively early research decision was that a substantial focus in the fieldwork would be on London based sites. It seemed sensible to undertake fieldwork in accessible locations given that London also provides rich territory to explore the thesis issues. For the London-based locations chosen for study there were still some issues to work through. Originally it was decided that, for purposes of comparison, at least two locations were needed. Once the Paris-based site had been excluded it seemed necessary to add a third London fieldwork site in order to make richer comparisons between sites within the case study approach. These issues obviously had a bearing on the kinds of places to be chosen. The intention was to select locations broadly within a sub-region of London; that showed a range of food quarters centred on "farmer's market" style markets; and possibly to include a site that provided a contrast as comprising a more traditional, long lived food market space. There are numerous neighbourhoods within urban London that fitted these criteria, so again a long list was developed of possible sites from which a short list was then derived. Sites that appeared suitable included those centred on Borough Market; Marylebone Farmer's Market; Islington Farmer's Market; Broadway Market; and Whitecross Street Market. Sites where more traditional food markets were found included Ridley Road Market at Dalston, and Chapel Market at Angel, Islington.

#### *The case study locations: three London food quarters*

Among the possible farmer's market-like markets, an initial choice was Southwark, centred on Borough Market. This stood out as the most developed new 'farmer's style' market in central London, operating in existing market buildings which were undergoing extremely substantial regeneration. In Chapter 2 it was argued that this kind of site could be conceptualised as a food quarter overlaid on the same physical space as a food desert, depending on the class and cultural position of the user. This was an element of complexity that was of interest. The strength of the Borough quarter as a case study fieldwork site, in which the aim was to explore the behaviour of local place-users within a particular design context, was

offset by issues in its catchment pattern, as it clearly draws market visitors and tourists from well beyond a local, walkable catchment. However, Borough is such an important site, in terms of the emergence of a new type of market space in social and physical terms that it could not be ignored, and was chosen as one of the three main study sites.

Among a number of other sites where it appeared that such a new style of market was emerging, were Broadway Market in the London Borough of Hackney, and Exmouth Market in the adjacent London Borough of Islington. Both of these appeared to offer interesting similarities to Borough although to be less far along the revived market development and urban regeneration trajectory. At this stage only Broadway was included as a study site as there was to be a maximum of three sites in all. The traditional market at Ridley Road meanwhile was added at this stage to the two chosen farmer's style markets for purposes of comparison. After a certain amount of research material had been collected at each site it became clear that the issues within the development of farmer's style markets were complex enough as an object of study in themselves. It was argued that over the course of the fieldwork it has become clearer that it would make sense to look more closely at this first kind of market in more depth rather than spreading the research and analysis more thinly over two divergent market forms. Following discussion and submission of a written justification for the change in the fieldwork focus, Ridley Road Market was dropped as a fieldwork site and the Exmouth Market area included instead.

Each food quarter, shown in Figures 3.4 to 3.6, has provided opportunities to use all the outlined study methods of unstructured observation, semi-structured interviewing, urban design investigations and gastronomic mapping within sites physically defined by their walkability catchment, normally within urban design conventions, a radius of 400-500 metres.



*Figures 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6: Borough, Broadway and Exmouth markets Source: Researcher's photographs*

## **About the research plan**

### *Research plan structure and purpose*

Based on the methodological and case study site considerations outlined above, I developed a research plan to guide the research process to help structure the processes of collecting research material, analysing the results and interpreting fieldwork observations. Although this was not an attempt to establish causality, it was useful in developing a logical progression that assisted in drawing inferences from the research material (Nachmias & Nachmias 1992). The plan's role was to help in implementing the case study design in a methodologically and theoretically coherent way. The research plan followed the convention that case study design should have five components: a study's questions, its propositions, its units of analysis, the logic linking the data to the propositions and the criteria for interpreting the findings (Yin, 1994). The research plan worked through these steps and also took into account the possibility that wholly unpredictable or surprising observations might emerge (Alasuutari 1995: 175). In the next section more explanation is provided about the different aspects of the research plan and their implementation.

The research plan covered an initial piloting stage in the research. A piloting process is a useful phase to build in to deal with the possibility of unpredictable results emerging. It allows early adjustment to be made to methods as a result of initial findings. Piloting is typically used in structured interviewing to test that questions work well and clear up any confusions or uncertainties in the approach before undertaking the main research program (Bryman, 2004: 159). This also holds true for the other methods used in this research: semi-structured interviews, unstructured observation, urban design investigations, and mapping. Piloting was undertaken in both social and spatial techniques. Through piloting I tested the various approaches in the field and made adjustments as necessary to interview questions, themes and prompts; to observational methods; to the range of design techniques used to gather research material; and to mapping arrangements. For the semi-structured interviews, I used the pilot interviews to explore how well the interview pro forma worked in actual interview conditions, following which small changes were made. For the initial unstructured observations, I made notes to experiment with the use of the technique in practice. This led to a refinement of the arrangements for recording observations, first using and then discarding Spradley's notation system.

The research plan covered a semi-structured interview process which I began by first identifying a range of potentially valuable interviewees. Following an initial contact by telephone, these potential subjects were emailed a short briefing note explaining the research context and process, the proposed interview themes, information on how results would be used, a statement about confidentiality, supervisor details and university contact details. A long list of interviewees was included in the plan, to cover contingencies such as failure to receive a response from potential interviewees. Some potential interviewees who were contacted did not respond, some responded but were not available for interview, and a third group responded and were willing to be interviewed.

For the place-users, I decided to focus the semi-structured interviews predominantly on market traders, as other research material would be obtained about place-users, such as local residents and shoppers, through

informal observations and mapping methods. After reviewing the interview material collected at Borough and Broadway Markets some way into the fieldwork stage, I decided that more shoppers' voices might enrich the work and so additional interviews with this category of place-users were included for the Exmouth Market interview series. The process for place-user interviews was somewhat more direct than that for expert interviews. It was planned to approach place-users directly at each food quarter, hand them the interview background sheet, explain the purpose of the interview and the research, and ask to undertake an interview. The plan envisaged that some would be interviewed immediately while for others a time would be set up to conduct the interview later, and both these outcomes occurred in practice.

As part of the research plan, pro formas were developed for use in the expert and place user interviews. These acted as prompts for the detailed discussion. In each case the pro forma was piloted with initial interviewees, making changes in response to areas that did not work as well as expected as discussion prompts. The plan made provision for two forms of interview recording, by way of handwritten notes and by recording. At the piloting stage recording was not used, but detailed notes were taken and the draft write-ups of interviews were emailed back to interviewees for vetting. Interview records were then amended as necessary, following editorial suggestions from interviewees. For the main tranche of interviews with both experts and place-users, after seeking their permission, I used a small recording device and transcribed the interviews. As described earlier in the chapter, in the section covering methods in detail, it was planned to undertake around twenty-five fieldwork interviews, with roughly five to ten from each site, augmented by four to five expert interviews. As noted, and broadly in line with the research plan, I conducted thirty interviews altogether, spread between food quarters and interviewees as follows: Nine interviews were obtained from place-users at Borough Market, six at Broadway Market and ten at Exmouth Market, as well as five expert interviews. The thirty interviews involved speaking to thirty-nine individuals in all.

In line with unstructured observation methods noted above, the research plan was based on observations being made in each food quarter as far as possible at a variety of times, including hourly, daily, weekly, seasonally, and from different spatial reference points such as the high street, the café, stall side, the park, and the residential street. Given that the focus of the research is in part on the environs of food markets, which only operate for limited hours each week, observation times were predominantly focused on these market-operating hours. However, observations were also planned for times when each of the markets was not operating, to compare differing activity patterns. The aim within the plan was to build up the previously described "rich description" (Geertz, 1973) of each of the three food quarters. The research plan reflected the intention that unstructured observation field notes be hand written or drawn in the field and then written up as soon as possible so that perceptions remained fresh. Visual images were scanned or digitally recorded. A substantial number of observations were made over a three-year period, amounting to approximately twenty observations at each site and around sixty in all. These included five 'head count'

sessions as described in the section on observation earlier in the chapter, with three at Borough Market and one each at the other two markets.

Finally, the research plan documented the process by which the morphological analysis of the three food quarters would be approached. It reflected a process of identifying, studying and analysing maps and other historical records about the sites, which are held in various London archives, to build up a picture of their changing built form and food-related land uses over time. It was also planned that the urban design investigations, documentation and analysis, as described above, would in each case be represented through photographs, maps and diagrams supported by text, while the mapping results were scanned so that they could be reproduced in the thesis chapters relevant to each food quarter.

## **Chapter conclusion**

To summarise, the research has been undertaken by way of a case study approach because it was judged that this best suited the nature of the research topic being studied. It has comprised a collective case study investigated in three food quarter sites located in London. These food quarters were chosen from a long list of potentially suitable sites in London and elsewhere and the set refined through detailed research and discussion with supervisors. All have been based on urban neighbourhoods centred on traditional food markets that have been regenerated into a new food market form. The methodologies used to study the food quarters and to collect relevant research material, have been drawn from both sociology and urban design. The sociological methods comprise unstructured observation and semi-structured interviewing with experts and place-users. Other sociological approaches were rejected for reasons explained in the chapter. Two methodological techniques have also been drawn from outside mainstream sociology. These are master planning style investigations and gastronomic mapping, which have reflected insights from visual sociology and borrowed from urban design.

The work has been undertaken in the framework of a research plan that linked each stage of the research to a coherent methodological and theoretical framework, as set out in Chapters 2 and 3. The methodological approach was designed to make the research process as focused, transparent and reflexive as possible. The gathering, reporting, interrogation and analysis of research material has been primarily text-based but is supported in Chapters 3 to 8 by photographs, plans, diagrams and drawings. The overall methodological intention has been to generate useful research material that helps in exploring the research topic from a number of different angles in a grounded, narrative way. In the next chapter, the focus is on exploring the morphological and urban design aspects of the food quarters using the methods described above. This in turn provides a frame for the sociologically based investigations and analysis of Chapters 5 to 8.

## **Chapter Four: Designing the food quarters**

## **Introduction to the morphological and urban design context**

The spatial aspects of the research into food quarters is informed by methods used in morphology and urban design. This chapter deals primarily with spatiality and thus incorporates the master planning methods and morphological investigations that have been made into each of the studied quarters. Together the evidence from these investigations helps delineate the three sites, and assists in the analysis of their physical conditions. The chapter also acts as a foundation for the exploration and analysis of the relationship between physical design and social processes within each of the sites, which is then presented in Chapters 5 to 8. Sources for Chapter 4 include visual records based on site observations, and research using relevant map and archival collections. Chapter 3 provided a methodological basis for the kinds of master planning methods thought most suitable for exploring the physical form and condition of the food quarters. As a reminder, these methods are touched on below. Then, in the subsequent sections of Chapter 4 the methods are worked through with reference to each of the sites in turn: Borough, Broadway and Exmouth Markets and their surrounding areas and catchments. I conclude Chapter 4 with a short section drawing out key findings from each of the site analyses, and where appropriate, make comparisons between food quarters and research themes. Particular emphasis is given to the relationship between physical and social space that is explored in the subsequent chapters.

Before moving on to the substantive sections of the chapter, I briefly review the morphological and master planning methods that have been used to explore the nature of neighbourhood character as physical space. Archival material, including maps and historical records, has helped establish how the sites have developed as food spaces, and to consider some of the implications of those changes in food terms. Urban design analysis meanwhile has followed the conventions of a master planning exercise, beginning with an appreciation of the context, moving on to consideration of urban structure, exploring site connectivity, and finally considering details of the place (Urban Design Compendium, 2000). The appreciation of context has been the starting point for the urban design analysis of each food quarter. Context is understood in urban design practice to refer to “the character and setting of the area within which a project or scheme will sit” (Urban Design Compendium, 2000: 19). Context refers to urban design in broad terms, as it can include natural and human history, settlement forms, buildings and spaces (ibid). The Urban Design Compendium (2000: 19) lists a number of priorities to be taken into account in the process of the context appreciation, which are explicitly about improving places (ibid). Finally, context cannot be understood as fixed and immovable but dynamic, and thus requiring design responses that are robust and flexible enough to be able to incorporate changes in land uses over time.

The next stage of the urban design analysis for each food quarter is the consideration of the urban structure, that is,

“the pattern or arrangement of development blocks, streets, buildings, open space and landscape which makes up urban areas. It is the interrelationship between all these elements, rather than



their particular characteristics that bond together to make a place” (Urban Design Compendium, 2000: 38).

Sometimes referred to as the urban armature; “the spatial organisation of an area” (Cowan, 2003), this structure provides the foundations for an understanding of detailed design in each site. At this stage of master planning analysis, structural elements which can be taken into account included integration, functional efficiency, environmental harmony, a sense of place, and commercial viability (Urban Design Compendium, 2000: 38). Meanwhile, design qualities explored at this stage include the compatibility, character and grain of land use mix; the nature of centres and edges and the role of transitional spaces between them; the density of the fabric and its profile, including concentrations into activity nodes; the capacity of the urban structure to provide energy and resource efficiency; the relationship between built form and landscape design, including microclimatic effects created by the structure; the nature of landmarks, vistas and focal points; and block and plot structure including shape and size (ibid).

The following step has been to explore connectivity by acknowledging the importance of movement and interplay between people and goods, reflecting that:

“Towns exist for interaction. They depend upon movement systems – roads, streets, footpaths and public transport routes; also the service utilities which make urban life possible... Just as much as architecture or landscape they help determine whether places are good or bad. So whatever their function, connections need to be thought of as an integral part of the urban fabric” (Urban Design Compendium, 2000: 69).

The exploration of connectivity builds on the urban structure analysis, and focuses on determining how this contributes to the quality and character of a place. Again a range of issues has been considered, including an assessment of movement possibilities and patterns; the capacity of the area to be a walkable neighbourhood; the directness of the connections provided by the street pattern; the nature of the street grid; how the area’s roads link up; what movement choices it offers; how far the connections reinforce a sense of place; how safe routes are; what parking arrangements there are; and how traffic management is handled (ibid). Key areas for analysis are the nature of the pedestrian environment; how the space works for cyclists; what the public transport catchment is; what the range of street types is; how junctions are designed as places as well as movement spaces; how servicing is arranged; and how sensitive approaches are to car parking, in order to avoid car dominance (ibid).

The final stage of design analysis at each site is to define the details of the place, as this can determine “where the identity and quality of a place is finally won or lost” (Urban Design Compendium, 2000, p. 85). The detailed design analysis later in this chapter refers not only to the design of the buildings and public realm, but also to the interface between them, the so-called zones of transition. In relation to the public realm, the analysis elements concern “the street, the pavement and the square and include planting, street furniture, lighting and public art” (ibid). Interface elements for analysis meanwhile include walls,

windows and doors, which act as “the hinge between the horizontal and vertical planes” (ibid). A key aspect of the analysis is to determine the sites’ ability to create positive outdoor space, based on an appropriate balance between positive and negative space and providing a sense of enclosure.

For each food quarter, the description and analysis comprises both text and visual methods, including maps, diagrams, plans, drawings and photographs. For the context analysis this includes site maps that indicate the physical extent of each of the sites. Morphological material meanwhile allows me to trace the physical evolution of food-related land uses, and the mix with other land uses at the sites over time. For understanding urban structure, figure-ground diagrams provide information about the shaping of the physical fabric. The figure-grounds help indicate the level of positive and negative space, and thus the degree of enclosure within the street and urban block structure. Urban structure material is also used to reveal key compositional aspects of the urban armature, including landmarks, vistas and focal points; and give an indication of urban structure in terms of building size, scale, density and active edges. The connectivity analysis includes movement assessment, which demonstrates the level of permeability, legibility and walkability of each site. Similarly, the catchment analysis maps help make clear the ‘ped-shed’ or walkability range, and in that way assist in indicating the spatial range from which visitors are usually prepared to walk to the sites. Finally, to establish the details of the place, there is an assessment using text and photographs of the physical qualities that contribute to making the streets and other spaces under consideration into social places within the public realm.

### **Morphology and design at Borough Market**

#### *Borough Market quarter location and boundaries*

As noted in Chapter 3, the Borough Market area is the most mature of the sites, functioning as a food quarter over the very long term, through a complex set of interior, exterior and transitional spaces. In this way it differs from the simpler form of the traditional market street, which typifies each of the other two quarters. Given its complexity and age, the morphological and master planning analysis is somewhat lengthier than that for either the Broadway or Exmouth Markets. The site map for Borough Market and surrounding area (Figure 4.1) shows the site lying in inner London, just to the south of the Thames and close to London Bridge. In principle, the physical boundaries of the site mirror the spatiality of the urban quarter. There is a question here as to how far site boundaries at Borough and the other sites can be sharply delineated. In each case, they demonstrate somewhat fuzzy edges in spatial and other terms; because their market-related land uses, economic effects, and social and environmental impacts extend outwards in uneven ways and to varying extents. However, there are fairly clear boundaries around how far visitors will walk to come to each market. The ped-shed diagram for Borough (Figure 4.26), for instance, can be seen as informally defining a certain kind of edge to the urban quarter, at a 400-500 metre radius. Overall, however, it is not possible to draw a definitive spatial line around each site and that has not been attempted.

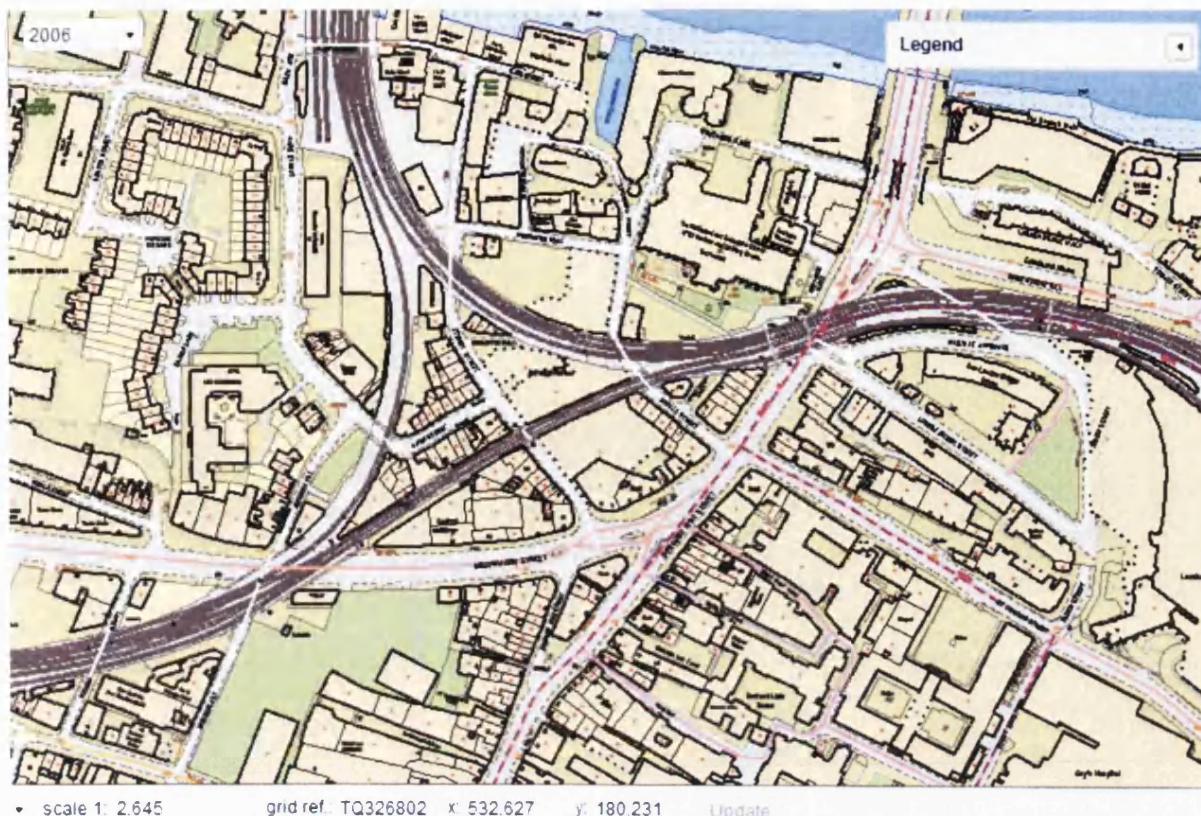


Figure 4.1: Borough Market and surroundings Source: Ordnance Survey base map (2006: grid reference TQ326802) at the scale of 1: 2,645.

#### *Urban morphology for Borough - evolution of the market*

The urban morphological and historical record shows that food-related land uses have been located in the area of Borough Market's current site over the very long term. The food market is reputed to have pre-Roman antecedents (Passingham, 1935; Forshaw and Bergstrom, 1983) and was at various times located on and south of the river (Inwood, 1998). From the 10<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries a series of Royal Charters were granted to Borough Market, and for part of this time it was under the control of the City of London (Inwood, 1998; Forshaw and Bergstrom, 1983). Situated at the meeting point for roads from the south and from the City, the market remained an obvious physical point for trading produce, although its specific location shifted within the Southwark area (Dean, 2005: 19). Borough Market also acted as a nodal point for the development of new settlement, and by 1600, new suburbs were developing around the market in an area which had traditionally mixed rural and urban pursuits, the latter including theatres, bear baiting, cock fights and brothels (Forshaw and Bergstrom, 1983: 16). John Rocque's map of 1746 (detail in Figure 4.2) shows a fine-grained urban quarter in the area of Borough High Street, which was then called "The Borough". St. Thomas' and Guy's Hospitals were already in evidence. There was a series of coaching inns and their yards down both the left and right hand sides of the street. On the right, a dense urban fabric was found around St Saviour's Church. This area included brewers, a "Whore's Nest" (the "stews" of Southwark were famous) and stables, with "Dirty Lane" and "Foul Lane" off Stoney Street suggesting less savoury market related activities.



Figure 4.2. Rocque's map of 1746, detail Source: London Guildhall Library

Accounts vary but it appears that by 1754 or 1755, the City of London had tired of running the market with its attendant problems, and control passed to the churchwardens and parishioners of St Saviour's, Southwark<sup>1</sup>. A replacement market was created in an area of Southwark known as 'the triangle', "which was far enough away from the main road to avoid congestion" (Dean, 2005: 19). The maps record supports Dean's contention that the market moved to its current 'triangle' site at around this time. Horwood's map of 1792-1799 (Figure 4.3) demonstrates that part of Stoney Street was by now called Borough Market, suggesting the market was centred here by that time, away from the main road of The Borough. Further support for this view is the loosely triangular shape of the urban blocks in the immediate area. It was also at this stage that the aims of the market (which remain the same today) were instituted: "to hold a market, and to contribute profit from the market to the relief of the poor" (ibid). The "trustee option" was introduced in 1756 as a successful form of market management that also remains in force (Smith, 2007: 40).

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.boroughmarket.org.uk/index.php?module=about:19>





Figure 4.3: Horwood's map of 1792-1799, detail Source: London Guildhall Library

By 1862, Stanford's map of London and its Suburbs (Figure 4.4) shows that Borough Market still fronted on to Stoney Street, much in its 1792-99 position. However, Foul Lane and Dirty Lane had disappeared and The Borough had been renamed Wellington Street, one supposes after the Duke's triumphs in the Napoleonic Wars. Many of the inns and taverns also remained along the high street. St Thomas' and Guy's hospitals had taken over more space to the east of the high street, but still contributed strongly defined urban blocks, within an enclosed urban structure, as Figures 4.5 to 4.8 demonstrate.



Figure 4.4: Stanford's map of London and its suburbs, 1862 (detail) Source: London Guildhall Library



(a) BOROUGH MARKET, circa 1750



(b) BOROUGH MARKET, 1810





(a) FISHMONGER ALLEY



(b) No. 4, GREEN DRAGON COURT

*Figures 4.5 to 4.8: Developing urban form in the area of Borough Market* Source: London Metropolitan Archive

#### *Relevant transport changes*

Stanford's map of 1862 (Figure 4.4) shows a number of dramatic transport related changes in the morphology of the Borough area since Horwood's map of 1792-99. These were caused "by a revolution in transportation and movement within the city" (Dean, 2005: 20). London Bridge had been moved west by some 180 feet, and substantial railway infrastructure developed south of the Bridge. By 1843, railway lines were arriving from both south-west and south-east. The latter required large viaducts to be pushed through the immediate Borough Market and high street area. A further evident transport related change was the clearance of buildings in a sweeping line from the top of Borough High Street round to the west in the 1860s. This was to make way for what was to become Southwark Street, just to the south of the market. The new railway viaducts "narrowly missed a substantial 88 foot cast iron dome which had been erected over 'the triangle' in 1859 by Edward Habershon" (ibid).

#### *Market design, development and reconstruction*

In 1880 Henry Jarvis developed ambitious reconstruction plans for the market, but a simpler barrel-vaulted replacement structure was built instead (Dean, op cit: 22). A second scheme of barrel vaults by Kinnipie and Jaffrey in 1894 did not proceed (French, 2005). Figure 4.9 demonstrates that Borough Market was designated as a space just to the north of the South Eastern Railway viaduct that loops across it. This space was east of Church Street and north of Bedale Street, rather than the more traditional 'triangle', although the covered halls were still apparent on the map at this location (Figure 4.9).



Figure 4.9: Ordnance Survey map of Bermondsey and Wapping of 1894 (London Sheet 77) Source: London Guildhall Library

Figure 4.10 demonstrates that by 1914 there had been some further changes since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century configuration of market and surrounding space. The market was still shown as in the 1894 map, but now the covered structures (market halls) were in a slightly different configuration. A “Borough Market Junction” was shown, where a small entrance to the market met Borough High Street. Just to the south of the railway viaducts was a new space enclosed by built fabric abutting the market halls, now called “Three Crowns Square”, and in a position that was to become the 1930s market entrance.





Figure 4.10: Ordnance Survey map of Bermondsey and Wapping of 1914 (London Sheet 77) detail  
Source: London Guildhall Library

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Borough Market was one of London's principal fruit and vegetable markets (Porter, 1994) and continued to flourish as a wholesale market up until the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1906 new regulations had been brought in for the control of the market, after a series of physical expansions in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and by 1927 the market covered an area of around three acres. Further alterations and additions were made in 1931 "which included the demolition of old Three Crown Square and the building of a new road through the market" (Passingham, 1935: 110). The next notable addition was a building comprising an entrance and accommodation for market trustees, designed by Arthur W Cooksey and Partners, in a mix of Art Deco and Neo-Georgian style, which was added on the Borough High Street frontage in 1932. The new entrance was required to relieve congestion within the market (Maughan, 1931: 168) which suffered from lack of space and poor road approaches, while "the accommodation there is of a miscellaneous character, and still hopelessly mixed up with other buildings in the vicinity" (Passingham, 1935: 110). A description of the market's internal configuration in the early 1930s emphasises its crowded character and gives some insight into the way that trading was organised in terms of physical form:

"The market is irregular in shape, hemmed in on all sides as at Leadenhall, and covered by a glazed roof which allows insufficient light to filter through it for the business below. This is in part caused by the two bridges over which the Southern Railway actually crosses the market. ... There are 188 pitching stands let to 81 tenants in the covered portion of the market, while the

uncovered part is divided into 203 wagon and pitching stands occupied by growers who bring their produce from the Home Counties south of the Thames. Rents for the outside stands are nominal charges of twenty-one shillings per stand per annum” (ibid).

In the 1930s vegetables and fruit formed “the basis of the business of Borough Market” (Maughan, 1931: 168). In the (covered) green market wagons were not unloaded, but fruit and vegetable samples were displayed outside the vans of potential buyers and then packed up by them for distribution onwards (ibid). Produce had to be transferred by hand from street to stalls because of space restrictions, so all unloading was done by porters (Passingham, 1935). At that stage the market still largely served south London and the South Eastern counties, as it had done from medieval times (op cit). The market thus retained its nexus position as a physical food trading space at a critical location.

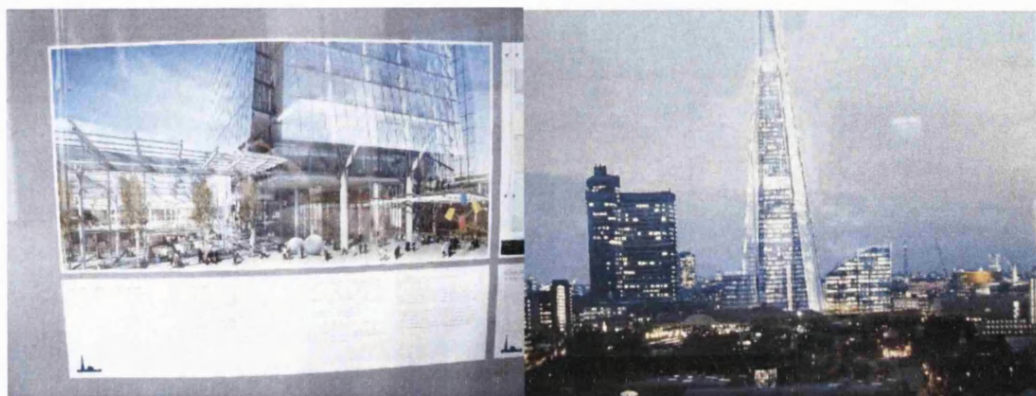
#### *The market post-war*

Like much of Borough High Street, Borough Market suffered damage from World War II bombing which destroyed parts of the covered structure on Park Street. Post war the Borough area and the market went into decline, with empty warehouses to the north abutting the Thames, and the market itself in an increasing state of disrepair. “Years of decline in the wholesale trade - a product of changing consumer shopping patterns - had meant that, not only was there a lot of vacant space in the market, but insufficient funds were available to maintain its increasingly decrepit structures and services” (Nicholson, 2005: 11). Its very decrepitude may be one of the reasons why the market was of considerable interest to artists, as demonstrated by Edward Bawden’s exquisite lithograph of Borough Market of 1967, which can be viewed at the London Guildhall Library, and L. Moholy-Nagy’s earlier photographic record of 1936. Despite the barriers to the market’s continued functioning, from the early 1990s the Market’s Trustees, under George Nicholson’s leadership, launched and managed an ambitious restoration and new development programme for the market and adjoining spaces. Work to date includes the re-erection of the south portico of the Floral Hall from Covent Garden (Figure 4.11). Over the late 1990s and early 2000s, each area of the market has been rebuilt. New stall areas have been created, with some, but not all, based on the existing pattern of trading ‘out’ from a space rather from freestanding stalls (Greig, 2006). New roofing, walls and flooring have been inserted as necessary.



Figure 4.11: Borough Market floral hall frontage to Stoney Street Source: Photograph by researcher, 2005

In 2008 plans are afoot for the commercial redevelopment of the area to the north east of the market, where a new 'London Bridge Quarter' is proposed to be built adjoining London Bridge Station. This has been promoted by its developers as "the capital's most exciting and ambitious new development"... "A truly mixed use vertical city in one building"<sup>2</sup>. The 72 level, 310 metre tall 'Shard of Glass', is designed by Renzo Piano (Figures 4.12 and 4.13). The link between what is being marketed as desirable residential, office and hotel accommodation and 'attractions' like Borough Market is explicitly made.



*Figures 4.12 and 4.13: Publicity material from 'London Bridge Quarter', (left) and the Shard by night (right) Source: Photographs by researcher, 2008*

#### *Figure-ground and site map*

The figure-ground diagram of the Borough Market area (Figure 4.14) shows a fine-grained urban fabric pattern in keeping with its location near the centre of what the morphological records above demonstrate is a long developed, traditional city quarter. There is a strong solid-to-void relationship between the built fabric and open space around the market, along the minor Stoney and Park Streets. This is also the case on the more major Borough High Street and Southwark Streets, in which urban blocks are generally built up to street alignments. The railway infrastructure acts as a substantial intrusion, crossing the site area in a Y shaped form over the market space. The figure-ground also conveys that the market is predominantly configured as a set of covered structures wrapped under the rail viaducts, within the area bounded by Stoney Street, Winchester Walk, Bedale Street and Borough High Street.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.shardlondonbridge.com/vertical\\_city/location.php](http://www.shardlondonbridge.com/vertical_city/location.php)



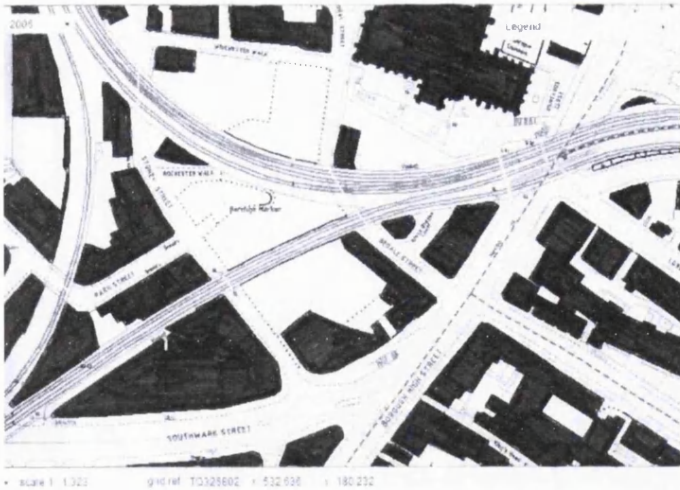


Figure 4.14: *Figure-Ground of Borough Market and surrounds* Source: Drawn by researcher, based on Ordnance Survey map (2006; bar scale of 1:1,323)

The street and building pattern, evident in the figure-ground and on the site map, demonstrate the imprint of successive layers of settlement from medieval and into early modern times. The elevations from Borough High Street, taken from Tallis's 1840 survey (Figure 4.15), indicate how coherent this pattern was in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Tallis shows a consistent frontage on both sides of the street, comprised of narrow terraced buildings housing individual shops, surmounted by two to four stories of business and residential accommodation. Gaps in building façades, leading to inns, taverns and their yards, are also narrow and small scale, so that the overall coherence of the frontages is not disrupted. Some breakdown of the urban fabric pattern is evident in development dating from this time, due in part to railway line and terminus building described above. The impact of this series of transport infrastructures starts from this time to contribute to areas of lost space (Trancik, 1996).



Figure 4.15: *Housing elevations on Borough High Street - from Tallis's 1840 survey (left) and Figure 4.16: From a 1948 survey by the London County Council (right)* Source: London Metropolitan Archive

Studied together, the figure-ground and the site map indicate that the area's urban structure had broken down more seriously by the latter half of the 20th century, when a series of rips and tears in the fabric occurred near the food market. These included the development of a number of large-scale, buildings comprising housing blocks, hospital related buildings, and medium and high-rise office blocks set back from frontages. Another evident influence is the relationship to the river to the north. Here lie remnant dock spaces that reflect the area's historically important, but now superseded, designation as London's larder. By 1948, the building elevation pattern, shown in the London County Council's visual survey (Figure 4.16), largely remained intact along Borough High Street, although there had clearly been some infill in early modernist style. Some disruption to the fabric can also be seen close to St Thomas' Street, as well as gaps where individual terrace buildings once stood. Somewhat ironically, due to the food market's decline, and therefore the lack of redevelopment, by the post war period the area around the market was one of the remnant pockets of fine-grained buildings in the northern part of Southwark, which addressed street frontages in a largely uninterrupted way.

#### *Assessment of Borough's urban structure*

This morphological material lays the groundwork for the urban design analysis. The urban blight the morphology reveals has had a paradoxical effect on the urban structure at Borough. Many of the market buildings, and buildings surrounding it, were left to fall down rather than being demolished. This meant that when regeneration started in the 1990s it was able to build on a rich stock of local market related fabric. The area already had a strong sense of place and environmental harmony even though its commercial viability was deeply compromised. Today this building fabric forms the basis for Borough's recent concentration into an intense activity node, surrounded by fine-grained mix of land uses including housing, shops, offices, workshops, and studios. In the immediate area of the market there is an equally rich land use mix, largely focused on food, including food wholesaling premises, stalls, shops, pubs, bars, cafes, and restaurants.

Key focal points in the area include the Thames to the north, London Bridge Station to the east (London's oldest station, opened in 1836) and the tube station entrances on Borough High Street. Within the market, the Floral Hall façade re-erected from Covent Garden acts as one of the market's focal points, as does the 1930s façade to Borough High Street. Other new focal points include the Monmouth Coffee Store and café on the corner of Stoney and Park Streets (Figure 4.17) and the Neal's Yard Dairy shop and storage premises in Park Street (Map 4.7). Meanwhile, landmarks in the area include the spire of Southwark Cathedral just to the north of the market, and the George Inn on Borough High Street, which contains parts of London's only surviving galleried coaching inn. The regenerated and newly built market halls, including those at the green market, in the area bounded by Stoney Street, Bedale Street, Rochester Walk, Winchester Walk and Cathedral Street, have themselves become landmarks. The frontage of the Floral Hall on Stoney Street is now often used as a signifier of the market as an iconic space in visual representations of London, in the same way as St Mary Axe ("the Gherkin") has joined other buildings in representations of London's skyline. Neal's Yard Dairy's location map for its shop, (Map 4.7) points to

some of the landmarks and focal points noted above. It also identifies other places that might be considered food and drink landmarks at Borough, including Monmouth Coffee Store and three local pubs: The Globe, The Wheatsheaf and the Market Trader. The complex railway infrastructure that sits above the market spaces can be considered another kind of landmark, albeit a less admired one.

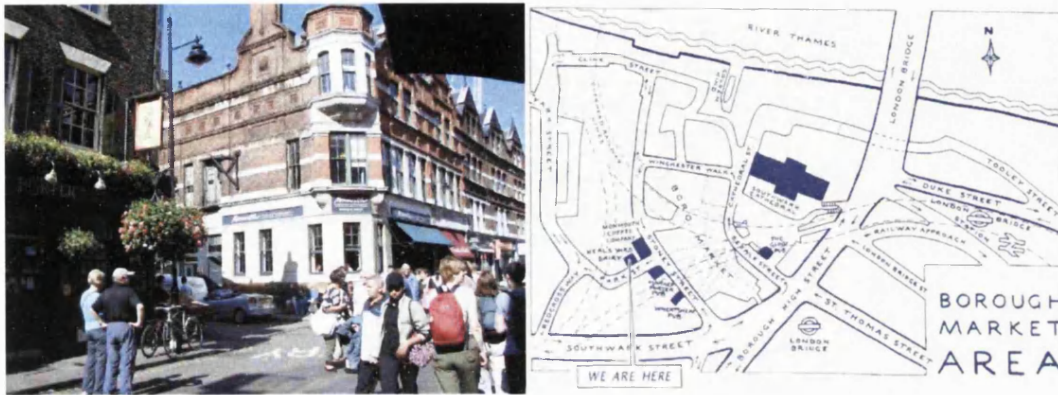
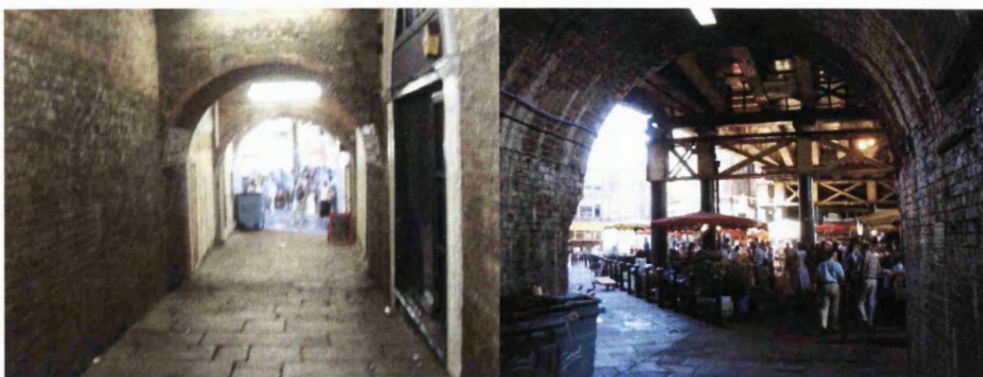


Figure 4.17: Monmouth Coffee Store (with green canopy) corner of Stoney and Park Streets, Photograph by researcher

Figure 4.18: Neal's Yard Dairy Map of the Borough Market Area Source: Photograph by researcher, map downloaded from Neal's Yard Dairy's website

There are few obvious vistas at Borough although looking north from Borough High Street, the Borough Market corner above Brindisa's restaurant is one. There are some views in evidence, including west to the entrance to the market from Borough High Street under the railway viaduct. Looking back towards the food market to the south from this position, meanwhile, allows a rather Gordon Cullen (1971) inspired "serial vision" view into the market space itself (Figures 4.19 and 4.20). Another intimate scale view is found by looking north from Park Street back towards the market halls on Stoney Street. A further view is to be had from the approach from London Bridge Station, looking south west over the market spaces. The quality many of these views share is that they allow glimpses of small parts of a mysterious whole and this adds to the site's design charm.



Figures 4.19 and 4.20: Serial vision views of the market, looking south Source: Photographs by researcher

*Urban design qualities including fine grain and scale*



The figure-ground findings, the historic elevation drawings and photographic record indicate the predominantly fine grain of the urban structure in the immediate area of the market. There is a reasonable degree of coherence in the built fabric in terms of building size, scale, density and active edges in the vicinity of the market. A typical building elevation is that found on Stoney Street, which is reproduced in Figures 4.21 and 4.22. The edge of the space, where the pavement meets the building frontage, is active and intricate, supporting vibrant street life, especially, but not only, on market days. Land uses appear to be compatible, with market-related uses such as food shops, cafes, bars, pubs and restaurants developed at a fine grain along each of the streets surrounding the market. Building typologies appear robust. They demonstrate a “long life and loose fit” quality that contributes to their sustainability (Brand, 1994). Some can be seen to be undergoing renovation to extend their useful life. The microclimates created by the interplay of buildings and spaces are pleasant, with none of the wind tunnel or sharp updraft effects that are associated with spaces outside high-rise buildings or in areas that lack enclosure. Taken together, these qualities mean that the area demonstrates a strong visual identity and ‘sense of place’ based on coherent character.



*Figures 4.21 and 4.22: Visual examples of fine-grained local built fabric on Stoney Street* Source: Photographs by researcher

#### *Decline in urban design quality*

As one moves further away from the market spaces, to the east and northeast in particular (and many people do because this is where the London Bridge transport interchange is found), there is a sharp deterioration in the quality of the urban fabric. A loss of human scale and active edges is demonstrated in the net of station approach roads, and exacerbated by the jumble of buildings and spaces of St Thomas’ and Guy’s Hospitals to the east. Here the coarse grain of high-rise, point block office buildings just to the north and south of London Bridge Station undercut many of the qualities that give the Borough Market’s immediate area such a strong image and sense of place. As the visual examples in Figures 4.23 and 4.24 show, the area is characterised by jarring built form discontinuities and areas of lost space.



Figures 4.23: Area to the north and east of Borough High Street (left) and 4.24: Area south and east of London Bridge Station (right) Source: Photographs by researcher

#### *Connectivity assessment*

The connectivity assessment builds on the analysis of the urban structure. Through this assessment it is possible to see that the immediate site area has a high level of permeability, legibility and walkability. Substantial permeability is demonstrated in a number of ways. First there is the presence of small blocks that give visual cues that help the walker understand how to get through from one place to another. There is an avoidance (by and large) of segregation of walking paths from other modes, or the segregation of land uses, as is habitual in exclusionary zoning. The site scores less well on the avoidance of dendritic road layouts, as there is clearly a road hierarchy in evidence. Stoney Street, Park Street, Bedale Street and Winchester Walk are the minor roads, with Southwark and Borough High Streets' more major roads acting as traffic arteries. The immediate area of the market can also be considered highly permeable. This is because it allows a considerable number of routes through, avoids confusion about which frontages are the 'public' fronts and which the 'private' backs of buildings, and ensures almost contiguous perimeter block development.

As explained in Chapter 2, legibility is about being able to grasp what is going on in a spatial sense. The immediate area of the market allows a reasonable level of legibility, despite spatial complexities including the overlay of railway infrastructure viaducts (see Figure 4.25) and the substantial level changes in roads as they near London Bridge. Although there are a series of complicated spaces, the market area also contributes to legibility by its small block structure, strongly thematic quality, high level of path enclosure, nodal nature and the intriguing path sequences it allows the walker. A little further from the centre of the site, legibility declines due to the widely separated land uses of London Bridge Station and



office developments to the north side of the site with their set back, bland building typologies and overlarge urban blocks.



*Figure 4.25: Railway viaducts across Bedale Street* Source: Photograph by researcher

The immediate market quarter is very walkable. The catchment analysis suggests a ped-shed (represented in Figure 4.26), which characterises Borough Market as highly accessible to a local pedestrian catchment. The ped-shed diagram maps the physical radius of around 500 metres from which pedestrians are normally willing to walk to a site on a daily basis. This walkability radius encompasses the key transport interchange of London Bridge Station, other public transport nodes such as London Bridge Underground Station (there are exits on Borough High Street immediately next to the main market entrance), and extends nearly as far as Borough Underground Station to the south. It also covers various bus stops, close by the market on Borough High Street, on the southern approach to London Bridge and at the bus station adjoining the railway station. These serve routes from North, East, West and South London as well as the city loop bus route that traverses various transport interchanges and cultural sites on the north and south banks of the Thames.



Figure 4.26: 500 metre radius ped-shed for Borough Market Source: Prepared by researcher, using London A-Z base map

Also contributing to the catchment analysis is the public transport accessibility map of Southwark (Figure 4.27). This demonstrates that Borough Market is in the most highly accessible category in the borough (shown as dark pink to purple, at the top left of the map). The area around the food market is also in this highest accessibility category or one below, which still indicates a very high level of accessibility to public transport. This is not surprising given the proximity of the number and range of transport modes noted in the previous paragraph. It suggests that Borough Market has the capacity to attract a significantly larger catchment of visitors than those who come from within 500 metres. The observational material presented in Chapter 5 strongly reinforces this conclusion.



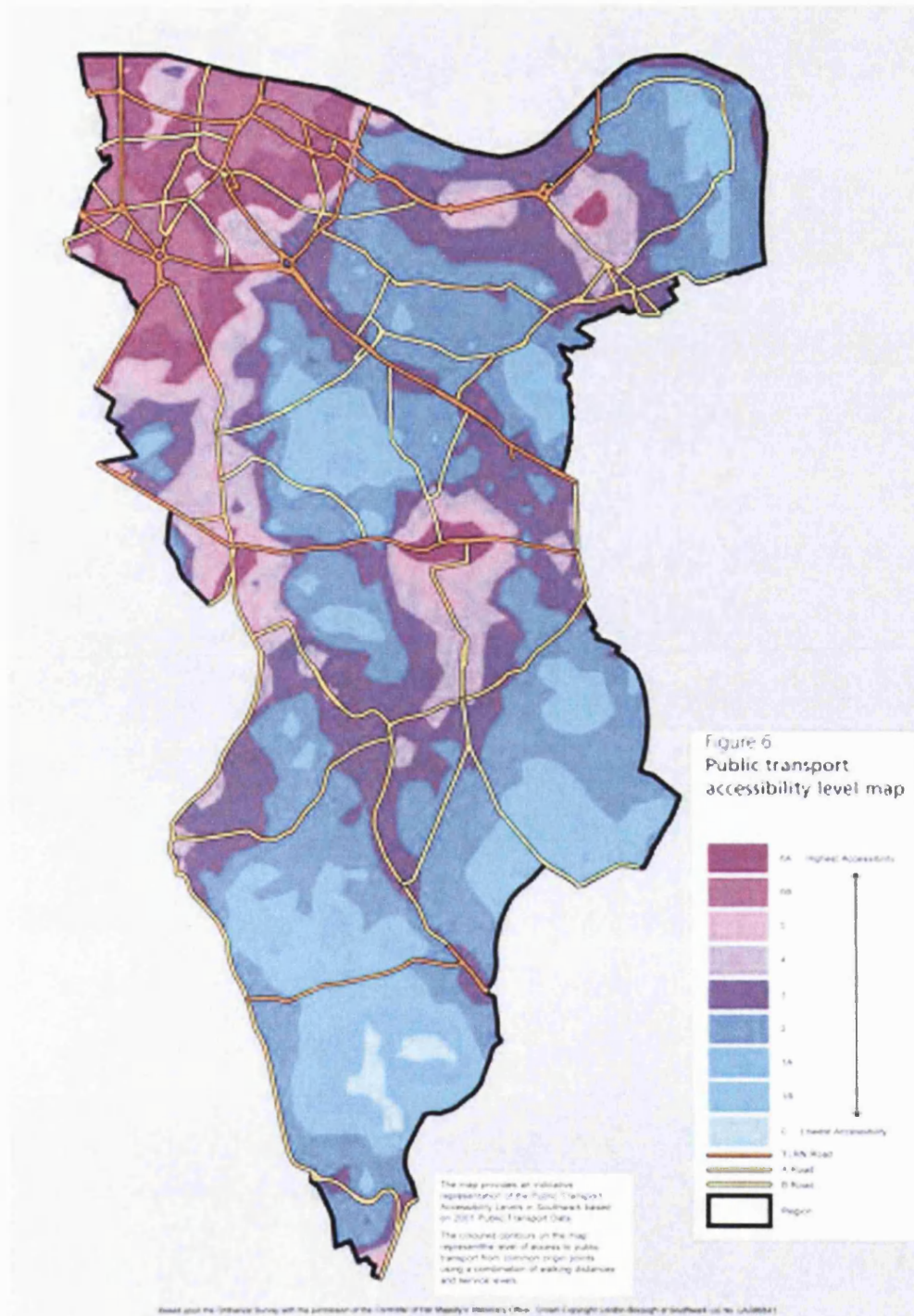


Figure 4.27: Public Transport Accessibility Level Map for LB Southwark (detail) Source: LB Southwark Transport Topic Paper (2005)

Part of the connectivity analysis concerns whether and how street space is shared between different travel and access modes. Site assessment demonstrates that junctions in the minor streets around Borough Market work as places, rather than simply as movement corridors for cars. The narrow streets and the

wealth of activity on the street and at its edges forces drivers to slow down and negotiate their way through. While street space is used by a number of travel modes, car dominance has been avoided around the immediate market area, although not on Borough High Street. Car parking opportunities are available but limited. A corner like that of Stoney and Park Streets is a focal point for pedestrian and street activity (Joined Figures 4.28 and 4.29). These tight urban conditions mean that servicing of the food market and attendant shops has always had to occur at a reasonably small scale at Borough Market and this remains true today. Site observations suggest that servicing is handled fairly discreetly, and follows the fine-grained economic structure evident in the market. This is typified by numerous small deliveries to the large number of individual businesses, rather than a few very large trucks dominating the street spaces.



*Figures 4.28 and 4.29: Activity at the corner of Stoney and Park Streets (left) and servicing at small scale outside the Floral Hall (right) Source: Photographs by researcher*

#### *Detailed street assessment*

Turning to the detailed street assessment, site analysis suggests that the market hall pathways, and the streets in the immediate area of the market, contribute strongly to its identity and quality. These provide a series of human scaled spaces that create outdoor rooms, which feel pleasant to be in, rather than simply acting as through ways. The typical height-to-width ratios are around 1:1 to 1:1.5, which provides a comfortable level of enclosure. Meanwhile, the public realm is simply detailed, with asphalt road surfaces and paving blocks at street edges. Bollards are used to divide off pedestrian from vehicular space in a few places (Figure 4.30). Until very recently local streets were in poor condition, with ponding and potholes in evidence. While the market's paving surfaces have been upgraded as part of the overall regeneration effort, there are still relatively down-at-heel road surfaces and pavements are found in local streets. It may be that this somewhat rough and ready quality is seen as part of the market area's charm. Lighting is generally on freestanding poles (Figure 4.31), and there is little in the way of street furniture or public art. There are no street trees but hanging baskets can be seen suspended from poles and building frontages here and there. Almost all the public realm drama comes from the interplay between place users, the market's own stalls displaying produce, the architectural qualities of the buildings and their busy frontages to local streets.





Figures 4.30 - 4.33: Details of the streetscape at Borough Source: Photographs by researcher

#### *Summary of morphological and urban design findings from Borough*

In summary, the research shows that Borough Market has been an extremely long-lived food market space. It has operated on its current somewhat tight site for centuries, experiencing substantial changes in its governance, trading arrangements, and physical structures over time. Equally long-lived has been the market's aims and management by trustees. The market spaces themselves are of historic and architectural interest and the area reflects the strongly coherent built form of a traditional urban quarter. The fabric suffered transport-related and other incursions in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but worse decline came in the post war period, due to structural issues including changes to London's food economy. Remarkably, given the scale of post war demolitions elsewhere, the immediate market area remained largely intact as urban fabric, and enjoyed significant regeneration in recent years. The wider area around the market, by contrast, continues to suffer from insensitive large-scale redevelopment schemes.

The different elements of the urban design analysis demonstrate that the site has a fine-grained, complex but coherent urban structure. There are both long existing landmarks in the vicinity, and newer landmarks

relating to the food market itself, that help support legibility despite a complicated urban pattern. A number of focal points act as social nodes within the urban fabric. Vistas and views tend to be subtle, giving interesting serial vision opportunities to the walker. The existing, renovated and new built fabric is human-scaled, with active frontages, and housing a robust and diverse range of land uses, many related to food. There is a high degree of enclosure in local streets, so that public spaces in and around the market work as outdoor rooms, with simple street detailing that contributes to distinctive character. The connectivity analysis demonstrates that the site allows a high level of permeability, especially for pedestrians, but also creates a much broader catchment for visitors from further afield through a variety of public transport modes. The site retains a rough and ready character that is part of its identity. All these design elements support local sense of place by underpinning intensity in both economic and social activity around food.

### **Morphology and design at Broadway Market**

#### *Food quarter location and boundaries*

The next section of this chapter explores morphological and urban design material collected in relation to Broadway Market in East London. The site map for Broadway Market (Figure 4.34) is shown with fuzzy edges following the uneven boundaries argued for the urban quarter. Broadway Market (the street), on which the site is centred, runs north to south from London Fields to the Regent's Canal. Most morphological information starts from a considerably later period than for Borough, because the area was settled as primarily rural rather than urban space until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. While there were villages in the vicinity, Broadway Market was not yet a street or urban area but simply part of a Porters' Path that existed for some centuries and along which drovers led cattle into London from Epping Forest and south-eastern Essex. Livestock were grazed on London Fields, just to the north east of Broadway Market, as it was the last common grazing area before Slaughter Street in Brick Lane or East Smithfield, where London's major meat market was located<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.broadwaymarket.co.uk/history.html>, 2007

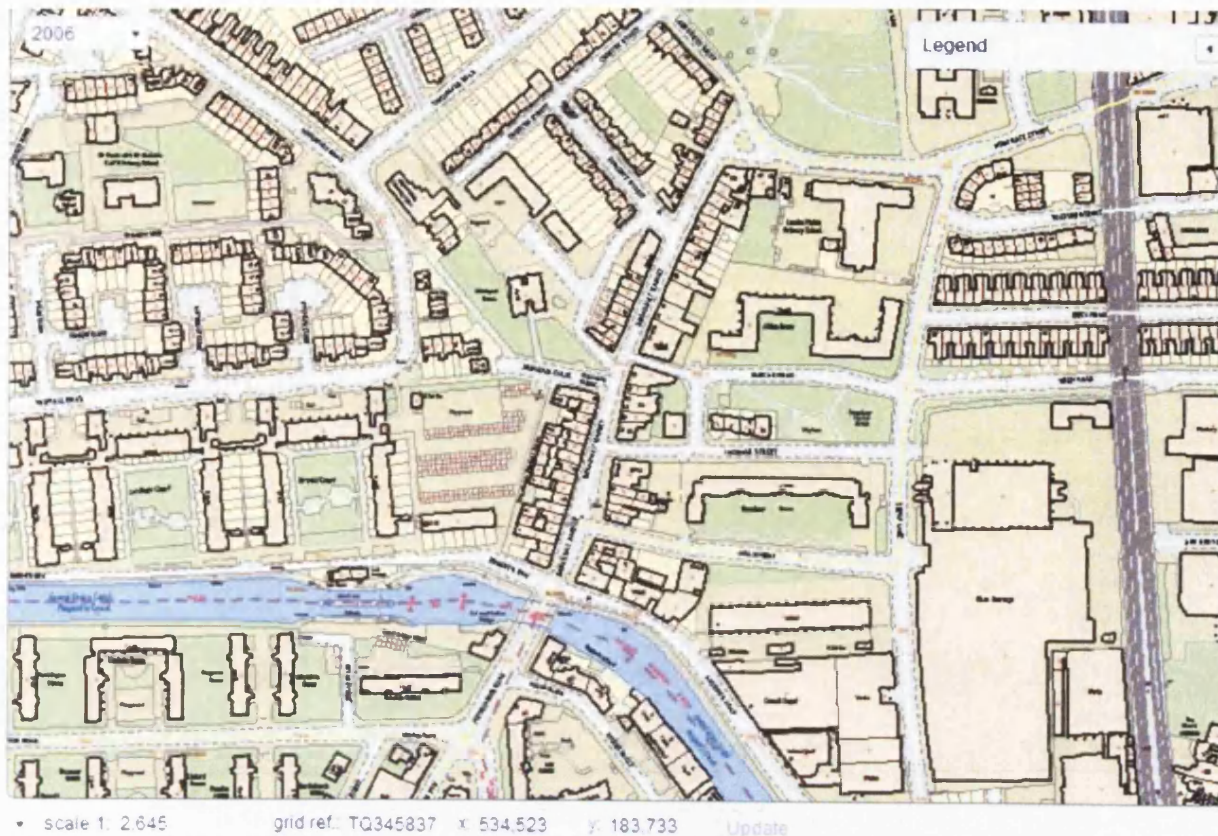


Figure 4.34: Ordnance Survey map of Broadway Market (2006: grid reference TQ345837; Scale 1: 2,645)

Source: British Library maps collection

At the time of John Rocque's map of *London and the Country 10 Miles Round* of 1746, (Figure 4.35) the drover's path had become a road that traversed rural space, with fields to the west and market gardens to the east. The map (4.35) shows the site area was close to a small settlement just to the north east in London's rural hinterland, which was centred on Church Street and Mare Street. Mutton Lane, off to the left, can be seen extending south from the bottom corner of the triangular space of London Fields (which are already named on the Rocque map) to eventually join up to Shoreditch High Street/Kingsland Road to the south west. The urban edge of London can also be seen creeping up from the south west, with Hoxton at the urban frontier. Peripheral settlements can be discerned in Bethnal Green and Mile End to the south (where both Old and New Towns are noted) and Hackney and Humerton (sic) to the north east.





Map 4.35: Detail of Rocque's map of London and the Country 10 Miles Round (1746) Source: London Guildhall Library

Broadway Market was one of the chartered open markets that grew up in London between 1660 and 1840 (Smith, 2006: 31). Its growth should be situated within London's demographic and physical expansion, which led to rising demand for foodstuffs further out from the centre (ibid). Likewise, its growth reflected substantial changes in the "long eighteenth century" by which Londoners underwent a consumer revolution in food marketing toward "decencies and luxuries" (ibid). Some of the changes had spatial expression. For example, suburban expansion in markets mirrored population decline in central areas like the City of London (ibid). "New markets largely depended on the enterprise and wherewithal of private developers at a local level" (op cit: 32). Such markets were established in areas that were socially mixed and were characterised by diversity and versatility in the foodstuffs they provided. The sharp division between markets for wholesaling and retailing was not yet pronounced.

Maps such as Horwood's (1792-99, 1819) and Stanford's (1862), that give morphological information about Borough, did not extend this far out from the geographical centre of London so do not provide primary sources for the Broadway analysis. However, the 1870 Ordnance Survey maps of Dalston,



(Figure 4.36), and Shoreditch (not shown, London Sheet 51: Scale 1:4340), illustrate that by the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century there were completely urbanised areas at and around Broadway Market. The neighbourhood was well established as urban fabric, as was the street of Broadway Market itself. The maps show there was contiguous development along both sides of Broadway Market for its entire length, between London Fields at the northern end and the Regent's Canal (which was completed in 1820) at the southern end. All around the market street densely built up fabric can be seen, with small terraced housing generally offering continuous frontages to the street and private gardens behind, on blocks within a traditional grid-based street pattern.



*Map 4.36: Ordnance Survey map of Dalston of 1870 (London Sheet 40: Scale 1:4340) Source: London Guildhall Library*

By the time of the Ordnance Survey map of Dalston of 1913 (Figure 4.37), and of Shoreditch of 1914 (Figure 4.38), further changes can be discerned. The northern section of the street at the centre of the food quarter is called London Fields, and extends down from the formally planted urban park of the same name, while the southern portion of the street is called 'The Broadway'. The exact point along its length at which the street's name changed is not shown. Some land uses on the street are named, including the public house on the northern corner where London Fields (the street) meets Westgate Street, which runs around the southern edge of London Fields (the park). A small but necessary piece of public infrastructure is the urinal placed at the centre of the small triangular public space at the London Fields (northern) end of the street in front of the public house. Two further public houses are shown further south on the street's right hand side, one on the corner of Duncan Road and another on Andrew's Road, the latter facing the canal.



Figure 4.37: Ordnance Survey map of Dalston of 1913 (London Sheet 40, Scale 1:4340, northern part of Broadway Market) Source: London Guildhall Library

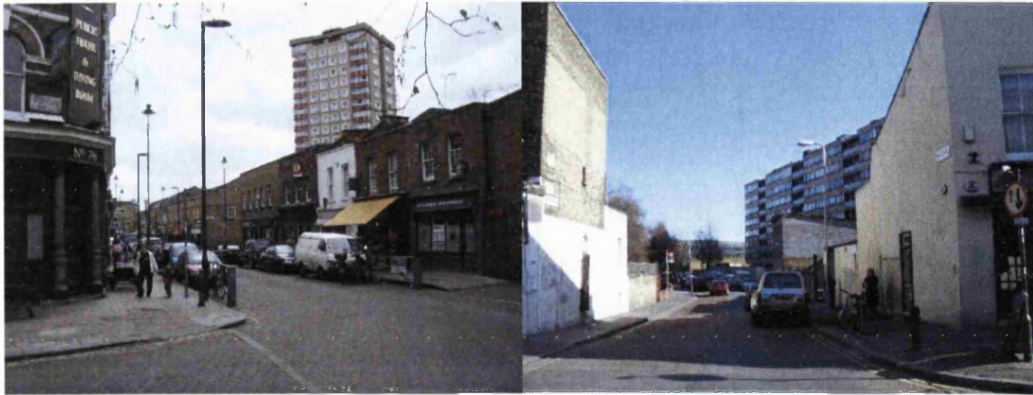


*Figure 4.38: Ordnance Survey map of Shoreditch of 1914 (London Sheet 51, Scale 1:4340, southern part of Broadway Market)* Source: London Guildhall Library

#### *Evolution of Broadway's market quarter*

Various substantial pieces of urban infrastructure can now be seen in the vicinity, demonstrating this was a fully functioning urban quarter with local shops, services, industries, public infrastructure, public transport, parks and housing as well as the food market at its centre. These include the north/south oriented railway line of the Great Eastern Railway, located slightly to the east, which had not yet been built at the time of the 1870 map; the similarly oriented horse drawn tramway on Mare Street, again not yet evident in 1870; and the east/west oriented Regent's Canal. The canal dips slightly south eastwards at this point, to be crossed at the southern end of The Broadway at the Cat and Mutton Bridge. Also just to the south east is a substantial stone yard, and adjoining that, a gasworks with four large circular gasholders. To the north of the canal and just to the east of The Broadway is a chemical works. The area is thus characterised as a relatively fine-grained mix of dense, working class residential, commercial and industrial land uses, with housing predominating, and providing a local catchment for the food market.

As at Borough, the next era of substantial morphological change occurred during wartime and post WWII. While the East End of London suffered substantial bomb damage during the Second World War, it was post war that these boroughs "faced the most relentless enemy of all, the municipal bulldozer" (Inwood, 1998: 812). Following Abercrombie's Plan of 1948 the intention was to decant population from boroughs perceived as crowded such as Southwark, Shoreditch and Bethnal Green; the latter two boroughs close to Broadway. Government was committed to the wholesale removal of what were described as "obsolete", "congested" or "muddled" housing, and of "districts of narrow and confined streets lined with outworn and sub-standard building" (op cit: 821). This resulted in the destruction of substantial amounts of urban fabric that had escaped the bombs, but not the comprehensive development that followed (ibid). From 1954, national government also introduced subsidies for high rise flat development, and "the cheaper alternative policy of repairing old houses and providing them with modern heating and plumbing, which was often preferred by tenants themselves, did not attract significant government support, and did not seem to local authorities to offer the mass housing they had in mind" (Inwood, 1998: 826). The London Borough of Hackney was among the most enthusiastic tower builders (op cit: 831). The process left Broadway Market as a traditionally shaped and scaled street marooned in an expanse of slab and point housing blocks, each surrounded by ill-defined open space (Figures 4.39 and 4.40). Thus "Broadway Market was a 1960s clearance area; massive modern blocks replaced the little terraced houses and ambitious plans were made for a new shopping precinct. What was once a thriving market serving a strong local community degenerated into a depressing collection of decaying properties" (Forshaw and Bergstrom, 1983: 46).



*Figures 4.39 and 4.40: Public housing blocks to north and east of Broadway Market* Source: Photographs by researcher

#### *Recent regeneration of the Broadway Market area*

By 1983, Broadway Market presented a microcosm of the food-related results of LB Hackney's approach to urban regeneration. It was noted that although "vast amounts of Urban Programme money" had been spent to clean up the physical fabric, "half the shops and pitches are empty" (ibid: 46). Broadway Market's curving street was still thought to have character and potential in the early 1980s, despite urban renewal incursions. It retained its cobbles and a large number of its old buildings:

"some improved, some derelict. The fascia of Geo. Tallet's fish shop can faintly be deciphered above the corrugated iron, seemingly condemned for demolition. Beside London Fields the Cat and Mutton pub has been smartened, and Selby's art gallery is perhaps a portent. The Market House Tavern is painted cheery red, and near the canal estate agents' boards herald bijoux residences" (ibid: 46).

Within a context of decline in the physical form of the place, the beginnings of regeneration of the urban fabric appeared to be stirring. This shift was noted on Broadway Market's website (2007), which mourned that the market had declined almost completely by the 1980s, and pointed to its recent revival. "Once a thriving market some thirty years ago, Business then decayed almost into oblivion. Now it is about to become a buzzing centre of the community again".<sup>4</sup> The success of the food market has clearly affected the sales and rental residential property market in the area. A trawl of real estate websites in 2008 shows a number of flats for rent or sale locally that are described as "located close to the vibrant life of Broadway Market" or "5 minutes walk to Broadway Market and London Fields"<sup>5</sup>. As at Borough and Exmouth Markets, the resurgence of the food market has heralded substantial new residential development in the Broadway Market area. New mixed-use property developments have also begun to be built close to Broadway Market. Typical descriptions of new flat buildings include the following:

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.broadwaymarket.co.uk/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.findanewhome.com/s/ai/5661/rs/1/pt/2/new-homes-for-sale.fap>



“Located on the junction of Westgate Street and Triangle Road overlooking London Fields, this new build mixed-use development is conveniently located in terms of the local amenities in and around Broadway market. A new high quality development, offering a choice of one, two, three and four bedroom apartments”.

“NEW DEVELOPMENTS (sic). Enviably located by Broadway Market and overlooking London Fields, is this selection of one, two, three and four bedroom apartments arranged over the upper floors of a stunning new development” (ibid).

#### *Figure-ground diagrams and site maps*

The figure-ground diagram of Broadway (Figure 4.41) shows that by the present day much of the well-developed fabric in Broadway’s vicinity has been destroyed. Broadway Market as a street is relatively unscathed in terms of the physical fabric remaining extant. It still offers an almost continuous built frontage up to the street alignment along its length on both sides. The exception is the area between Benjamin Close (the remnant of Brougham Road) and Duncan Street (on the left hand side of the market street), which has lost the triangular building and the rest of the built form that gave this corner its enclosure. The areas behind the street have fared far worse, both to the west, and to the east towards Mare Street. In this urban neighbourhood the fabric of terraced houses on Duncan Lane, Duncan Road, Jackman Street, Ada Street, Andrews Street and Urban Place (east-west streets), and Antwerp Street, Sheep Lane (the name possibly retaining the memory of its pre-urban function), and Ash Grove (largely north-south), have been hollowed out. Almost all the terraced housing has gone and has been replaced by large, set back housing blocks, indeterminate open space and car garaging areas. On the left hand or western side of the road there has been less wholesale removal of terrace houses, and rows of these are still found in the area between London Fields and Duncan Street. South of here, however, a similar eradication of the fabric has created a tabula rasa for the development of more set back housing blocks and a large area for garaging cars owned by these flat dwellers. Also to the west it can be seen that Benjamin Close has been created as a cul de sac, with a walkway extending westwards, where once Brougham Road provided terraced lined street access to The Broadway. The figure-ground shows that while the Broadway Market street retained most of its legibility, the permeability and connectivity of the areas immediately around it declined. This occurred through deliberate decisions to close off streets, and through the severance effects of the major infrastructure of the canal to the south and the railway line to the east.

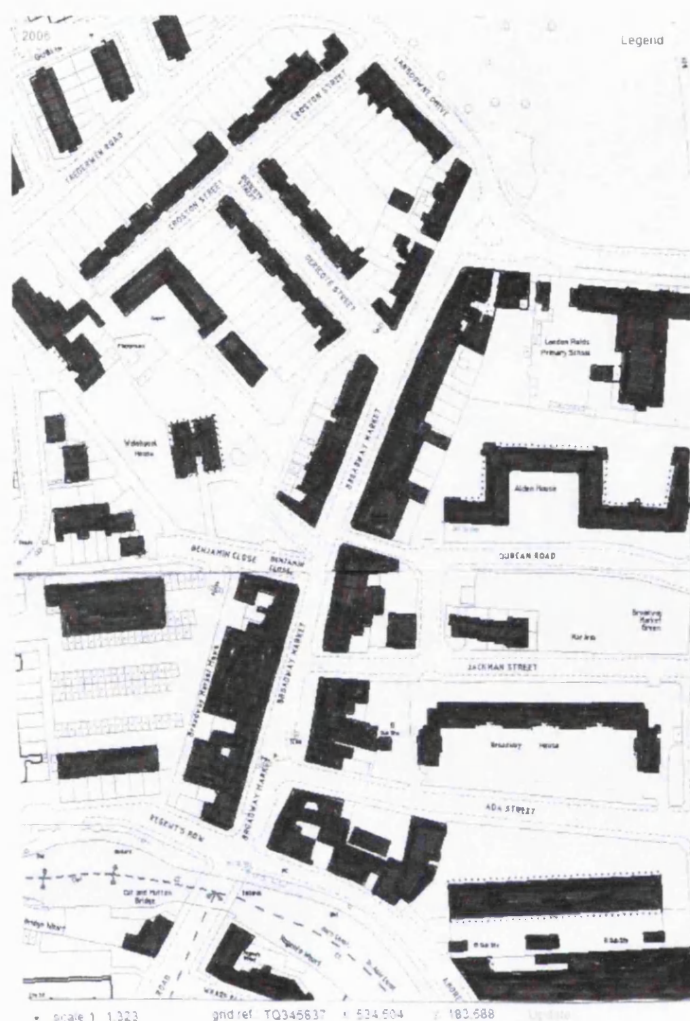


Figure 4.41: Figure-ground of Broadway Market (north orientation) Source: Drawn by researcher, based on OS map

### Urban structure analysis

Urban structure analysis builds on the morphological evidence outlined in the previous section. It suggests that Broadway's traditional pattern of blocks, streets, building, and garden space was severely disrupted in the mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The demolition of swathes of private houses and gardens, and the deterioration of Broadway Market as a high street, as discussed in the preceding paragraphs, led to substantial decline in the sense of place and the commercial viability of its centre. New, large public housing block development undermined the physical character, tenure mix and fine grain of local land uses. Broadway Market, previously a thriving food and social centre for the local community, was reduced to a virtually derelict space. Similarly, the relationship between built form, open space and landscape design was seriously disrupted. The area had in the past been characterised by a strong street grid pattern with buildings close to street alignments, on streets lined with trees. This coherent pattern was intentionally destroyed. While the area retained a relatively high density of residential development, the result was substantial areas of lost space around isolated residential buildings, and few attractive landscape features or functions in the remnant public domain.

*Evidence of fine grain and scale associated with food land uses*

In recent times there has been some amelioration of the effects of decline and ill-judged renewal interventions. This is most evident on Broadway Market itself, where buildings down either side of the street largely escaped demolition and were thus available for renovation. Their frontages were renovated in the early 1980s, and this physical regeneration has since been built on and the street further revived as a physical space. Its restoration has relied to a large extent on the high degree of compatibility between its characterful shape and its function as a food space. It now functions on market days as a fine-grained, mixed-use, local activity node. Many of the land uses in evidence have some relationship to food: stalls, shops, indoor and outdoor cafes, pubs, bars and restaurants (Figures 4.42 and 4.43).



*Figures 4.42 and 4.43: Mixed-use at Broadway Market* Source: photographs by researcher

There are a number of local landmarks in the immediate area. The most obvious are London Fields to the north and Regent's Canal to the south. The demolition of Tony's café, a famous local 'caf' on Broadway Market, turned it into a contentious local landmark on the street. Meanwhile local pubs along the street, and certain shops such as Spirit's grocery store (also the subject of serious contention), are focal points. Various food stalls are also focal points, including one that doubles as a coffee bar on market days. The street boasts very attractive views to the north towards the southern tip of London Fields (Figure 4.44), while to the south the canal acts as a vista termination point (Figure 4.45 shows Cat and Mutton Bridge in foreground).



*Figures 4.44 and 4.45: Views of Broadway Market looking north east and north* Source: Photographs by researcher

#### *Connectivity assessment - movement, walkability and accessibility*

Connectivity has been assessed in a number of ways at Broadway. The movement assessment shows that Broadway Market was once at the centre of a very connected, permeable and legible street grid that provided a wealth of movement options for pedestrians and other road users. As noted above, comprehensive redevelopment of the 1960s undercut this permeability. Some streets were truncated, while others suffered closures, with deleterious effects on permeability and walkability. Broadway Market itself had a road closure installed (see Figure 4.48), either as part of the 1960s era development of the area or during regeneration activity in the 1970s. By the early 1980s, the road closure half way down the street provided “a focus for a few hardened traders” (Forshaw and Bergstrom, 1983: 46). Broadway Market’s ped-shed or walkability radius of 500 metres (Figure 4.46), meanwhile, extends into housing areas to the northwest, north east and south of the site, and into London Fields to the north. It also encompasses the major arterial road and transport hub of Mare Street to the east. While the street provides the nodal point to a relatively walkable area, in reality the catchment is not strictly circular due to the way the street grid has been interrupted or severed in certain directions. This occurs most seriously to the immediate west and east, limiting pedestrian accessibility in these directions.





Figure 4.46: 500 metre radius ped-shed diagram for Broadway Market Source: Prepared by researcher, using London A - Z base map

Today the area is well served by local and sub-regional public transport. The map provided by the Market's website (Figure 4.47) shows some of the bus, train, underground and bicycle options for gaining access to the street, while more comprehensive details are given in the site's text. The local Public Transport Accessibility Level map (Figure 4.49) shows Broadway Market just to the south of London Fields, which is named on the map. It shows that Broadway is moderately well connected in public transport terms, with adjoining areas to the east scoring orange (high) and red (very high) levels of public transport accessibility. The bus stops and pedestrian paths at the point where Broadway Market meets London Fields also contribute to a lively, informal gateway to the street from its northern end. Like Borough Market, the street provides an interesting path sequence for pedestrians, while limiting car access.



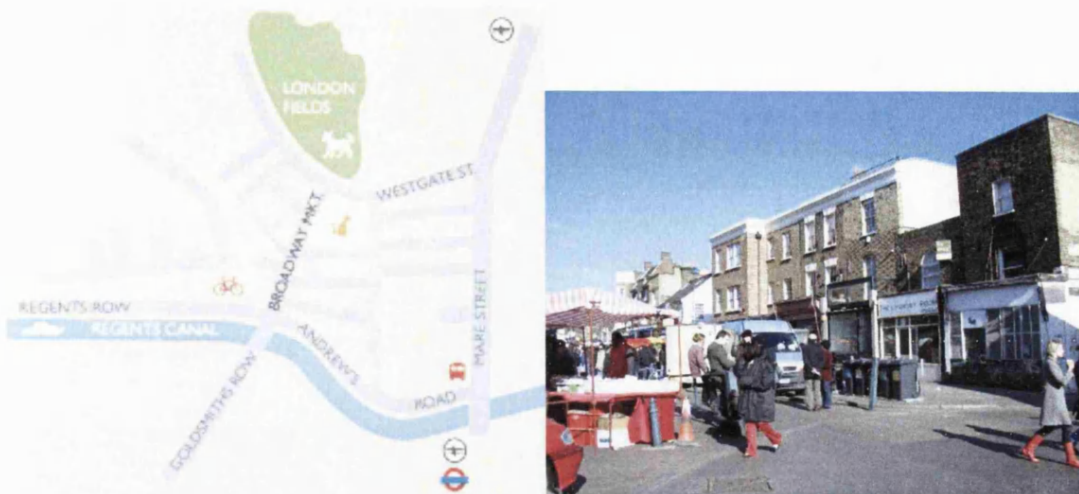


Figure 4.47: Broadway Market access map (on the left) Figure 4.48: Road closure on Broadway market (on the right) Source: For map, Broadway Market website <http://www.broadwaymarket.co.uk/info.html> Source: Photograph by researcher



Figure 4.49: PTAL map of LB Hackney (detail) Source: Transport for London

#### Detailed street assessment

The detailed street assessment demonstrates that Broadway Market has a high degree of visual richness, due in part to the fine-grained pattern of the frontages. Its human scale leads to a strong level of enclosure in which the street acts as a series of outdoor rooms, characterised by active edges on both sides. The height to width ratio varies but is in the range of 1:1 to 1:1.5 along its length. Details are well resolved, with a coherent pattern of frontages in relation to the shape of walls, windows and doors, as well as the

height, scale and materials in buildings fronting the street. There is simple paving of brick appearance, although a bicycle lane has been inserted at the London Fields end. A set of gates and bollards half way along add some complexity, and show the limit of car access during market hours. Lighting and signs are set on poles along the street's length and there is little in the way of street furniture. Some examples of the design details are shown in the Figures 4.50 to 4.53.



Figures 4.50 to 4.53: Details of Broadway Market streetscape Source: Photographs by researcher

#### *Summary of findings from Broadway Market*

In summary, the morphological and urban design analysis of Broadway Market shows that the food market sits within what was once a traditional urban quarter of London, located near a number of what were originally outlying villages, from which urban development expanded. The area has long-term food associations including being on the route of a drover's path into London, and designation as one of London's chartered open markets. The food market and local area suffered an almost terminal decline in the post-war period, with much of its housing demolished in the push for renewal based on point and slab public housing blocks. Despite loss of local legibility and permeability due to poorly designed renewal interventions, its physical fabric and social use has been regenerating in recent times, especially since the advent of the revived Saturday market. It contains a number of local landmarks, views and focal points, some of which are food-related. There is an increasingly rich land use mix with the range of food-related uses broadening and growing. It now operates as an activity node that is both walkable, and accessible to a broader public transport catchment. Activity is centred on Broadway Market as a street that operates as an



attractive outdoor room, with a comfortable height to width ratios, simple streetscaping details, and highly active frontages, all contributing to a strong sense of place and local identity.

## Morphology and design at Exmouth Market

### *Site location and boundaries*

The last substantive section of this chapter explores the morphological and urban design conditions found at Exmouth Market, the third of the food quarters, shown in Figure 4.54. The site is centred on the street of Exmouth Market, running north-east to south-west, parallel with Rosebery Avenue, in the southern part of the London Borough of Islington. The same fuzzy edges as for the other sites apply.



Figure 4.54: Ordnance Survey base map of Exmouth Market (based on grid reference TQ313825; scale 1: 2,645) Source: British Library maps collection

Morphological findings show that the street did not yet exist at the time of Rocque's London map of 1746. Instead the area was one of market gardens and orchards, just to the south of what became Exmouth Market; and fields and track ways, just to the north. All of these land uses lay at the edge of urban London. The beginnings of what became the urban road structure can already be discerned in the net of pathways, some of which later solidified into streets. However, the site area was not entirely urban space by the time of Horwood's 1792-1799 map, a detail of which is reproduced as Figure 4.55. What can be

seen in 1792-99 is that today's Exmouth Market, named as Baynes Row, is the continuation of a street running north-east up from Mt Pleasant, and crossing the north-south running Coppice Row (later reconfigured as Farringdon Road). The southern side of Baynes Row constituted an urban edge at this point, although further north there was already substantial development in Islington village. Terraced housing can be seen all along this southern side of Baynes Row, the line broken only by Spa Fields Chapel and its burial ground (today's remnant Spa Fields). Baynes Row halted at Rosoman Street at its north-eastern end to give way to a track across open fields, which stretched towards the New River Head, Merlin's Cave and Sadler's Wells Theatre, and the settled areas north of Winchester Place (later to become Pentonville Road).



Figure 4.55: Detail of Horwood's 1792 map Source: London Guildhall Library

#### *Development as urban space*

Spa Fields, in the area of what is now the street of Exmouth Market, was, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century “one of London's great rural attractions” where prize fights and fairs were held (White, 2007: 351). It was also notorious for the footpads who roamed by night, to the extent that theatregoers to Sadler's Wells had to band together to cross the Fields supported by “linkmen” who lit the way for their protection (ibid). By 1816, however, urbanisation was on the way: “the fields around the Spa tea garden were just one more



frowsy no man's land at the edge of London, ripe for the house builder's mattock" (ibid). By the mid 1830s Spa Fields was bricked over by the Lloyd Baker Estate and other streets stretching from Kings Cross to Rosebery Avenue<sup>6</sup>. The Horwood map of 1819 (see Figure 4.56) confirms that by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Baynes Row had given way to Exmouth Street, and was settled along both sides, with contiguous terraced housing. Side streets on its northern side were Guildford Place, Easton Street, Yardly Street and Tysoe Street, and each had terrace housing developed some way up its length toward the laid out, but not yet developed, Wilmington Square. The urban development on the southern side of Exmouth Street looked very similar to its form in 1792. At the street's northern end, however, a road called Middleton Street had been developed as a continuation of Exmouth Street to the north east. To the south of Middleton Street, and the east of Exmouth Street, was a designated cattle field of the Skinners Company, furriers who were one of London's 12 great livery companies (trade guilds). Also in the vicinity was a tiny vineyard, also marked on the 1819 map, just to the south of Exmouth Street behind the circular chapel.



<sup>6</sup> <http://www.newlondonarchitecture.org/media/exhibitions/catalogues/TheGreatEstates.pdf>

Figure 4.56: Horwood's 1819 map (detail) Source: London Guildhall Library

By 1850 “the spas had disappeared, the wild flowers and fresh air replaced by sweatshops and workhouses, making artificial flowers and clothing, alongside the metal-platers, watchmakers and distillers. Clerkenwell’s teeming population was crammed into tight terraces and tenements” (Forshaw and Bergstrom, 1983: 118). Stanford’s map of 1862 (Figure 4.57) shows that all the remaining rural space has indeed been captured for urban development and the street itself, as well as the area to the north and east of Exmouth Street, is now entirely built up. Today’s Spa Fields, and a small ring around the New River Head Reservoir, are at this point the only open space left in the vicinity. The street of Exmouth Market can be seen to run directly towards St John Street to the north-east, by way of its continuation (still then Middleton rather than Myddelton Street).

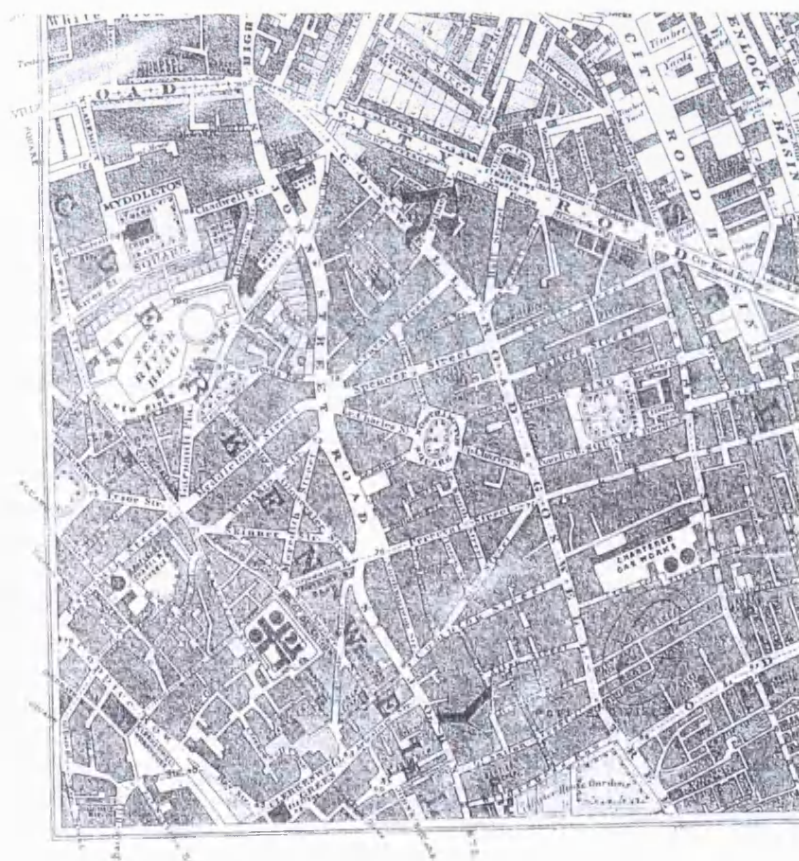


Figure 4.57: Stanford's map of 1862 (Sheet 7 - detail) Source: London Metropolitan Archive

#### *Evolution of the Exmouth Market quarter*

Some of the points about the growth of food markets made in relation to Broadway Market also apply to Exmouth. The street-based food market existed by 1850 and “attracted hordes of street sellers and small shops” (Forshaw and Bergstrom, 1983: 118). In the 1890s it was still “a relatively new market whose costers were often regarded with disdain by the local authority” (Whitelegg, 2002: 79). The area became known as Little Italy as it attracted generations of Italian migrants. Their impact on the food trade, such as



Gazzano's delicatessen on Farringdon Road, which is still extant as a café and salumeria, and cafes along Exmouth Market itself, was felt from the 19<sup>th</sup> century until very recent times. By the time of the Ordnance Survey map of 1894 (Figure 4.58) the entire area around Exmouth Market was fully urbanised and the food market was at the centre of a thriving community. Dramatic alterations had occurred in the urban form, with Rosebery Avenue carved through in 1891 just to the north of Exmouth Street, running from south west to north east. This new major road and road widening elsewhere in the vicinity disrupted swathes of housing and the urban road and block pattern. For example, a new leftover space was created by the way Rosebery Avenue intersected with the southern end of Exmouth Market, as some built fabric was demolished at this point. Overall, the character of the site area still appeared predominantly of contiguous built development up to or close to the street alignment, in urban blocks demonstrating a high level of enclosure. Particular land uses were altered, such as Exmouth Street's chapel, replaced by a more substantial rectilinear church (Our Most Holy Redeemer) fronting the street, and the much shrunk and relocated Spa Fields was now designated as a playground. The Ordnance map of 1914 (Figure 4.59) shows little alteration except that Rosebery Avenue now has a tramway, as does Farringdon Road (formerly Coppice Row). The area is now shown as St James' Ward, Finsbury.



Figure 4.58: Ordnance Survey 1894 map of Exmouth area (London Sheet 50: Scale 1: 1430; detail)

Source: London Metropolitan Archive





Figure 4.59: Ordnance Survey 1914 map of Exmouth area (London Sheet 50: Scale 1: 1430; detail)

Source: London Metropolitan Archive

#### *Changes to Exmouth in the 20<sup>th</sup> century - decline and regeneration*

The present day OS map (shown at the beginning of this section as Map 4. 16) demonstrates substantial changes to the urban form in the vicinity of the street now designated Exmouth Market. The street itself, like Broadway Market, has retained a solid built wall up to the street alignment on both sides, from Farringdon Road at the south-western end, to the intersection with Tysoe, Rosoman and Myddleton Streets at the north eastern end. However, again like Broadway, but in a more modified form, the most striking alteration is the amount of lost space that has been created, especially to the north-east around post war housing development. There is lost space around point block and slab block-based public housing estates, and an indeterminate new green area has been opened up to the east of Northampton Road, on Exmouth Market's eastern end. Some of this public housing, though, is of significantly higher quality than that found close to Broadway. For example, the Spa Green Estate, designed and built by Lubetkin and Skinner over the period 1936-45, just to the north east, is Grade II\* listed by English Heritage, as an architecturally important example of modern social housing.

Other spatial changes are also physical expressions of economic and social forces. For example, the area has had long-term connections to cultural institutions and industries, including theatre and printing. Its industrial base declined in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, due to a combination of structural developments (Whitelegg, 2002) that meant, "Between 1945 and 1980 the accumulation of slum clearance, war damage, closure of factories and the lure of the suburbs had reduced the population to a tiny fraction of what it was sixty years ago; Exmouth Market had become a ghostly and shabby backwater" (Forshaw and Bergstrom, 1983:

60). The street was in a very poor state in the 1980s, when a number of physical improvements to the fabric of the street were funded by regeneration money flowing from national government by way of the London Borough of Islington. At this point, some £146,000 was spent on repaving the street (Whitelegg, 2002). More recent changes to the built form have included further streetscape improvements, such as new lighting, paving, hanging baskets, and street furniture. It is worth noting that, like Borough and Broadway, the Exmouth Market area is subject to considerable interest from property developers. There are a number of small to medium scale office developments and residential flat development schemes in the vicinity, and plans are afoot to redevelop Mount Pleasant, London's biggest postal sorting office, just to the south of Exmouth Market. A master plan is being drawn up by architect John McAslan & Partners, for a mixed use scheme which comprises a 600,000 sq ft (55,741 sq m) sorting office, one thousand-five hundred homes, a public square and a gallery on a 12 acre (4.9 hectare) site.

#### *Exmouth figure-ground and site map*

The figure-ground diagram of Exmouth Market (Figure 4.60) shows that most of the built form in the immediate area of Exmouth Market maintains a strong solid-to-void relationship. The street itself has almost continuous built frontages along both sides, with only small openings to north and south at Spafield Street, and narrow lanes linking the street to Spa Fields Gardens and Rosoman Place. A small public space can be seen at the south-western end of the street, where it meets Rosebery Avenue and Farringdon Road. A much larger open area is apparent at the north-eastern end of the street, and another, Spa Fields Gardens just to the south.



Figure 4.60: Figure-ground of Exmouth Market (oriented north) Source: Drawn by researcher, based on OS map

#### *Urban structure analysis*

The urban structure of the Exmouth Market area predominantly shows a traditional block pattern. This pattern has been maintained along the street itself and just to its north, but has been disrupted in a number of directions a little further out from this activity node. The street displays a finely grained block and plot structure, characterised by mixed land uses. There are street level small shops and two-to-three storeys of office and residential above, providing a high residential density and a vibrant activity level. The architecture is not outstanding but provides a solid urban fabric framing the public realm and a harmonious environment for the street's increasing commercial viability. The tower of St Saviour's church acts as both a landmark and a vista termination from the north, when viewed down Yardley Street. There is a small urban square formed by the meeting points of Rosebery Avenue, Farrington Road and Exmouth Market, and Al's Bar on this corner acts as a focal point for the street. Market stalls on market days (now Friday only) are equally a focus for activity, especially at lunchtime. Another area about halfway along the street, which has a high percentage of bars and restaurants is also a focal point. Overall, the coherent built form and public realm underpin a strong sense of identity and place.



Figures 4.61 and 4.62: Exmouth Market view looking north east (left) and focal point, St Saviour's spire (right) Source: Photographs by researcher

#### *Urban grain and scale issues in the Exmouth area*

To the north-east and south-east by contrast, the urban clearance described above has seen formerly fine-grained, built-up street blocks obliterated and the space redeveloped in a modernist style (Figure 4.63). Various set back, separate, large-scale residential, institutional and commercial buildings are awkwardly interspersed with areas of open space. These urban armature elements generally do not present a solid wall to the street, which is necessary to achieve the positive-negative space balance. Nor do they possess the fine-grained, human-scaled form that would meld them successfully with the strongly marked local built



form context that the morphological research reveals. The contrast is particularly striking at the north-eastern end of Exmouth Market, where one moves from the enclosed outdoor room of the market street, to an area facing Myddelton Street that lacks coherent urban structure or enclosure.



*Figure 4.63: Lack of enclosure in view from northeastern end of Exmouth Market* Source: Photograph by researcher

#### *Exploring connectivity - movement, walkability and accessibility*

Through the movement assessment it is possible to see that the immediate site area is particularly well connected. It provides a large number of movement possibilities, through a predominantly permeable urban block structure. It is possible to approach the street from many points on the connected grid that surrounds it in most directions. The fine grain of these connections reinforces the street's sense of place as a pedestrian friendly, walkable activity node. Traffic management arrangements clearly privilege walking over driving along Exmouth Market. Although the street is still accessible to vehicles for servicing, its paving treatments, street furniture, signs, bollards and small number of parking spaces all reinforce the design cues that this is primarily a pedestrian space rather than a through road. Meanwhile, the areas surrounding the street, where the traditional block pattern has been erased, are also those that exhibit a far lower level of permeability and legibility.

Catchment analysis meanwhile shows that Exmouth Market is highly accessible to pedestrians (Figures 4.66 and 4.67) and has very good transport connections, both for public and private modes. The walkable radius or 'ped-shed' centred on the street (shown in Figure 4.64) takes in a number of local residential and mixed land use areas. This shows how easy it is to walk to and through the site from most directions, except the public housing areas to the north-east, where the street grid has been broken. The Public Transport Accessibility Level Map (Figure 4.65) demonstrates that the site, which is close to the centre of the map section reproduced here, is also very accessible. Its rating is at Level 5 (shown as orange) and Level 6 (shown as red), which are amongst the highest accessibility ratings given. This reflects the proximity of various transport modes, including a number of bus stops along Rosebery Avenue,

Farringdon Road and St John Street. Although neither the rail/underground station at Farringdon or at Angel is within 500 metres, both are less than a kilometre away.

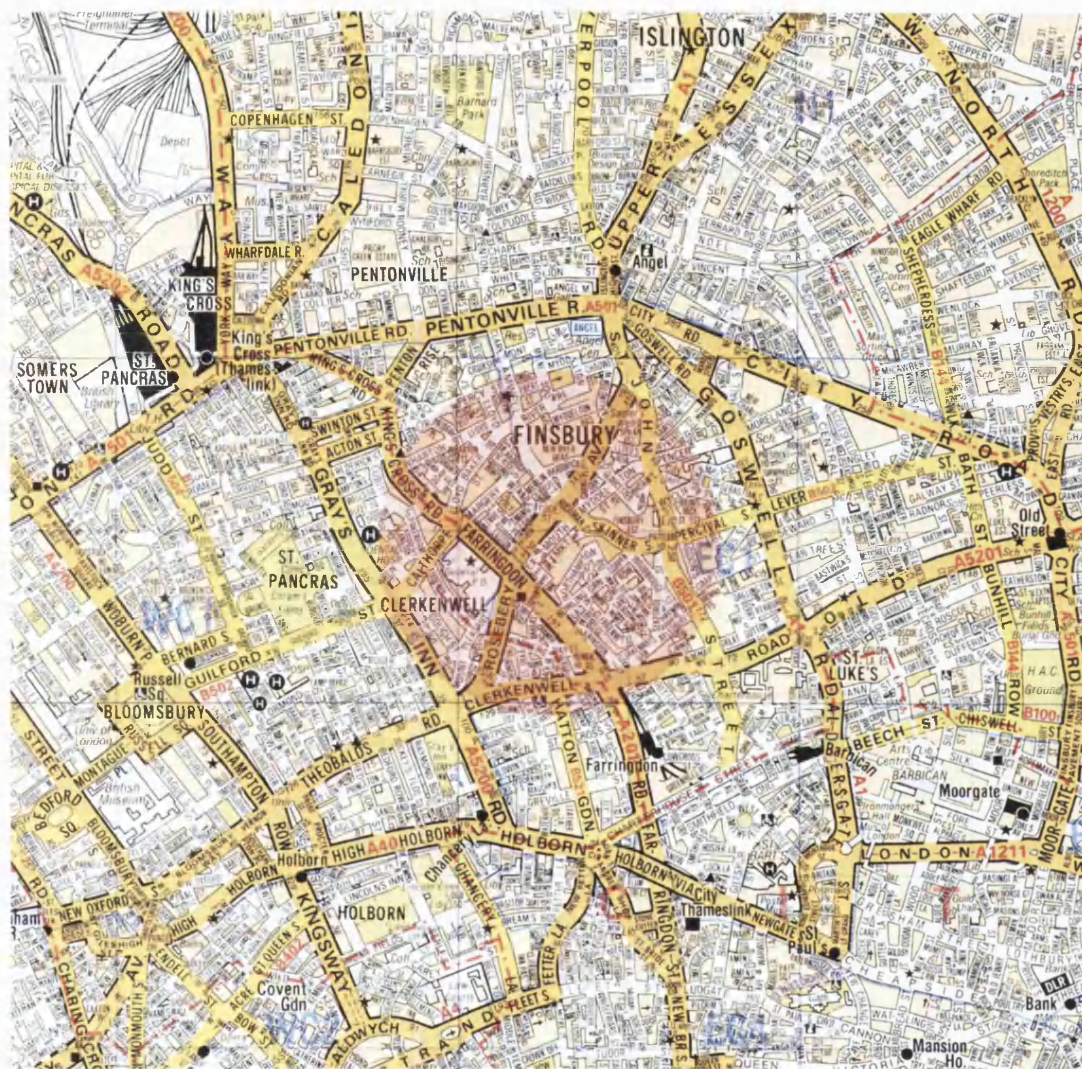
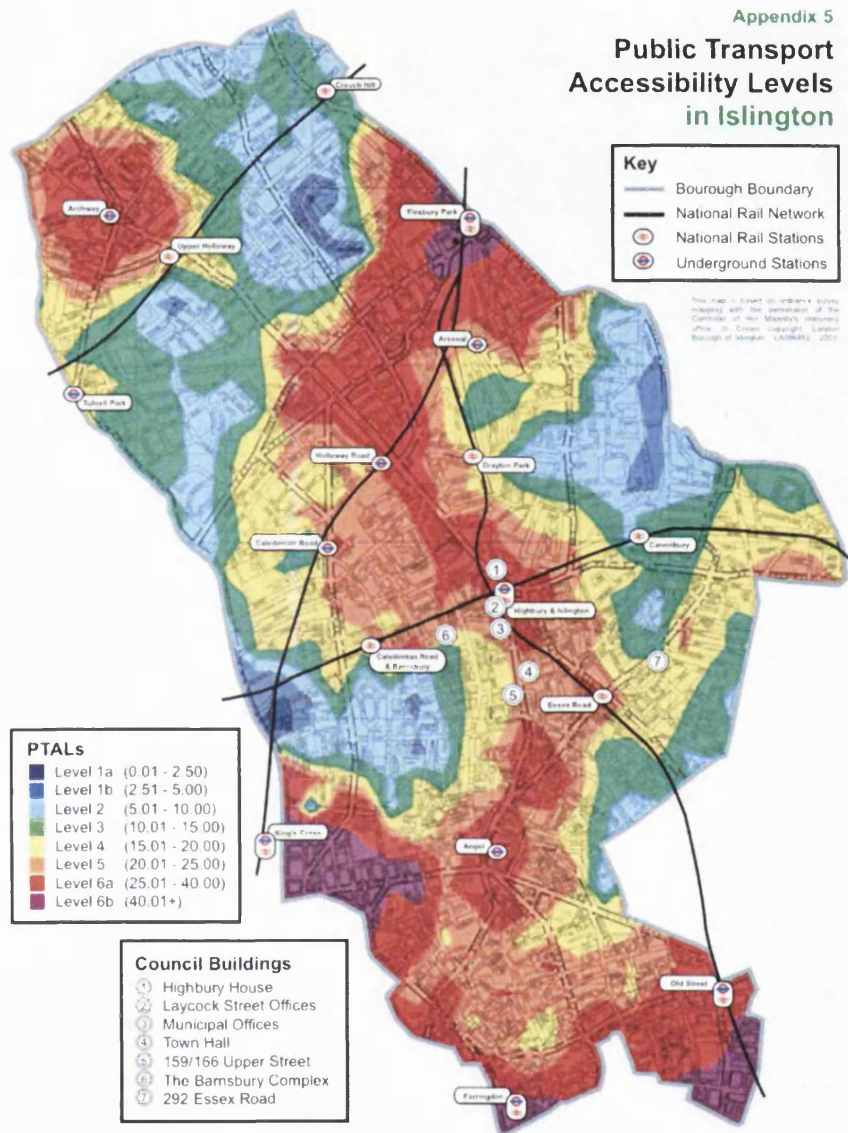


Figure 4.64: 500 metre radius ped-shed for Exmouth Market Source: Prepared by researcher, using London A - Z base map



## Appendix 8: Public Transport Accessibility Levels Map



109

Figure 4.65: Public Transport Accessibility Level Map of LB Islington (Exmouth area to south of map)

Source: LB Islington



Figures 4.66 and 4.67: Walking, cycling, and parking along Exmouth Market Source: Photographs by researcher

#### *Assessment of details of the place*

The street assessment demonstrates that Exmouth Market achieves a strong level of enclosure, with a range of detailed street design elements contributing to the space as a series of outdoor rooms. The height-to-width ratio of the street varies slightly along its length, but averages at, or a little more than a comfortable 1:1. There is a coherent built frontage on both sides, with shop front buildings mostly comprised of materials; wood, brick, stone and glass used in traditional combinations. The footpaths and road surface are paved as a continuous space, with a mix of concrete slabs and stone setts. Bollards placed down each side of the street delineate the roadway from the pedestrian footpaths to either side. This separation is somewhat symbolic, as it is the roadway space that pedestrians habitually use. At the Farringdon Road end, seats and tree planting (London Planes) provide a welcome shaded area after the harder edged, largely unshaded street. The sense of enclosure and protection from most car traffic make the space attractive for outdoor seating in front of cafes, restaurants and daily food stalls (Figures 4.68 and 4.69). The street is lively throughout the week, especially at lunchtimes, after work and during market hours on Fridays.



Figures 4.68 and 4.69: Outdoor seating at Exmouth Market (note the coffee chains have arrived) Source: Photographs by researcher

### *Summary of findings from Exmouth Market*

In summary the morphological and urban design investigations at Exmouth Market demonstrate that the area emerged as urban space since the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, prior to which it was largely open fields. The urban edge of London crept northward to encompass the infrastructure of the New River and the attractions of Spa Fields, Sadler's Wells and their attendant prize-fights and fairs. The area around Exmouth Market was developed as a coherent urban fabric of streets and squares, with row housing predominating. The quarter became densely populated, with a strong immigrant presence, and a focus on artisanal and industrial production. There is evidence of the food market existing by the 1850s, with numerous street traders and small food shops. Italian immigrants were and remain strongly associated with the street as a food space. The maps and other records show that major changes included Rosebery Avenue cutting through the existing fabric in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and significant decline in population, industry, and the street and area's physical fabric after WWII. Large tracts of public housing were built, by demolishing traditional housing and streets under the rubric of slum clearance. The market itself virtually disappeared. Waves of regeneration effort to revitalise the physical fabric of Exmouth occurred in the 1980s and 1990s but did not result in the hoped for social and economic improvements. Likewise attempts to revive the food market were unsuccessful. Since the late 1990s the street and area's fortunes have risen, with considerable new economic development, in part based on food, and Exmouth is now considered a highly attractive residential, business and social location.

Exmouth Market shows a strong level of enclosure, with the street working as a series of outdoor rooms within a fine-grained, mixed-use, dense urban quarter. The local area has a predominantly traditional character, based on a grid of streets and contiguous built fabric up to or near street frontages. This provides a strong design context for a focus on a vibrant, human-scaled public realm, with various focal points including food shops and stalls, and landmarks, vistas and views helping establish the legibility of the urban armature. Close by the street there are significant areas of lost space, as a result of 20<sup>th</sup> century interventions, especially those post war housing and other developments that have undermined the street grid and fabric pattern. Exmouth Market itself is at the centre of a highly permeable area, allowing easy access by public transport for a local and wider catchment, and scoring a high walkability rating. Its detailed design helps privilege pedestrian over vehicle movement, making it a pleasant space to be in. This is reinforced by the streetscape qualities, which emphasise both fine grain and visual richness, using simple, traditional materials. These urban design qualities contribute to Exmouth Market's strong identity and sense of place.

### **Chapter conclusion**

Chapter 4 has explored the urban morphology, urban structure, site connectivity and details of the place, in each of the three food quarters. Each site has fuzzy edges but is loosely based in terms of size and other aspects of spatiality on the European urban quarter. The evidence demonstrates that the sites share certain important similarities but also show distinctive features. Both parallels and differences are briefly



summarised below. The urban context of Borough Market is far older than that of either Broadway Market or Exmouth Market. The Borough Market area has been settled possibly since pre Roman times, and has been a key node in London's urban armature since the 10<sup>th</sup> century, while the other two areas retained their rural or peri-urban character until the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Each site has been characterised by the development of a coherent built fabric and urban structure, which has produced "invisible architecture" (Drijver, 2005) that does not draw attention to itself, but provides a strong frame to urban activity nodes such as those centred on food markets. Each area has thus historically acted as a focal point for new, mixed-use urban settlement around a food market and related activities. Moreover, there has been a long-term relationship between the market and these other food-related land uses that can be seen to be physical, social and design based. In each area there has been a high density of development from the beginning of urban settlement. Borough Market demonstrated strong urban fabric continuity until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when public transport infrastructure was imposed over the existing urban pattern. At around the period when this transformation was underway at Borough, both Broadway Market and Exmouth Market became functioning food markets at the centre of urbanised quarters. Both had been outside or on the urban edge of London, which crept up on them in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, all three were very well connected for walkers and in public transport terms.

However, for all three markets, the 20<sup>th</sup> century brought a number of adverse spatial impacts. Especially in the post WWII period, a series of structural changes including suburbanisation, economic decline, and comprehensive redevelopment affected all three sites in largely deleterious ways. Population to support the markets declined in each area, in part due to broad structural changes but also as a result of deliberate post war policies of population decanting and demolition of local housing. In Borough, the market was left to fall apart, while in Broadway's case, areas perceived as overcrowded were thinned out. Both here and in Exmouth, high-rise buildings and "slaburbs" (Kegler, 2005) replaced finer grained housing fabric. All saw their central function as a market dwindle virtually to nothing, and acquired areas of lost space through housing or other redevelopment, which harmed their urban fabric. Borough became, by the 1960-70s, a place to be avoided, while Broadway perhaps suffered the most as more of its fabric was cleared and the quality of the housing design was lower than at Exmouth. Here too, however, serious decline was in evidence in the quality and coherence of the physical space. By the 1980s, regeneration efforts to physically upgrade and regenerate the traditional urban fabric were desperately needed, and were launched at each site. These efforts continue to the present, and for Borough in particular, its strategic location close to a major transit hub makes it a highly attractive location for major new development, as demonstrated by plans for the London Bridge Quarter. Both the other two sites are now experiencing similar development trajectories, albeit at a more modest scale.

The detailed physical analysis of the three sites demonstrates that today they each have a strong identity in the immediate area of the market, but this sense of place falls away sharply further from the food market streets and spaces. Each site performs well on movement assessment in terms of permeability, legibility and walkability. Each has a good pedestrian catchment and avoids car dominance, despite some barriers

created by poorly designed housing, commercial or transport infrastructure developments in the vicinity. All the sites are centred on excellent outdoor rooms with appropriate height-to-width ratios, robust built form and high levels of visual richness. Each provides a highly attractive physical setting for a vibrant street life centred on food. This chapter has set out the physical design context for the analysis of the three sites. In Chapters 5 to 7, I use this morphological and urban design material as a basis for exploring in detail the social, economic and environmental life of each of the three food market quarters in turn.

## **Chapter Five: A case of ‘designed’ food quarter transformation at Borough Market**

### Introducing the Borough Market quarter

This chapter focuses on presentation and analysis of material from primary research conducted at Borough Market and its surroundings. Of the three food-centred sites under study, this chapter suggests that the Borough Market area constitutes the most fully realised urban food quarter. The work discussed in the next three chapters is refracted through the lens of the sustainable city and each chapter is structured around the economic, environmental and social dimensions of the food quarter being studied. This foundation provides an overall frame for exploring and analysing the interplay between physical space, economic and environmental forces, and everyday social practices in and around the food market. The findings and initial conclusions here rely on a number of information collection methods including eleven semi-structured interviews, of varying lengths, with experts and place-users, with architects, market trustees, food traders and visitors. Second, there are field notes taken from numerous informal observational visits over a three-year period up to June 2008. Third, as a subset of the second method, there are a series of 'head counts' used to distinguish various social practices over a typical Thursday to Saturday trading period, in September 2007. Fourth, there are findings from food mapping of the market and surrounding spaces undertaken in June 2008. The end-of-chapter analysis and tentative conclusions prefigure the lengthier discussion in the final chapter, where all three sites are considered together, and their connections to relevant theory further analysed. A map of the area under study is shown below (Figure 5.1).



Figure 5.1: Borough Market quarter (500 metre radius map) Source: based on A-Z map

## Tracing Borough's triumphant story of economic revival

Borough's economic regeneration has underpinned the development of its environmental and social roles. Useful information about the market area's political economy came from interviews with the (now former) Head of the Trustees of Borough Market, and with the chief architect in the design of its physical regeneration, as well as from semi-structured interviews with traders and market users. The Head of Trustees says that Borough Market is the only market in London run by local residents, as opposed to local government or a private operator (a view echoed by Broadway market's manager, in the next chapter). This is a very long-term governance arrangement stemming from a 1756 Act of Parliament, which brought the market under the control of wardens of the parish of St Saviour. In 1907 it became a Trust nominated through, but not controlled by, the local council. Borough suffered very significant post war decline and by the 1980s was virtually empty, and the Trustee suggests customers preferred supermarkets *"which brought their produce direct from producers, bypassing the wholesale markets. The physical structure was also decrepit and dangerous"*.

An unusual route was then taken by the Trustees to kick-start a market regeneration process, envisioning an alternative future for the market. Imaginative economic action to reach their goals has marked their approach throughout. They chose to launch an architectural competition to develop a retail market within the structure and awarded the contract to a firm that had recently refurbished Leeds Market. A critical factor at the time was that the Head of Trustees had earlier been chair of planning at the then Greater London Council and had the political skills and knowledge to develop a workable strategy for market regeneration in a socially democratic mode. A key point made by this interviewee is how, by buying formerly industrial property in the late 1980s, the Trustees created affordable spaces that helped bring in wholesale food business tenants in the first instance. The Trustees bought up former industrial spaces and attracted in businesses such as Brindisa and *"Neal's Yard Diary did come in for a cheese storage place. Straightaway people starting knocking on their door to buy cheese"*.

The Head of Trustees says that he decided to apply for Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) funds to help pay for regenerating the market structures. He came up with the idea of 'London's Larder', which was the traditional name for nearby Hay's Wharf, which had been historically a centre for London's food imports. The Market Trustees obtained £2.5 million from Single Regeneration Budget funds and used this to refurbish property and pay architectural fees. The ex-Head notes how the Trustees had to be quite creative and take risks in order to pursue their regeneration ambitions for the market, as there were difficult economic issues to wrestle with. The market was in a "cul de sac" in the river and not a viable place to set up a retail business. *"But if you started a core business (i.e. wholesaling cheese) then you could float the retail off the back of it. The next firm to arrive was Konditor and Cook who just wanted to start a bakery. The Trustees told them they had to also have a patisserie. Next was Fish! who used English Heritage money and their own money to develop their restaurant site. The Trustees actually broke the law as by statute they are not allowed to borrow money. The Trustees discounted the rent"*.

In November 1998 the Trustees held a food festival involving the food campaigner Henrietta Green. As the Head of Trustees describes it, companies like Neal's Yard Dairy started having warehouse sales with invitations sent out through their mail order catalogues. He was keen to point out how the market developed not just as a farmer's market with produce from a narrow geographical catchment. Instead the market always had two strands, *"supporting producers in the UK and supporting European quality produce"*. Some of the producers invited by Henrietta Green are still trading at Borough. Meanwhile the trading interval shortened as the market grew more successful from quarterly warehouse sales, through monthly to weekly and twice weekly sales: *"Now there are 130 businesses in and around the market. There was also attention to high food quality from the start: "The first thing was to set up a food company to police the quality of what was coming in"*.

### *The urban design and architectural programme*

Alongside these economic regeneration efforts, something had to be done to rebuild the market's physical structures, which were falling apart, so they *"started thinking about refurbishing, with the architects"*. To do this, the Trustees needed substantially more money than they had through their SRB funding and hoped to obtain Heritage Lottery grant money but were unable to secure enough through public funds. *"But we were able to sell a couple of warehouses and used the profits to think about more grandly refurbishing the whole of the market"*. Additionally, in this regeneration effort, the Trustees wanted to recycle architectural structures such as the floral hall that had been used at the now defunct Covent Garden, which they bought for £1. At the core of the strategy was intertwining architectural elements, economic regeneration and development of a thriving market space and culture. They took note of the experience of developing nearby Coin Street as a mixed-use area, where land uses giving high returns fund social housing: *"We were able to think about constructing a two-level building with market space underneath, and a restaurant on top a la Coin Street. That scheme slowly evolved."* Funding remained a complex and contentious area. The Head of Trustees says that they managed to obtain funds from a number of sources: partly from SRB, from the sales of buildings, and from English Heritage. As he notes, there were problems with potential funding partners such as the local authority: *"We bid for funds on Southwark Council's coat tails but eventually we put our own bid in as they chopped us off from joint bids twice"*.

One of the most difficult issues faced in the regeneration effort was in dealing with planned significant changes to the railway infrastructure on site. At the stage when the Trustees were planning the regeneration programme, they had problems with Thameslink, which said it wanted to build a rail line through the market. As a result the Trustees decided to split the refurbishment programme into two physical spaces either side of the rail corridor. Thames Link then failed to get their planning permission so the Trustees were able to fast-forward Phase Two, which was renewal of the west side of the market. As each section was refurbished, the wholesale market was decanted to other parts of the halls. The Trustees had to tender on the project while the market was growing so *"it was a bit uncertain in design terms"*. The Head of Trustees explains *"Borough Market had to go all the way to the House of Lords to stop*



*Thames Link putting a ventilation shaft in the middle of the green market. Railway Companies are absolutely terrible people to deal with. The final sting in the tail was that we decided not to refurbish the electrics at this end (eastern end) of the market. They insisted and we built a transformer, which they then wouldn't connect to".* A market trader interviewed also highlights anxieties about further rebuilding of the main market hall that may occur, but ascribes his concerns to expected track work by Railtrack rather than Thameslink.

The Head of Trustees makes direct links between the economic revitalisation of the market and the details of the design of the market spaces. This relationship has a number of dimensions. For instance, with a market site of about five acres, he describes the process as one in which they refurbish old structures and create new spaces. The internal configuration of the market stands, is one of its design peculiarities. Borough was unusual in that it was able to start from scratch and *"could kind of make it up as it went along"*. They devised a spatial model and space structure. *"The stand structure of the wholesale market is used for retail. That is quite unlike any normal retail market. You go into each section, not trade out of stands from the centre"*. In spatial terms it is acknowledged that there are possibly economic implications from this design arrangement as it is not very space efficient, but the stand system does allow a unique interplay between interior and urban design, and economic vitality. The market's architect also notes *"it allows people to walk in off the street to a store like environment. That's really essential. You don't want to be in the full glare of everybody else"*. The configuration of individual retail elements was deliberate and subtle with fine-grained attention to the economic and social implications of design. *"We had a conversation about whether we would have all the butchers together. We sort of did, sort of didn't. None of them front onto each other. If they had all been facing each other the decision comes down to price. There would also be social pressure to buy from the same person all the time. The system of stands offers that choice very well"*.

Another facet of the market's relationship between economics and design is the sense that it is being "returned to its former glory" as a wholesale and retail space, "returning to its former grandeur" (Head of Trustees). The market's architect also notes this grand quality in the space, saying he has always been *"quite awestruck about market halls, shopping arcades, department stores. They have always been the cathedrals of shopping. The architectural typology of Borough Market is reminiscent of railway station architecture"*. An organic products trader echoes this view when he says *"the ambience of the place is probably one of the key factors ... there has probably been a market of some description on this site since the Romans so you are talking nearly 2,000 years of some form of market here"*. The architect similarly makes the urban design point that the market's economic sustainability has been in part a function of its urban location in relation to food importing and distribution: *"London's Larder – the Pool of London used to be where all food imports came in. It's a most interesting place. Possibly the oldest cross street was London Bridge. A reason why Borough Market is successful/sustainable is where it is. It is one of the best-connected spots in London"*.



*Figure 5.2: Interior showing stall structure, prior to main roof renovation* Source: photograph by researcher

At the same time, the architect does not think that a strategic interconnection between architectural design and economic issues was at the forefront of the Trustees' thinking when the revival of the market was first being contemplated. The Head of Trustees concurs, and explains the stance of the Trustees as being more about *"employment and sustaining the place as a market. Some more enlightened members of the Trust were interested in the heritage of the market. It used to be much grander. [Economic] sustainability was seen as more to do about having always been a market and being on a connectivity hot spot. And a very gritty south London space"*. It is clear from the discussion above that the Head of Trustees saw these connections from the start.

### *The economic revival trajectory*

A number of interviewees note how individual businesses have grown and thrived economically alongside the market's overall regeneration. Diversification is happening at an increasing rate, and also taking an increasing number of forms, including retailing, restaurant supply, café, and restaurant development to showcase products, and food education and training. Brindisa, for example, began as a wholesaling business that *"now has a retail presence. Brindisa has recently started a tapas bar as well"* (ex Head of Trustees). The architect supports this point, with other examples of the growth trajectory from wholesale to encompass retail. Neal's Yard Dairy, for example, has stalls at the front of the house but a massive business behind. Another trader, in Italian products, started seven years ago at Borough with one stall and now has four stalls in the market covering a range of regional products from Italy. An example of a different kind of growth and diversification, into food education and skills development among consumers, is provided by a butcher trading at the market, who does *"sausage making courses and it's got round to now people will pay as much money to know about a product and see how its made... You can almost make as much money out of your knowledge (laughs) as the product which is quite an interesting fact"*. This appears interesting in at least two ways. First, there is willingness among some consumers to pay well to learn more about food quality. Second, the focus is not just about learning to cook but about understanding more about primary production, sustainable supply chains and product antecedents and quality generally.

The growth trajectory is not just at the level of individual traders but a market management strategy. To build on its economic revitalisation, the Trustees have developed links with other outstanding markets, twinning with La Boqueria in Barcelona. The emphasis is always on quality rather than trading down. In fact, interviewees consider one of the keys to the success of the process of economic regeneration so far lies in the structure of the management and governance of the market. Yet this structure appears to have been largely an unintended consequence of a pre-existing Trustee governance model combined with the particular skills of its leadership at a critical juncture. The Head of Trustees explains that gaining official charitable status in recent years has had a direct link to the market's capacity to economically support small businesses, by, among other actions, keeping rents down so that the local, traditionally working class, population can afford to trade in and buy from the market. The low rents might be expected to be reflected in more affordable prices and the Head of Trustees challenges the assumption that the market

and area are now essentially middle class because of high food prices, arguing instead that *"The area's land uses are industrial and commercial with some public housing (Charitable Trusts such as Peabody, Guinness Trust) and traditionally working class. It is not true that working class people don't come to the market"*. The rents issue remains a key one though. As a cooked sausage trader argues, rents could go up, with disastrous consequence. He suggests that the Trustees must continue to support the traders who are the *"people who make the market"*. The market's architect meanwhile supports the Head of Trustees' view, pointing out that the trustees are, uniquely, not driven to make the maximum financial return and so are able to support the sustainable growth of the food market.

The Head of Trustees makes the connected but more general point that markets are still in his view wrongly seen by local governments as marginal land uses, rather than as a springboard for regeneration. He argues that local governments do not necessarily take a very enlightened view about the best use of their funds in relation to managing markets. They tend to favour revenue maximisation over allowing trustees to build up reserves to run the organisation. This lack of economic foresight links back again to the governance issues raised above. Borough Market's response has been to try to maintain its independence from local government control by appointing its own trustees. At issue is the trustees' apparently greater capacity than local government's to maintain a focus on their key objectives for the market. *"We have been focused and stuck to it: food - market - quality. Now we are getting asked to talk to other markets. If you look at what's happened with markets there is only one local authority left that has a markets committee. Markets are a kind of leftover category"*.

Interviewees argue that the economic benefits of the market's regeneration extend in the direction of the food producers who provide products for the market. One example refers to the increasing popularity of the market for producers and traders, with a waiting list for stalls. Attracting a balanced mix of products has been a deliberate strategy, as has the specialist product base. Selling at Borough Market has allowed producers to raise their prices to a level that makes their production methods sustainable. Referring to Herdwick Lamb the head of trustees explains that *"Andrew Sharp managed to persuade six farmers to sell these. Their lambs fetched £15 a head. Andrew now has 40-50 farmers who are making £50 per head. That has a big impact on the Cumbrian economy"*. The architect for the market also argues for the beneficial link outward to the community and back to primary producers. This reflects the food chain discussion in Chapter 1 and links to issues of class, which are relevant to the way resurgent markets like Borough are viewed: *"Historically, good food used to be about all the classes... I resent that whole thing about Borough Market being for rich people. It's not just about people who shop there but people who trade there, who have started business, helped farmers. The town and country always relied on each other. The resurgence of the fresh food market puts wealth back into the rural enterprise, which for a long time drained away through the supermarkets' horrific buying practices. I tend to think we underestimate working class people [about food]"*.

Issues in relation to class are also apparent in the Trustees' conscious focus on the social inclusion of the local population, through rate relief and plans for a food school among other actions. Interviewee



comments suggest that the Trustees intend to build on the economic success of the market in future by extending its hours and its range of food services, as well as by reinforcing good management, education and employment related to food. The Head of Trustees notes that there are around 10-15,000 people visiting Borough Market each Saturday and they intend to increase the market's reach to Thursdays through special events. From a very tentative start in the mid 1990s the market is now thriving, as a well-managed place celebrated for high quality produce. The organic products trader sums up that the critical thing for the market in economic terms is the relationship between traders and trustees, that amounts to a kind of informal but mutually rewarding economic partnership. *"A fairly good relationship with the people that own the market...It's not just a landlord and tenant, whatever. Because everybody fully realises that we are interdependent on each other"*.



Figure 5.3: Visitors arriving and leaving the market from Borough High Street Source: photograph by researcher

#### *Prices and related issues*

Although views vary between interviewees, a criticism levelled at Borough Market by some interviewed is that it is very expensive compared with other more traditional markets and with supermarkets. Conversely, one trader (middle-aged male, selling cooked sausages) suggests that it is high prices allied to high quality that make the market financially viable. Londoners' perceived higher disposable incomes and cooking for dinner parties are thought to be key factors. Another trader (forty-something male, trading in organic food) argues that higher prices are justified on quality and environmental grounds. This trader thinks that artisan products rightly attract a premium price because of their greater sustainability – a point

considered further in the next section: *"We obviously talk to people, lots of people, one of the biggest complaints you will get about this market is price. Well it's not expensive if you hunt around, but then again, we have been brainwashed into the fact that the cheap supermarket price is the real price of food and it isn't. I'm not saying this is the real price of food but it's far closer"*.

For some interviewees, the prices issue relates to another which is the food market's increasing popularity with tourists who may prefer to simply look than buy. A forty-something, male butcher points out that this has an adverse impact on his stall's trade, which may be mitigated by mail order sales. The sausage-seller agrees that over a period of time the issue of low-spending tourists has worsened and tourists are blocking access to stalls for the real buyers: *"They can't get to the stand because there's too many tourists looking around saying 'I'll try this and I'll try that. Oh! Lovely market'. They've got short arms and long pockets"*. But this is by no means a universal view. The trader in Italian products argues, *"tourists find a lot of things they can't find in their own country. So also tourists are buyers sometimes. They bring back home something particular they found at Borough Market that they couldn't find at home"*.

Another increasing consequence of economic success is that property developers as well as food businesses are attracted to the area. The proposed luxury office, hotel and apartment tower development, 'London Bridge Quarter', references Borough Market as a local attraction, adding to the area's ambience. The sausage trader argues that the market has built the area up *"without a doubt. All these wine bars and restaurants would never ever, ever be here if it wasn't for the market because they wouldn't put their money where there's no-one here. Now they come here on a Friday and a Saturday and it is heaving and they can see there's potential there"*. The market's architect also notes developers' changing attitudes to markets over the last forty years and the recent recognition of food markets capacity to attract people and regenerate areas through good food. *"In the 1970s and 1980s developers saw markets as a pain in the arse, a nuisance. They have come gradually to see them as anchors. Now they can see the potential for farmers markets. They don't want markets to be 'down market' but about fresh food. They are a seriously good people drawer"*.

The narrative of fresh food markets as increasingly perceived as local development anchors, connects to the sense that such food places have more authenticity than many high streets, where the conventional assumptions of development economics have led to the creation of a "clone town Britain" range of identical chain shops. Authenticity centred on good food can be sold as part of an area's attractiveness for new development and add to development profit. An interviewee (Italian-Australian, in his 30s) comments on this from a place-users' perspective. He cites Brindisa, the Spanish food stalls and tapas bar, as an example, saying it might now be considered *"chain-ish"* because it has developed two different outlets (here and at Exmouth Market). At the same time, *"I think there is an appeal because it doesn't feel like another part of London. Coz if you go to any high street you know there's Starbucks, whatever. I think that's a definite appeal about going there"*.



## Exploring Borough's growing role as an alternative food space

This section looks at the market quarter's place in the food chain, in line with arguments about sustainable cities and from food sociology. It explores the environmental issues of food quality, provenance, and consumer education. It further examines the contested notion that good food is simply a middle class preoccupation and therefore elitist. Other readings of what is in evidence at the quarter in environmental terms are presented through the views expressed by shoppers, traders and experts. The market's architect argues that places like Borough have emerged in part as more environmentally conscious, educated alternatives to supermarkets. With higher incomes and more consumption choices, supermarket shopping is being challenged and modified by places like Borough. The architect believes consumers are "*fed up*" with supermarket shopping and want to "*find out more about fresh food, enjoy real expertise from sellers. People don't mind spending more time and money. They have a more in-depth understanding of eating*". He goes on to say, "*For fresh food we will go to local delis, greengrocers and be quite seasonal. That is how we used to shop*". The architect suggests that this does not mean people have abandoned supermarkets altogether, but mix and match their shopping arrangements, a trend likely to increase in future, in which "*supermarkets are likely to become the centres for distribution of boxed up commodities*".

This interviewee suggests that food scares have sharpened the interest of Londoners in understanding more about where their food comes from and how it is produced. This in turn has increased interest in fresh food markets. Some of those others interviewed also describe Borough Market as a place that focuses on getting people back in touch with food. They see this as at the heart of the market's operations, and various stalls have been "*kicked out*" because their produce wasn't up to standard (ex Head of Trustees). The organic food trader, for example, explains: "*Well, the whole concept of it is people regain an interest in what they are eating... They can actually talk to people that grow, farm, whatever, instead of being constantly brainwashed by supermarkets into 'you must have this shaped apple'*". The trader who sells cooked sausages says in a similar vein that traders' product knowledge is critical. "*They know where everything comes from and they are quite happy to sit down and talk to people about the food because they passionately love the food and they are proud of what they do*".

A middle-aged, male Viennese tourist seems to reinforce the point that food freshness, clarity about origins and choice are important to visitors. This interviewee makes a link between these food qualities and the social aspects of the market (which are further discussed in the next section). "*Well um I think you get a good choice of food. And it's fresh food. You can feel like the origin of where it comes from. And I think that is why I prefer markets to supermarkets. It's not so anonymous. It's got a nice feeling. And seeing all the foods and the fish – it's nice*". Another market user, a young man in his 20s, who lives locally, also notes the high quality of food available, and suggests: "*It's cheaper than the supermarkets. Meat is more expensive but it's justified because of the quality*". This interviewee makes a link to an interest in good food: "*I feel very passionate about food. The more people who come here the better. All the people here, farmers, fishermen. I hope they get as many customers as they can get*".

### *Transforming food chain relationships*

Relationships between different parts of the food chain are considered to be quite transparent at Borough Market. The sausage seller explains his business's direct connections to the farmer who supplies his sausages, to other stalls that sell the raw products, and to the people eating them. He makes the point that these products are unobtainable through the mass food market. At the same time, the distance food travels to get to the market is of some concern. The trader in organics argues that lower food miles are not by themselves necessarily a mark of better environmental practice. He wants to support organic producers wherever they are, and while he does not use air freight, he does import "*quite a bit*" that is not produced in the UK. This interviewee makes the point that refusing to import produce will have a deleterious effect on growers in poor countries: *"I don't think we have the moral high ground to say because of food miles we won't take your stuff. Not only that but we've exploited these people for the last 300 years and now we are going to turn round and say 'actually we're not going to have your pineapples'"*.

Linked to this, the organic food trader feels that there is still considerable education needed among consumers about food quality and environmental values. He relates this to the dominant food culture, which stresses convenience rather than daily shopping for food in season. Another trader, male and forty-something, who sells Italian products, agrees about the importance of clarity about product origin, and explains that his staff tries to educate their customers' food sensibilities. The organics trader contrasts the UK situation with everyday food practices in Europe, with a more highly developed culture of food believed to exist where there are "*people who actually go every day and shop at markets*". The Italian-Australian shopper reinforces the point that compared with cities on the Continent where many people shop at markets daily; a space like Borough is an unusual food environment in the UK. La Boqueria market in Barcelona is invoked as a benchmark of quality (this is the market that is 'twinned' with Borough). Again, the class issue is raised but this time in relation to degrees of familiarity with this kind of consumption: *"Whether it's a tapas type restaurant selling great seafood, or whatever it might be, or La Boqueria market, dotted around certain parts of Barcelona. There is a dispersed quality whereas London really doesn't have it, so people will just go to where it is and it tends to be the middle class that have been exposed to it. They've travelled"*.

Despite the view outlined above by the organic food trader - that some shoppers are uninformed - other traders point to Borough Market users as often more environmentally conscious (or at least interested) than shoppers in the main. A butcher (male, forty-something) trading at the market notes the symbiotic relationship between sellers of high quality, niche products, and buyers whose knowledge and concern transcends income, or, by implication, their class position. The butcher feels that producers came first providing high quality products but then *"You look at some people and they must have spent every penny they have, disposable income, on a lovely joint of pork or wild boar. So I suppose what come first was the producers with their niche products and because of that the 'foodies' if you like to call them that have followed along. I think that's the greatest thing about the market"*. This butcher suggests that people who

come to Borough Market want to know about various sustainability aspects of the food they are buying. They show interest in all facets of the food chain: provenance, transparency about origins, food miles, and concern about geographical origin. It is less clear whether this interest arises out of a broad concern with the sustainability implications of food or with personal health. The butcher continues: *"There are a lot of people who are concerned about what they eat and I suppose through ages we've always had that so it's not down to their disposable income"*.

Again, this is seen as linking to the preparedness of Borough Market customers to pay higher prices. Speaking about the meat he sells, the butcher makes links between greater scrutiny of the production process and preparedness to pay for high quality: *"Its feeding, its welfare, all the way through the food chain. The slaughtering, the whole process has very much come under scrutiny - which is good... So now it's very much the real artisan producers are at a premium"*. The Italian products trader also makes the link back through the food chain to artisans, who produce food in environmentally sustainable ways. He counterpoints the strengths of traditional artisanal forms of production with the lack of quality in industrial production methods, and stresses the importance of seasonality. The connections to small, traditional producers are very direct, with sourcing trips undertaken every few weeks: *"Yes, let's say that one of our main concerns is to keep a high quality standard. That's because basically we are passionate about what we are doing. We don't like to sell industrial food. We only like to sell, only sell artisanal food or food made, formed in the traditional way of making cheeses or curing meat"*.

Knowledgeability among Borough Market habitués is contrasted with a sense that many people have lost connection to food as a central part of everyday life. The organic food trader says this may be because people live *"in such a busy, hectic society we don't actually have time to do anything"*. He suggests that dinner is now something people do *"in between doing something else"*. The butcher argues that people are trapped by overworked lives into a cycle of eating ready meals rather than buying from markets and cooking from scratch. *"There are a lot of people who enjoy good food but maybe because of their lifestyle and the way they work.. a lot of them guys back tonight - nine o'clock, ten o'clock before they get home - and girls - so to go into Marks and Spencer's at Liverpool Street and get one of these ready meals and that's the best they can do"*. In the butcher's view, places like Borough Market need to find ways to provide good quality, environmentally sensitive food alternatives, which recognise the lifestyle constraints of long working hours and declining cooking skills among their potential customers. He studied the ready meals supermarkets are supplying, with a view to matching this convenience in their own products: *"I said to Peter [assistant butcher] let's go over there and have a look at their chicken Kievs and their porks this .. what could we do so people can think 'Ah that would be easy to cook when we get home'? You know, so that's what we've got. So we stuffed some pork chops, we made wild boar sausages, we made some schnitzels and we're trying to create some almost meal-ready things. But how far do we go?"*

The butcher expands these points by suggesting the loss of cooking skills reflects changing family patterns, with people 'in transit' and consequent increases in the need for external education in life skills including cooking. Again comparisons to European experience seem pertinent, but may reflect the

idealised narratives Butler refers to: *"We have lost that family orientation, where on the Continent you've still got three generations of the family living in the same house type of thing. We don't eat together. We are probably not living with the family, the grandparents. There's probably the old Nanna who had the time to teach kids to cook etc. I know I learned a lot of cooking from my granddad. And that's been lost. So everything's been in that spiral, you know, the quality of food's gone, schools don't have the cooking we had, the home economics whatever you want to call it, these days"*. However this interviewee feels that such skills may be re-emerging as a result of increasing consciousness and through education, despite 'hectic lifestyles'. *"Hopefully it's all coming back to education. We want to educate people about where the food is from. How you cook it, what do you do with it, you know, it is so easy"*.

### **Considering Borough as a uniquely designed social setting for food**

This third substantive section charts the various social practices observed at the Borough Market quarter and those described by interviewees. It provides findings from the observation 'counts' from different food market days and times, and considers their implications. The findings from food mapping are discussed. It considers how and if social practices are affected by physical space, building on the morphological and urban design analysis of the previous chapter. The relationship between physical design and social practice is considered first. As was noted in the section above on the economics of the market, the market's architect sees its physical location and connectivity as an important backdrop to the social practices and relationships it fosters. The area's very particular sense of place, *"its offbeat flavour"*, is felt to be an important context for social use of the space. *"In their time, shopping arcades and market halls were the spectacles of their time. They were more architecturally sensational. The more services on top of the fresh food the better"*. Various place-user interviewees reinforce the point about sense of place, character and design quality. The Viennese visitor previously quoted connects this to the market's traditional structures: *"Yes this old structure gives the good touch and a really modern structure wouldn't fit to the spirit of the market I think"*. Another - the sausage seller - argues for the interplay of character and design, arguing, *"the design is the character. I think English Heritage say stop knocking these buildings down because the character of these buildings is unique"*.

Just as ambience was previously connected to economic success, the Italian-Australian London resident concurs about the contribution of design and says that: *"there is a series of spaces. There is a sense of enclosure associated with it. I wouldn't say it's entirely the physical environment, but that's a factor"*. This interviewee speaks about Borough Market's atmosphere or ambience, and the way this reflects its success as a social space. He also directly links the atmosphere of the place - in particular the profusion of social interaction - and the quality of the products available there. *"The space - Borough Market if it's crowded - there is an ambience. It is a place to socialise"*. A connection is made between atmosphere and food quality. *"Well I think what I like is the quality of what's available in the market and it's relatively central. And it does have a lot of activity in terms of being well used. So there is a certain atmosphere associated with going to the market"*. Similarly, the market's architect makes an explicit connection between the design quality of the spaces that emphasises sensuality, and the quality of the social

relationship between buyer and seller: *"It's also about the spaces you are in. You walk into this shop environment, which is quite sensual. You see things in their raw state. There is the relationship at the counter. That is Borough Market".* The organic food seller agrees: *"Although we sell very good food here, very good, top quality food. It's not dressed like Harrods Food Hall. Its quirky, its odd. It has that old London feel about it. It just has a sense of history".*

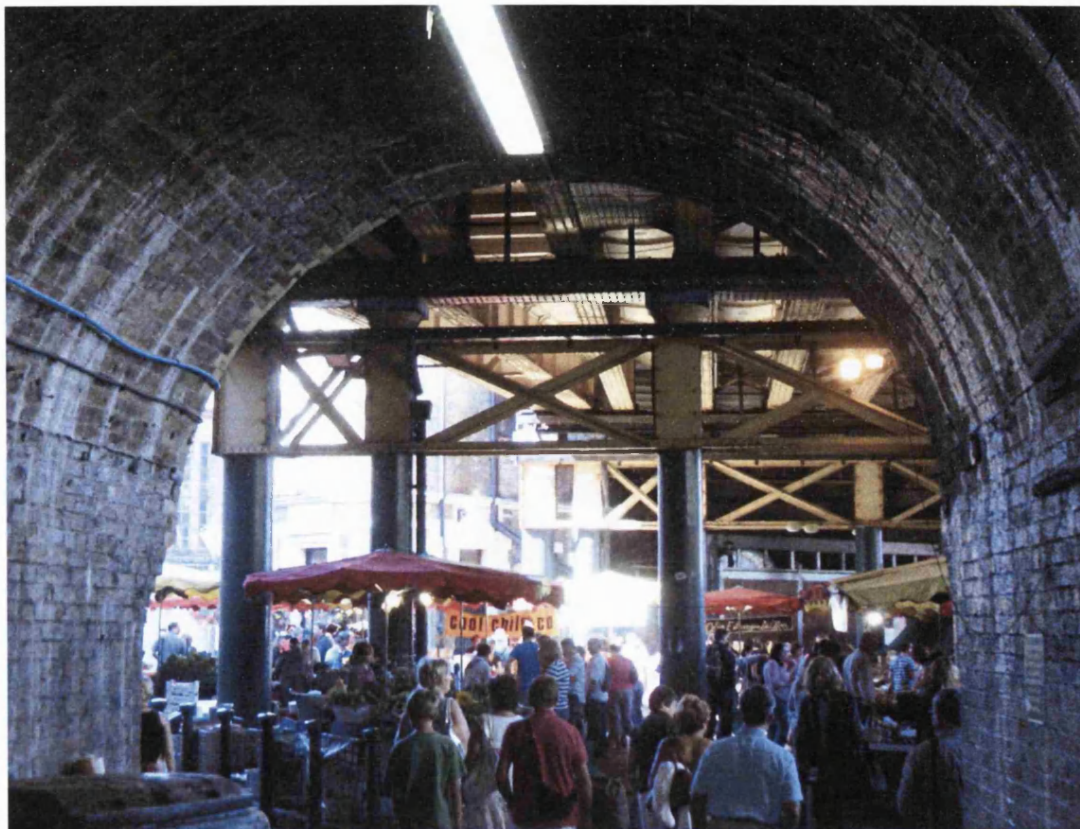


Figure 5.4: Physical space and social ambience in the green market Source: photograph by researcher

The market's architect cites expertise and intimacy at the point of sale as being important. This is both a social and environmental issue, and reflects changing consumption arrangements. This kind of retailing space and process can also be read, as the Italian Australian does, as being about attracting a certain crowd. Borough Market appeals socially to well-travelled, middle class people who like to socialise in a place that has a particular 'hype' and offers unique products: *"there is a certain crowd that's going"*. Despite the view that Borough attracts 'a certain crowd', the market's architect strongly argues that Borough's social appeal transcends class. The organic food seller also stresses the fact that Borough Market is a social space that is not so much a middle class preoccupation as one about people from all walks of life getting connected: *"It's become one of the social meeting places as well. You hear people talking to their friends on the phone: 'We'll meet you at so and so'. A lot of people will spend virtually all day here. They'll wander off to Southbank or whatever; people have lunch... I don't think it's just about selling produce. I think it's also about people being involved in a place they can come to and have a fairly decent, enjoyable experience"*.

Borough's rich social functioning reflects just how wide the catchment for the market has become, and what kind of people are attracted to visit it for social reasons. The sausage seller does not think the catchment is solely a local one. He says people come from both London and other parts of the UK but also worldwide. *"If you come to London come to Borough Market – it's an exclusive food market"*. Other interviewees make connections between how much of the social use of the space involves tourism. *"I just arrived today from Vienna and just taking a look around. Bumped into here. I didn't know anything about the market and so I was interested and it's quite nice"*. (Middle aged Viennese tourist). Another says: *"I think this is probably one of the best things about this city - and a lot of tourists don't know to come here"*. (American, male, London resident in his late 30s). Meanwhile, from a trader's perspective, it is thought people come from *"all over the place. I mean we are now so firmly entrenched on the tourist circuit. People who come to London, um, from all over the country if they are in London for a weekend, if they have an interest in food, they come to Borough Market"* (Organic food seller).

### *The range of socio-spatial practices*

In terms of the kinds of socio-spatial practices evident at the food quarter, interviewees point most often to various ways of eating as well as forms of buying produce. For instance, the sausage seller describes a typical buying pattern that covers both local visitors and tourists: *"You know, I will benefit because whoever comes in the market will have a sandwich and a cup of coffee or whatever. They will always have something. It doesn't matter if it's a tourist or not. They won't buy a load of meat and a load of vegetables and take it back to the hotel. You wouldn't do it if you're on holiday"*. As the market's architect points out, there are also more formal dining opportunities for Londoners. Business people can come to Borough, as an atmospheric place close to the City of London, and eat in up-market style yet surrounded by gritty market spaces. The counterpoint between luxury and decrepitude is one aspect of the market's charm: *"When Fish! opened up – you could walk for 8 minutes from the Bank of England and have lunch right next to the most decrepit bit of the wholesale market"*.

Some interviewees set all these 'extraneous' social practices of visitors against the needs of 'real' shoppers, and this has timing implications. The perception of both traders and market users interviewed is that serious shoppers, the "real customers", increasingly come to the market earlier in the day and earlier in the week in order to avoid the tourist crowds. In response to a question about how busy the market appears to be on Saturdays the butcher says that: *"it's like everything; the success side to things has brought its own problems"*. The organic food seller concurs about timing for 'regular customers'. *"I have to say most of our regular customers, as far as I'm concerned, know when to come. Yeah, like first thing Saturday morning: 'shop there, shop there, shop there'. Certainly before 10"*. A similar comment comes from the Italian-Australian shopper, in relation to dealing with large numbers of tourists: *"I think it is more of a tourist place. If you want to go there and do shopping it's very difficult because there are long queues. It's very hard to move around. So it's not an efficient place for shopping. I think it's becoming more of a social place. There's nothing wrong with that but I suppose ultimately it may detract from shopping there"*.



## Results from food mapping

The food mapping information collected tends to support these perceptions. The mapping records the kinds of land uses given over to food and provides a context for the way that these are being used. The uses are named and numbered in a key (Table 5.1) and shown in a food map (Figure 5.5). A subsidiary cluster map (Figure 5.6) shows a detail of the market space bounded by Bedale Street, Borough High Street, Stoney Street, and an internal market path, where there is a particularly large number of food-related uses. The map demonstrates some clustering of similar kinds of food and drink uses, such as wine and beer stalls, and an overall cluster of various kinds of fresh foods. On the day that the map was drawn up, in June 2008, the market was hosting a special display of food and drink products from La Boqueria and its produce region around Barcelona. A space normally given over to a mix of fresh fruit and vegetable stalls and charcuterie and cheese (under the railway viaduct) was on this day filled with Spanish stalls.

As can be seen from Table 5.1, 118 food and drink uses were counted in the vicinity of the market. This compares with the number noted in a recent publication by the Market, which listed one hundred and forty one food and drink outlets, caterers and wholesalers of various kinds in a slightly wider area (Market Life, Spring 2008). The key shows their diversity and also that there is a focus on artisanal, organic and specialist food and drink, covering products predominantly from the UK and Europe. Stalls selling bread, cheese, meat products, fish, vegetables, juices, preserves, confectionary, olive oil and alcohol are particularly well represented, as are food products from the UK, Italy and Spain. In some cases, similar kinds of uses are grouped nearby, but not right next to each other, as in the case of the three or four fishmongers and oyster bars. This reflects a retailing design strategy noted above by the market's architect. So there is a loose concentration of butchers in one area, of vintners in another and of green grocers in a third area, while along Stoney Street there are a considerable number of eating and drinking places. Stalls where it is possible to buy fresh food to eat and drink at the market are also sprinkled throughout. A substantial proportion of the food related uses are for prepared or partially prepared foods. Many have been established since the food market began to revive, but some, especially those along Borough High Street, are longer-term food places that have weathered Borough's decline and enjoyed renewed popularity due to its success.

<b>Borough Food Map Key</b>			
1. Fish and chip shop	29. The Southwark Tavern	59. Le Marche du Quartier	89. Specialities from Italian Monks
2. Budgen's Express	30. Brindisa Restaurant	60. Borough Wines	90. Boston Sausage
3. Newsagent/fast food	31. Elsey and Bent Fruiterers	61. Utobeer	91. Orkney Rose seafood
4. Jade 'café'	32. Formaggi Vino	62. Cartright Bros	92. Mons Fromagier
5. The Globe pub	33. Wyndham House butcher	63. Mrs King's Pies	93. Dark Sugar Chocolate
6. Mercats de Barcelona (Boqueria)	34. Applebee's Fish	64. Silfield Farm	94. Wyndham House Poultry
7. Gastronomica Piedmont	35. The Wheatsheaf pub	65. Roast stall/restaurant above	95. Burnt Sugar sweets
8. Patisserie Lila	36. Bangers and Mash café	66. Spanish cooking demonstration	96. Gastronimica
9. "Paella" truck	37. The Market Porter pub	67. Only Organics	97. Baxters
10. Hobbs roast meat	38. German Deli	68. Mana's Market Café	98. West Country Venison
11. Café (empty)	39. Little Dorrit Tea Rooms	69. Cranberry (dried fruit/nuts)	99. Furness Fish Markets
12. Londis Off License	40. Paul Smith	70. Ceylon Organic Tea Shop	100. Turnips
	41. Neal's Yard Dairy shop/wholesale	71. The Fresh Oil Co	101. Organic Juice Bar
	42. Shipp's Tea Room	72. Ion Patisserie	102. Total organics

13. London Bridge Tandoori	43. Monmouth coffee shop/café	73. Mozzarella/Prosciutto Stall	103. Superfood
14. De Gustibus (bread/café)	44. Konditor & Cook Patisserie/café	74. Gamston Wood Ostriches	104. Shellseekers
15. Silka Restaurant (downstairs)	45. Wright Bros Oyster Bar	75. Monmouth Coffee Stall	105. Northfield Farm
16. King's Head pub	46. Vinopolis	76. Chegworth Valley Apples	106. Proper Fish and Chips
17. Ristorante Italiano	47. Black & Blue Restaurant	77. Borough Market Hessian Bags	107. Fishworks restaurant
18. Messr C. Caf	48. L. Booth Fruiterers	78. Food plates	108. Greens Café
19. Café Rossi	49. Brindisa	79. De Gustibus bread	109. Café Brood
20. Orient Express Café-Rest	50. Charcuterier - The Ginger Pig	80. The Flour Station Bread	110. A. Sugarman Fruit & Veg
21. Lennay Hop Factors Building	51. Borough Cheese Co	81. La Tua Pasta	111. La Cave
22. Entrance to George Inn	52. Olive oil stall	82. Pieminster	112. Barrow Boy & Banker Pub
23. Slug and Lettuce bar	53. Biscuit and cake stall	83. Argentine Folklore	113. Malaysian Restaurant
24. City Tandoori	54. Farmer Sharp Herdwick Butchers'	84. Loch Glen Salmon	114. All Bar One
25. Harper's caf	55. Flour Power Bread	85. The Fresh Pasta Co	115. Polish Deli
26. The Hop Cellars	56. Italian cheese stall	86. The Veggie Table	116. Burger Van
27. The Hop Exchange	57. Wright Bros Oyster Stand	87. Pecorino Sardo	117. Italian Restaurant
28. The Hop Rooms	58. Flower Stand	88. Sharpham Park (empty)	118. Caf

*Table 5.1: Key to Borough Market Food Uses Map* Source: Prepared by researcher

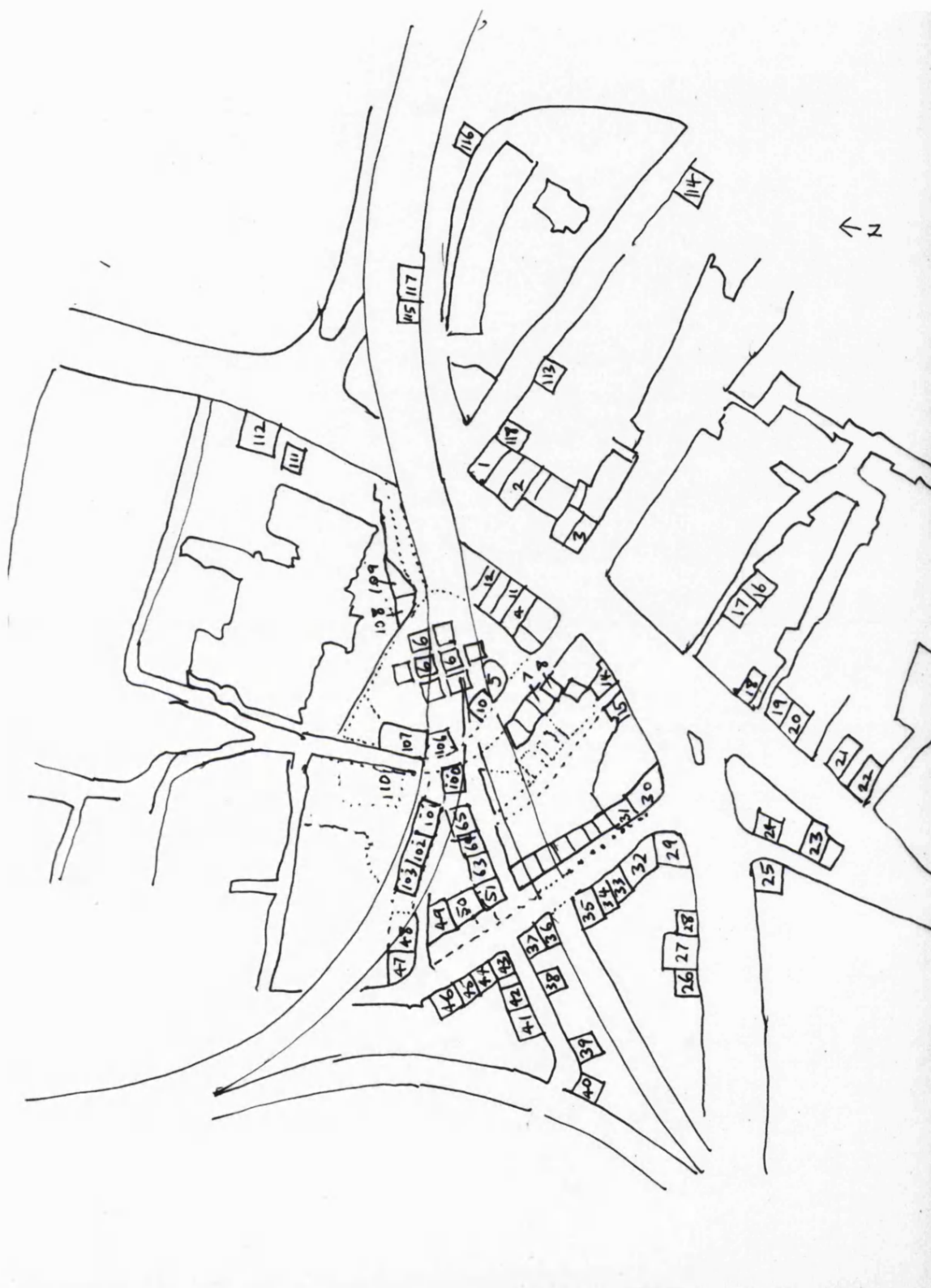
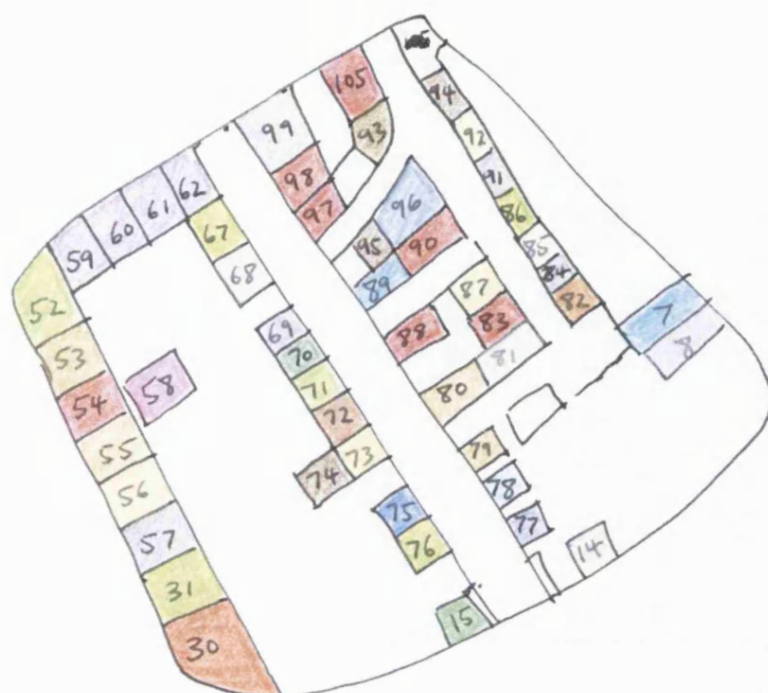


Figure 5.5: Borough Market Food Map Source: Prepared by researcher



- |               |                    |              |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------|
| ● Spanish     | ● butchers         | ● Italian    |
| ● fruit+veg   | ● cakes/pies       | ○ cafe       |
| ● fish        | ● pasta            | ● coffee     |
| ● cheese      | ● poultry          | ● bags       |
| ● bread       | ● oils             | ● plates     |
| ● flowers     | ● wine/beer        | ● restaurant |
| ● dried fruit | ● deli             |              |
| ● tea         | ● chocolate/sweets |              |

Figure 5.6: Borough Market Food Cluster Map Source: Prepared by researcher

#### Head count observations

The 'head count' observations generally reinforce and sometimes extend points made by interviewees about the range of social practices. They also reflect the configuration of uses noted in the food mapping above. The head counts reflect the nature of social practices in terms of their scale; the balance between them; how that balance shifts over the days and hours of the market's operations; variations observed within similar social practices; and any indications that the design of the physical space has impacts on these social practices. The head counts were carried out from the same central vantage point at a similar

late-morning to lunchtime period, for an hour each, on a Thursday, Friday and Saturday, when the market was operating normally. The counts confirm interviewees' perception that the market becomes busiest on Saturdays. Overall, over an hour I counted 1019 people on Thursday, 1214 on Friday and 1988 on Saturday. The view that Saturday is so busy that it can be hard for 'real' shoppers to get to stalls appears to be supported by the informal observations undertaken alongside the head count. This is further supported by a large number of other informal observational visits. Interviewees also say that 'real' shoppers are coming to the market earlier in the day and earlier in the week to avoid the mass of tourist visitors. The head counts give limited support to this view. For the purposes of the head count, I defined people seen at the market with large food shopping bags or baskets (some also seen browsing at stalls with such bags) as proxy measures for those shopping for food to take home and cook. On Thursday there were 71 such individuals, on Friday there were 57 and on Saturday (the market's busiest day overall) there were 189 counted. Thus, the number was higher on Thursday rather than the overall busier Friday, but rose again on Saturday, when the market generally was around twice as busy as it was on Thursday.

Interviewees point out that, within its three weekly days of operation, the market attracts the most tourists on Saturdays. The head counts strongly confirm this. As a proxy measure, I counted those holding or using cameras and/or guidebooks as tourists rather than individuals from a more local catchment. At the same time, it was not possible to define clearly to what extent the social practice of browsing but not buying was in operation among a wider group that might be loosely defined as tourists. On Thursday I counted 8 guidebook or camera holding individuals, on Friday 63, and on Saturday 175. Again the interviewees' view appears to be borne out by this material. On the Thursday I observed a food book signing, with a long queue of people waiting to have their cookbook signed by the food author, Jamie Oliver, (who was placed in a booth garlanded with flowers and surrounded by burly security guards). There were 100 people waiting for his signature. More generally, on two of the three days of head counts, there were a tiny number of people who could be observed reading: 3 on Thursday, 1 on Friday and none on Saturday. It was not possible to see if they were reading Jamie Oliver's book.

The head counts identified some practices not mentioned by interviewees but providing some information about the diversity of social use of the site. The most dominant in number terms is the practice of walking around and through the market, but not eating or drinking at the same time. On Thursday I counted 566 people walking alone or in company. On Friday I counted 615 and Saturday 1079. Most people appeared to be walking alone, although there were small numbers of groups, of two and three. There was also a smaller number of bigger groups of four people or more. The largest groups were tourists, but these are included in the part of the head count documented above. The walkers' pattern shifted somewhat over the three days. On Thursday, in particular, there were more lone walkers, whereas on Friday, and especially Saturday, a substantial proportion of all walkers were observed to be in groups. The other main difference was the increase in scale, with similar numbers on Thursday and Friday and a big jump in numbers for Saturday's market. The inference I draw from this is that Friday and Saturday constitute the more 'social' days of the market's operation, days on which more people visit and arrange to meet each other at the market. Thursday might be described as the 'real' shoppers day.



Interviewees suggest that many people come to Borough Market for the ambience, and tend to have something to eat and drink while they are wandering around enjoying the atmosphere. I counted considerable numbers on each day holding small food bags, holding food or drinks, or actually eating or drinking. On Thursday there were 251, on Friday 245, and on Saturday 331. I noted how relatively few people were found sitting or standing still on any of the three days. I had expected there to be considerable numbers of stationary watchers and eaters, but most people seemed to be on the move, even when eating or drinking. This may be simply to do with the lack of places to sit. There are very few benches or other seats in and around the market except for within stands configured as cafes. People were found perching where built structures allow them to do so, at the edge of buildings and on kerbs. Of individuals observed standing or sitting - a small proportion of whom were also eating - there were 37 on Thursday, 90 on Friday and 78 on Saturday. One conclusion that might be drawn from this pattern is that Thursday is the serious shoppers day. Friday is the day when more local office and other workers visit the market for lunch, as it is at the end of the working week. Saturday by contrast is the tourists' day, when most visitors walk around to view different parts of the market.



*Figure 5.7: Monmouth Coffee/Stoney street corner as a focal point* Source: photograph by researcher

An area of social practice that could be observed to cause some conflict was driving. The pattern was of increasing numbers of cars, vans and trucks observed over the three days, at the intersection of the minor Stoney Street and Park Street. In each case there were somewhat more vans and trucks than cars; the preponderance of such vehicles seems to fit with the servicing requirements of the market. I counted 58 cars, vans and trucks on Thursday, 104 on Friday and 96 on Saturday. It may be the somewhat lower



number on Saturday reflects the greater volume of pedestrians and thus a decision to avoid delivery and other servicing visits at that time as well as the need to deliver food for the Friday market trading hours. From my vantage point I could observe that vans and trucks, in particular, often had difficulty navigating the narrow streets and avoiding the large number of pedestrians. There were a number of minor traffic jams, especially at the T-junction. This was less of a problem for scooter and motorcycle riders; four on Thursday, twenty on Friday and seventeen on Saturday. It also did not appear to cause problems for the small number of cyclists; with ten on Thursday, seventeen on Friday and thirteen on Saturday. I observed one cyclist with an attached cart for carrying shopping, on the Saturday.

### **Analysis and conclusions from Borough Market's transformation into a 'global' food quarter**

#### *Reviving and transforming a food quarter: regeneration, gentrification and urban design*

This chapter has explored the various kinds of material collected at the Borough Market quarter, through interviews, observations, food mapping and 'head counts'. Together these sources provide information about the economic context, environmental implications, and social practices at the research site. The story is one of economic decline and subsequent regeneration on an area basis. However, the regeneration strategy appears to be more complex and more socially and environmentally aware than simply place-marketing based on investors, shoppers and visitors being attracted to a new consumption space. Borough is not a bland consumption space based on an outer suburban mall or clone town model, as the economic, environmental, design and social practice material demonstrates. It appears that some gentrification displacement effects are being experienced and capital is being extracted in the area around Borough Market from the value created by 'urban pioneers'. At the same time, the Trustees of the food market are undertaking various actions to avoid or mitigate negative effects on an existing local population that is traditionally working class.

The governance and leadership of the Market's Trustees is an important element in Borough's food quarter development. Although many UK regeneration processes have been economically and politically top-down in nature, in this case management is much more bottom-up, while central and local government have been noticeably absent as effective regeneration partners. Borough Market has been run along charitable lines for centuries, and over that time its managers have developed a great deal of social capital. Through recent formation of a Development Trust, the locally based Trustees have positioned themselves to secure regeneration funding at key stages. The Trustees' have shown considerable governance capacity and leadership. They have employing a risk-taking, imaginative approach to the regeneration process, in which substantial external funds were secured to finance an architectural competition and design-based refurbishment of the food market. In each of these areas, the skills of the then Head of Trustees were a critical factor in the market's economic success. Having launched the process with a food festival, a key revitalisation technique has been to attract in high-quality food wholesalers who have then chosen, or been required by the Trustees, to also open retail shops on their street frontages in and around the market. All these actions have helped create a food quarter from what was formerly a food desert.

Findings from Borough appear to support a strong link between urban design and food, which in turn underpins the urban sustainability of both the place itself and its food chain. The Borough Market quarter, in contrast to obesogenic environments elsewhere, promotes a healthier approach to urbanism. It operates as an example of traditional urban space, based on the European urban quarter that also functions well in a sustainable food context. The spatiality of Borough as a 'foodscape' is important in turn to how it operates in economic, environmental and social terms. Borough offers a wide range of food possibilities, at a fine-grain and human-scale, within a walkable catchment. Its revival focuses on architectural renovation of buildings and interiors and urban design on the one hand, and on economic revitalisation on the other. On the urban design side the emphasis is on qualities that support a compact city model. Borough forms a node of intense use within a relatively coherent, dense urban fabric, configured as a series of outdoor rooms in which the public realm contributes to a strong sense of place. This is an unusual urban form in a context of the dominance of 'big box' food retailing and contingent public space decline that has been well documented in the literature. Moreover, the sociability traced at Borough suggests that the physical nature of the spaces themselves has influenced the way they have been used in the past and today.

Physical refurbishment of the market structures and interiors was an urgent task for Borough's trustees, as by the 1990s the market was falling apart. This refurbishment has been staged since that time, with the market's operations shifting around the site to avoid building and renovations works. The material from interviewees fleshed out that provided by the morphological and urban design investigations and shows that particular areas of the market have been renovated to the design set out in an overall masterplan. The market's interviewees refer to 'happening upon' both a spatial model and a space structure that is unique in design terms for a food market, but reflects well-established urban design qualities such as enclosure, permeability, richness, variety, legibility and vitality. It likewise reflects the market's particular spatial history and additionally, it directly connects design to the economic viability of the market's operations.

#### *Complexities of success: gentrification and sustainability*

Market viability is established both at the level of the individual traders and businesses and through the market's management and governance overall. Typical growth trajectories for individual food businesses are from wholesale to retail; from running one stand to a number of stands; and towards diversification in the range of products, by opening restaurants and cafes, and by expanding into forms of gastronomic education. Traders have been surprised that their food knowledge is as valuable as their food products, a fact that reflects the degree to which cultural capital now goes into both the formation of cultural quarters and forms a part of individual consumption. At the same time, the market's operations reflect a rather complicated relationship with commodification and gentrification. The analysis suggests that Borough is more than merely an expression of the commodification of urban life, with the space as a high-quality consumption product. It equally functions as a productive space in which a large number of small businesses are nurtured, where food chain relationships are shortened and made more transparent, and in which opportunities for conviviality are emphasised. While gentrification is clearly underway, it cannot be

understood solely as a gentrifying space, focused entirely on the demands of middle-class incomers. The food quarter also provides production, distribution and consumption opportunities that cut across class and benefit some local as well as incoming users.

The chapter reveals regeneration activity at the level of market management that can tie into both place-marketing and social inclusion readings of the market. The partnerships formed with traders, and cultural and economic links with other high quality European market spaces (in this case La Boqueria Market in Barcelona) publicise Borough internationally and reinforce the stress on good local food and generation of income for the local community. Unlike the mainstream public-private partnership approaches to regeneration, these strategic partnerships emphasise Borough's niche as a high quality food provider, with a stress on artisanal produce rather than as a straight farmer's market. Also different from the usual regeneration approach is the lack of direct public subsidies, although external regeneration funding was used for key aspects of the building programme. Instead, discounting rents has been an important tool for attracting, keeping and growing market-based food businesses. This socially conscious financial method has positively influenced the market's overall economic success as well as supporting what are often fledgling food businesses. One of those interviewed sees the fundamental economic relationship at play as one that connects traditional food producers with consumers as directly as can be achieved, with as little mediation as possible. Again, this third sector-private sector partnership seems to stand in opposition to the way regeneration processes in the UK tend to be theorised, whereby top-down subsidies and control from the state are central factors.

A potentially negative aspect of the regeneration programme is the way that property developers are commodifying design improvements, which may increase the level and speed of gentrification. Speculative schemes in the area now use Borough Market as a local anchor, adding value to proposed property projects. The self-described 'London Bridge Quarter' is the most substantial example of these processes at work locally. It reflects the way that a proportion of the economic value and social capital, created by the market's charitable trustees and individual small businesses, is being expropriated rather than being returned to the local community. Set against this, the trustees' charitable objectives also deliver economic benefits to the local area. These occur directly by operating a market that provides good food, employment and educational services, and generates rate relief for local residents. Benefits are also derived more indirectly, by providing a positive context for broader regeneration efforts in the relatively deprived Southwark area. In so doing, regeneration in practice at Borough does not entirely fit with the arguments by Smith and others, about how gentrification tends to proceed.

A key theme that threads through the discussion is about class, with differing opinions expressed by interviewees as to whether the market is of most benefit or interest to middle class consumers for 'dinner party cooking', or offers more day-to-day food opportunities to working-class or lower income users as well. Some of the material collected at Borough supports Bourdieu's analysis, in which the market space acts as a context for social differentiation, where individuals signify social distinction through the refinement of their taste, and each form a particular, similar habitus for themselves. However, the data

also challenge the notion that only middle class people buy food at Borough Market. A number of interviewees point out that those on very limited incomes also want to eat well and from their experience are willing to buy high-quality, artisanal food that attracts a premium price. Relatively high food prices are in turn argued by both sellers and buyers to be justified on the basis of excellent quality, are understood to be important to the financial viability of producers and traders, and to reflect the requirements of maintaining a sustainable product base and food chain.

The environmental themes that relate to the Borough Market quarter flow from interviewees' concerns about aspects of both food quality and the nature of consumption. Borough is clearly a locus for the food system (covering distribution and consumption). Yet Borough consumers also challenge key aspects of that system by 'getting back in touch with food' in ways that encompass its quality, provenance, production methods and preparation techniques. Interviewees posit this as a method by which people can avoid or overcome being 'brainwashed' by supermarkets. One analysis presented is that such consumption provides an alternative to supermarket shopping, offering far greater expertise, intimacy 'at the point of sale' and healthier food. This is in line with the need to increase the sustainability of consumption practices and support more environmentally friendly production at the same time. Higher prices for some products, especially meat, are justified on environmental grounds. Sustainable food includes a more transparent food chain, in which the origin of food is clearly apparent, and thus the quality of its production methods and food miles can be more easily verified. Food miles remain a complex issue, with interviewees pointing to the fact that increased distance from market does not constitute a direct linear progression towards unsustainability. They also raise complex geopolitical issues focusing on the sharp inequalities produced by world food trade, and suggest places like Borough contribute to challenging iniquitous trading norms.

In a related way, there are differing views about educating consumers on food sustainability issues, with some interviewees believing people have a lot to learn, while others say that Borough Market shoppers tend to be substantially more knowledgeable than most. Some of these views tie in with the loss of food skills, which are in turn related to the decline of the domestic as a locus for cooking, and the advent of ready meals. Shopping at Borough Market is seen to indicate a higher level of knowledge than apparent among consumers in the main. However, knowledge is not directly correlated to income, and thus by proxy, to class position. Interviewees suggest that mainland European consumers of all classes have access to high quality food markets as an essential part of urban life, fitting with de Certeau's arguments about everyday social practices around food. Borough Market constitutes a virtually unique specialist food space in central London for environmentally conscious consumption. Consumption at Borough can thus be seen to express a particular individual habitus that also reflects a reshaping of everyday social practice for a proportion of Londoners.

There appears to be a symbiotic relationship between producers and traders on one side and buyers on the other, in which a feedback loop is built-up that supports sustainable production and consumption. There is a question as to whether these more sustainably grown products can or should directly compete with

supermarket-based ready meals. Certain interviewees consider that market products that mirror ready meals may be necessary in order to fit in with lives where working hours are long, family patterns have shifted so that food is viewed as less important, and food preparation and cooking skills have declined or are lacking altogether. This is one aspect of the changes in social practices around food that are clearly being modelled at Borough and again connects to the notion of the reshaping of everyday social practice as argued by de Certeau. A related view from interviewees is that despite these trends, consciousness about sustainability issues is also rising, leading to a turnaround in this area. This would link sustainability awareness with increased preparedness of consumers to be more educated about food, as appears to be the case at Borough. Again this shift is reflected in social practices, of which more below.

### *Socio-spatial practices as a marker of convivial urbanism*

This is a study of everyday life, which explores the links between social practice and physical space. On the social practice side, findings suggest that the Borough Market quarter is understood by those interviewed as a physical entity that provides both an important backdrop, and a contributor, to everyday social practices at the fieldwork site. Market architecture and design, as well as the local urban fabric, imbue the area with a strong sense of place. This, in turn, is felt to have positive impacts on the quarter's social use and the convivial practices it generates. Borough Market's architectural framework echoes the 'cathedrals of shopping' of earlier times and thus, according to one interviewee, provides the character and spectacle missing from supermarket-based consumption. Specific aspects of design thought to contribute to this effect include the series of spaces within and at the edge of the market, the sense of enclosure in the market and surrounding streets, and the strong heritage value of the buildings. The way the stands have been configured as 'walk in rather than trade out' is another specifically design-based intervention argued to be positively affecting social interaction. Borough Market is thought to possess a positive ambience, making it very much a place to socialise. Reflecting its complex morphology, interviewees also say that Borough is not mannered or finished, but a raw, sensual and immediate place that is quirky, odd, gritty and grand at the same time.

It is thought by some interviewees that Borough Market creates a 'hype' that attracts 'a certain crowd': middle class, well-travelled, food aware, with a 'European' food sensibility, and concerned about style. Again, Bourdieu's analysis seems congruent with this aspect of the market's social use. Other interviewees suggest Borough's social space appeal transcends class and is more about getting connected to others through food, whatever one's social background. In this reading, food consciousness is the predominant social link rather than class, ethnicity, age or cultural identity. All sorts of people can become involved in the place and have what is described as '*a fairly decent, enjoyable experience*'. In fact, the quarter's social space catchment is generally agreed to extend well beyond the local area or London more widely, to encompass United Kingdom and overseas visitors. Most are thought to visit intentionally as Borough has received international press coverage, but some have simply stumbled across the place. Among the most dominant socio-spatial practices interviewees mention are visitors eating and drinking in Borough's public spaces. Borough Market provides both informal and formal dining

opportunities and the latter are relatively upmarket. However, more visitors appear to frequent cafes and stalls in the market than to dine formally there. Borough appears to challenge Elias's view that eating in the street is problematic, instead operating as a culturally-sanctioned public space in which the appropriate performance of self can incorporate public food consumption.

Borough's overwhelming attraction to visitors has made it so crowded, on Saturdays especially, that in this way various interviewees believe it risks becoming a victim of its own success. It is uncertain what proportion of those visiting are doing their food shopping at the market, as opposed to, for example, meeting up with friends, as their main socio-spatial practice. The material collected at the food quarter does suggest that so-called 'real' shoppers tend to visit earlier in the day and the week and shop methodically rather than just being at the market to enjoy its atmosphere, although this is not demonstrated in any definitive way by the research material. Equally, for many visitors observed, the human scale of the market does appear to provide more than simply a locational backdrop for playing out a variety of documented socio-spatial practices, in that individuals seem to interact conviviality, not just with each other but also positively with the spaces of the market itself, as they wander through, shop and socialise. They can, for instance, be seen alone or in company, walking and cycling, leaning on walls, standing around near entrances and gateways, sitting on kerbsides, and perched on benches and seats outside cafes. A substantial proportion of the visitors documented through the observations, head counts and interview narratives thus appear to be at Borough Market to socialise and enjoy the ambience of the market in a variety of ways.

Using a range of methods, this chapter has presented and reviewed material from the Borough Market food quarter that builds on the thesis's sustainability framework, reflects its theoretical context, and refers to various morphological and urban design insights. The chapter has developed a narrative about Borough as an economic, environmental and social space. It provides a detailed picture of the way the quarter is understood by experts and managers and through the everyday socio-spatial practices of traders and consumers. In the next two chapters, material from research at the Broadway Market and Exmouth Market food quarters allows similar themes to emerge more broadly, and a basis for comparison between the three food sites to be established.



## **Chapter Six: A case of ‘bottom-up’ food quarter development at Broadway Market**

## Introduction to the Broadway Market quarter

This chapter explores aspects of the relationship between economic, social, and environmental practices and physical space design at the Broadway Market quarter. Broadway Market appears poised between the fully realised food quarter of Borough and the emergent quarter of Exmouth, discussed in the next chapter. The material collected from the site and from a small number of secondary sources suggests that, physically, the Broadway Market quarter is based on a significantly smaller-scale spatial catchment than Borough, while socially it demonstrates a somewhat more conflict-ridden recent history. Another departure from the last chapter is that a conscious architectural and urban design strategy is absent, although the space similarly displays a strong urban design character which has supported its social and economic revival. Again, the fieldwork findings are presented with the economy of the site examined first, followed by discussion of its urban design elements, the environmental aspects of its operation as a local quarter focused on a food market, and then discussion and analysis of observed socio-spatial practices. Unlike the last chapter, there is no comparative 'head count' data, as Broadway only operates as a market on Saturdays. The area under study is shown in the map below (Figure 6.1).



Figure 6.1: Broadway Market quarter Source: based on A-Z map

### Constructing Broadway's story of community-based, food-led renewal

Like Borough, the story of the Broadway Market quarter is one of serious decline and food-led regeneration. Post-war the area was subject to a comprehensive redevelopment process that saw much of the local urban fabric demolished, and the market street dwindle to a remnant space, with few food traders and shops remaining. The role of local leadership has been crucial to Broadway's regeneration, although the local management structure has been 'bottom-up' in a different way to Borough. The push to regenerate the market came from a recently formed group of local residents and traders who organised themselves into the Broadway Market Traders and Residents Association (BMTRA). Under the aegis of a very dynamic local leader, the BMTRA decided to organise a weekly market on Broadway Market in the early 2000s. BMTRA's leader is in her 40s, a former market trader and an East Ender who runs a shop on Broadway Market. She is now the market's volunteer market manager and a key source of information about the market. The chapter starts with the market manager's account of the difficult process of restarting the market, which she contextualises by reference to London Farmers' Markets experience generally.

The market manager argues that the economic regeneration of markets around London fits within an economic and social movement that people of all classes have taken part in. She makes a direct link between the desire for more satisfying consumption and the economic complexities of regeneration as experienced by individuals. *"About 3-4 years after they [farmers' markets] started the 'white space' brigade, the loft converters, people who had disposable income, started to go to them. Borough was the first. They suddenly realised that it was a very lonely, controlled life".* As at Borough, Broadway's local proponents had a battle on their hands to revive the market, with the local authority, the London Borough of Hackney, perceived as obstructive and possibly corrupt. The market manager comments, *"We had to fight the council to get it happening. They never said no but they put every obstacle in the way. They couldn't bear the thought of someone else having control and raking in the dough".* In the end, the designation of Broadway Market historically as a chartered market proved critical to its revitalisation, despite council inaction. As the market manager explains, because Broadway had continued to trade through its years of decline, although in a minimal fashion, it was still officially a market: *"I found a loophole to get the market started. A light bulb went off in my head when I was at yet another meeting with them [the council]. I was looking out of the window at the street sign and I realised Broadway Market is a market. It had two live traders so it was an existing market so Hackney Council can't stop us from trading".*

The market manager suggests that the council's narrow focus on regulation, without the apparent capacity to properly manage the market, has been a central problem in the regeneration process, and one that *"leaves a management gap"*. The market manager stresses the bottom-up, community-based nature of the management of the market as a key aspect in both the process and the structure of its ongoing revival. BMTRA has created a regeneration process unpaid that the council would otherwise have had to spend

significant funds on: *"Here we just expanded on what we wanted - a bunch of locals who wanted to shop local. Have camaraderie. Because we're an association - market traders, shops, residents, everyone gets to comment. Look at the whole street, not just the market and shops"*. The market manager says that markets like Broadway need to be understood in much broader economic and social terms than local authorities' traditional approach to market management. She makes connections between customers, traders and managers as a kind of partnership-working arrangement. *"This is the only market I know in the whole country where the market is about the people who live and work directly in that street, everyone's had an involvement and a say"*. A stress on creating a "whole shopping experience" is contrasted with the traditional trading-down-on-price approach of markets managed by councils. These are typified as a *"dog-eat-dog arrangement where you are forced by market management to compete with your neighbour or they might give someone else the pitch"*. The market manager expands on her economic and social vision for the market as one that stresses local connections and sense of community. *"I wanted to work on this market as my family are market traders. I used to work in this market when it was on its last legs. I wanted to create this as a place for the weekly shop, stop and chat, be part of the community. The 70 of us who got together were like that anyway. Old fashioned values, tolerance"*.

These points are all seen to directly link to the increasing success and growing visitor catchment for the market, from walkable and *"directly local"*, to borough-wide. The catchment for sellers as well as buyers has grown quickly. The market manager comments that *"we started with 23 stalls. We could have filled the whole street in six weeks. I took 500 phone calls in the first weeks"*. Other interviewees also see the catchment as being primarily local but expanding. A fish pie seller (white, female, twenty-something) says that over the last 6 years *"Broadway Market has changed a lot. You can see all the new shops coming in. It's always busy during the week but on Saturdays you get...over time it's just kept developing and developing and it's really, really nice. There's more people, more stalls and more stock. We get a lot of regular customers now but then every week you also see new people."* Similarly, an olive seller, who is white, male and twenty-something, argues that this increase in visitors is not caused by mainstream tourism but something subtler: *"it usually seems like that [visitors] are visiting some friend or..because I don't think tourists come here. Loads of tourists come to Borough."* A local resident who visits the market on a weekly basis to do much of his food shopping (white, male, twenty-something) also suggests the catchment is growing because the market has become cool, and hip journalists have heard about it, or possibly live near it (a point I return to in relation to socio-spatial practices later in the chapter). *"It's the kind of thing that will be in the papers, in the Guardian or something; 'a cool place to go at the weekend', so people will come"*. A tomato seller (white, male, twenty-something) meanwhile says that he thinks *"you do get a certain sort of catchment for this area"*.

*Who is the Broadway Market quarter for?*

One of the contentions by opponents to the changes at Broadway is that long-standing working class residents are unable to afford the food market due to high prices. A related issue is whether the area's working class population are excluded from benefits accruing to richer incomers, such as increasing

property values and an improving quality of life. Some critics have argued that Broadway is developing a brand identity, which is based on “an *organic farmer’s market catering to inhabitants of the area’s mushrooming yuppy apartments, [while] less affluent residents have mainly been victims, not beneficiaries, of this striking transformation*”.<sup>1</sup> By contrast, the market manager argues firmly that the market is affordable. “*Let me take you back to the supermarket to their finest range. Their finest range is more expensive than what you’re getting direct from the producers in my market*” (ibid). Despite these price comparisons, one market-user interviewed puts an opposing view, suggesting that the market is “*quite pricy and would demand a certain income*”. This white, 30-something, male, professional, who lives locally, comments, “*They are high value added goods here. You have to have a certain income. If you look at prices of cheese, bread, all pricy - you might come here for a treat. It’s predominantly people on higher incomes. The exception is the greengrocer who’s been here for decades*”.

Both observations and interviews suggest the food market is not solely organic, or a farmer’s market, and whether it is catering only for incomers remains a subject of contention by interviewees and commentators.<sup>2</sup> One interviewee, a 40-something, female trader, agrees that the food market has led the regeneration of the area and points out that the incomers have been part of what has made it sustainable in economic terms. A number of interviewees suggest the Broadway area is enjoying a mix of incomers and existing residents. The fish pie seller says the area can be increasingly recognised as “*middle class from the amount of people with really expensive dogs, people with really expensive buggies and very young children. There are a lot of people in their late 20s, early 30s who have moved into Hackney. There’s a lot of media people. It certainly has changed*”. At the same time, this interviewee believes that there is “*a mixture of people. I do think you get you know you’ve got the canal and the estates and you know all the other bits of Hackney are right there... Compared with other farmers markets that I do, this market is the... most random mixture of people*”. A number of other traders also stress the considerable diversity and social mix they notice among their customers.

#### *Broadway as a developing cultural food quarter: a complex gentrification scenario*

These views would seem to suggest any stark counter-pointing of working class victims and middle class victors, in the market’s regeneration may underplay the nuances in the nature of the transformation of the quarter, although identifying the general direction of longer-term trends. Interviewees point to the development of an “arty” but culturally rather mixed local community coming to the market. The tomato seller, for example, says, “*you know its quite mixed sort of cultures in this market as well. I think you get in this particular area of Hackney you get sort of young, up-and-coming, sort of like... There’s a kind of arty scene around here. At the same time you’ve got old geezers as well who’ve been here... There’s a sort of mix in this area. It’s quite unique for that*”. He adds that this social and cultural mix contributes to the market’s character: “*the good thing is the mix of cultures even like the shops that are here on a permanent basis, they work really well, you know, it adds to the feel*”. The olive seller also notes

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.hackneyindependent.org/news\\_archive\\_2006/the\\_saturday\\_market\\_debate.html](http://www.hackneyindependent.org/news_archive_2006/the_saturday_market_debate.html)

<sup>2</sup> <http://shopping.guardian.co.uk/food/story/0,,1660557,00.html>

“artiness” in relation to all the people who work on his stall, most of whom are also “*connected to some kind of visual culture and I think that you would find that here as well (gestures round)*”.

A key reason why young and poor artists, students and others with more cultural than economic capital state they have moved into the area is because of its relative cheapness. As a local resident and shopper points out, “*I ended up here because I was a student and it was the cheapest place to live. I’d never been to the market before but now I’m here I don’t think I’d leave*”. A white, forty-something female trader argues that up until recent times the market area had been a cheap place to live because it was poorly connected. “*It’s cheap because its got bad transport links. Depending on where you are. In a way you would think that would effect the market but look at it*”. [Gestures to busy market] The area’s cheapness appears, however, to have been a relatively fleeting quality as house price increases now begin to grip. This aspect of area transformation associated with growth of the market is explored below.

Even more apparently than at Borough, the issue of gentrification is an important part of the Broadway Market quarter story. Taken as a whole, the views noted above suggest that there is a strong community basis for the food-led revival of Broadway Market, but that does not preclude the process from having unintended gentrifying effects, which have roused heated local opposition. A market-user (white, male, thirty-something professional) argues along these lines: “*I see the market as gentrifying space. The history of this market: there have been cycles of attempts to have this as a market. First as a traditional market, then there was an attempt to do a flower market, then this high end market*”. Both interviewees’ views and observations give weight to the notion that Broadway Market is in the process of gentrification, supported by an influx of professional people, real estate agents and property developers. The first interview was begun with a comment from the interviewee cited above who approached me, saying: “*Are you doing participant observation? I use mixed methods in my work so recognised what you are doing*”.

More indirect material suggestive in relation to the class position and political orientation of market visitors can be gleaned from the local newsagents’ substantial Saturday morning stack of *The Guardian*, (Figure 6.2) whereas right-wing broadsheet newspapers are stocked in very small quantities, and there appear to be far fewer tabloid newspapers for sale. In distinct contrast, graffiti, including anarchist symbols, on a market side street wall (Figure 6.3) shows a less comfortable side of this economic, social and spatial dynamic. The previously cited olive seller argues that “*the gentrification process is so incredible around here*”, and this is signified directly through food and food spaces. What used to be a working class market the olive seller says now has “*gentrification somehow articulated through food*” and gives the example of the large number of restaurants which have set up in the street, while only one or two traditional food spaces remain (the chip shop and Cook’s eel and pie shop). Unprompted, he suggests that if such spaces were at Borough they would offer “*sites of authenticity*” but here no one uses them. “*On the other hand I think for the people and for the market it still works as an authentication site somehow.*”





*Figure 6.2 Broadway Market newsagent selling large number of copies of broadsheet newspaper, The Guardian Source: Photograph by researcher*

### *The role of incomers in food-led renewal*

A central contention in the claims that this is gentrifying space, is that the council has sold off property on and near the market street to developers, instead of to local small businesses which are sitting tenants and

were supposed to have first refusal. The two main examples are Tony's Café<sup>3</sup> and Spirit's grocery store<sup>4</sup>. A local campaigning group, Hackney Independent, argues that this is a straightforward case of the economic interests of the extant poor on "run down council estates" being marginalised by those of the "self-interested" incoming rich, with the Saturday market viewed as contributing to the gentrification of the area while its users have no idea of how they are being used the local council to prop up the local economy (ibid). Another website describes the more recent situation with Tony's café and others "forced out" to be replaced by luxury flats.<sup>5</sup> The notion of an invasion of Broadway Market by property developers is supported by commentary from Mute magazine, which describes the situation as one of "re-colonisation".<sup>6</sup> As these web-based accounts demonstrate, the Broadway Market area is subject to considerable development pressure.

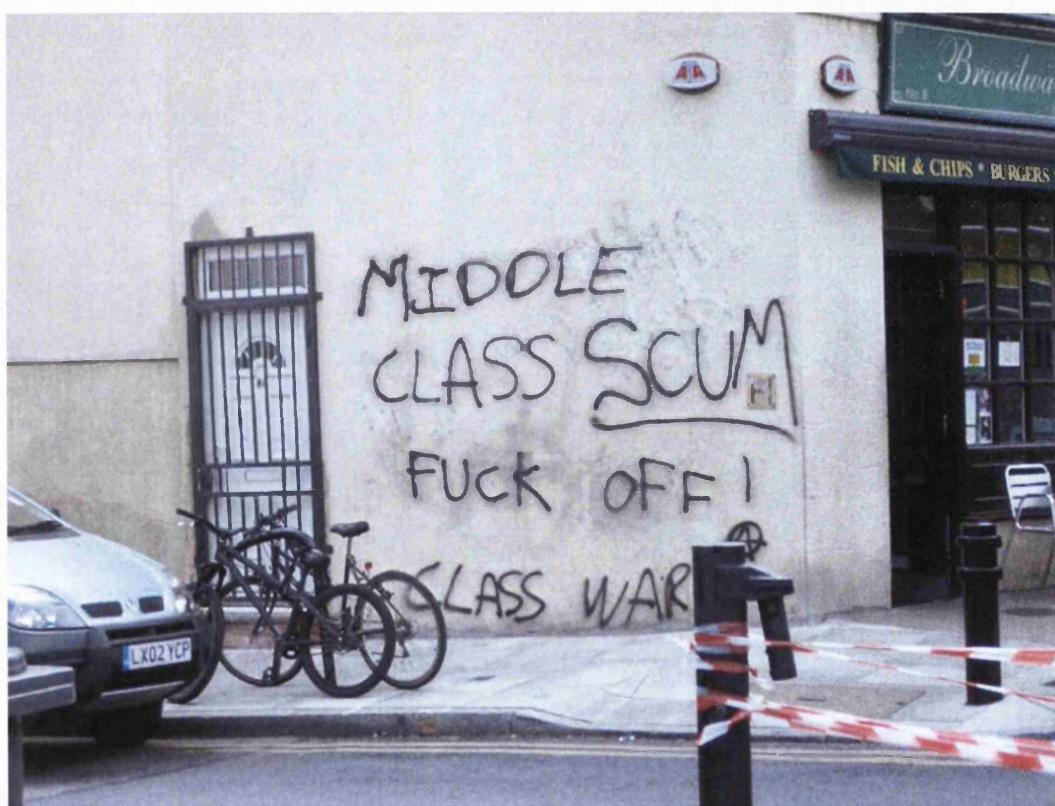


Figure 6.3: graffiti on the market street featuring the anarchist symbol Source: Photograph by researcher

The previously cited local shopper (male, 20-something), who originally came to live in the area because it was cheap, points out that a building boom of shoddy new apartments is underway locally. "It is happening though because along the canal there are so many new blocks of flats. And, you know, they're all going to be like the boxy, one bedroom, cardboary structures but they will sell for loads of money because it's a nice area". The fish pie seller also sees some opposition coalescing around the notion of

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.iwca.info/cor/cor0034.htm>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.hackneyindependent.org/content/view/170/2/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://34broadwaymarket.omweb.org/modules/wakka/HomePage>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.iwca.info/cor/cor0034.htm>

incomers shaping Broadway Market into a boutique kind of market, inimical to longer standing local people. *"Yeah, Hackney.. there's been quite a lot of opposition to it, let's say, from the working classes I suppose. You know some people, it does upset them, you know, new people coming in. You know, I think the combination works quite well"*.

Others also suggest that gentrification is perhaps *"a more complex tale"* than one of straightforward displacement (Kingsnorth, 2006), arguing that while Broadway Market is more gentrified than five years earlier it is still a mixed neighbourhood in which older and newer food shops and cafes rub together and incomers support battles to protect places like Tony's café.<sup>7</sup> Hari Kunzru, writing in *The Guardian* (7 December 2005, G2: 8) also describes the gentrification process in a way that accepts it is occurring, but acknowledges the complexities for individuals involved. He notes that there is an economic and social connection between a penchant for living in Hackney because of its individuality and eccentricity; described as *"a grubby glamour that has not yet been stamped out and flattened into the same cloned corporate hell-hole as the rest of Britain"* (ibid) and enjoying what somewhere like Broadway Market's food market brings to the area. *"But the thing is, I am partial to a nice piece of raclette. I like hanging out at the new street market. And I know the significance of all the high-end prams, the sudden appearance of a yoga parlour, the almost palpable whiff of testosterone emanating from the shiny new estate agencies full of shiny blokes with big, shiny ties and shiny Mini Coopers sprayed in the company colours. The technical term is regeneration. In other words the next phase of the takeover is underway. People like me - writers and artists - have softened Hackney up. Now comes the real money."*

Another example reported in the *Evening Standard* (Area Watch, Home and Property, Wednesday 7 March 2007: 7), also demonstrates some of the economic and social complexities embedded in the process for individuals living locally. This provides a kind of incomer's case history:

*"ACTORS Simon Kunz and Caroline Loncq live with their four-year-old son, Jonjo, and their lurcher, Harry, in a large and spacious flat in the London Fields area of Hackney. Simon came to the area from Highgate 12 years ago, not because he loved the area but because he found a flat that he loved at a price (it was less than £100,000) he could afford. Caroline, who came from the Westbourne Grove area, says she and Simon have really come to appreciate Hackney. "It is very green and friendly, and we like the great ethnic mix. There are lots of Turkish and Vietnamese stores selling lovely fresh produce, and I have never eaten as well as I have here. I know people complain about the public transport, but I have never liked the Tube much, so if I can't go on my bike, I take one of the many frequent buses." The couple enjoy the nearby Sunday flower market in Columbia Road and the market, shops, pubs and restaurants in Broadway Market. Like a lot of local residents, they have joined the protest in support of Spirit, a long-standing Jamaican shopkeeper in Broadway Market, who is being evicted by his landlord. "We like the way the local community gets involved in local issues such as this." A typical Saturday for Simon, Caroline and Jonjo is a stroll down to Broadway Market, a game of ping pong on the*

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.theecologist.org/archive\\_detail.asp?content\\_id=593](http://www.theecologist.org/archive_detail.asp?content_id=593)



*outdoor table in London Fields, then home to cook a meal with all the ingredients they have bought in the market”.*

At one level this is an absolutely textbook gentrification narrative of first wave gentrifiers or new urban pioneers. They fit very well the community activists’ stereotype of the middle class users of Broadway’s burgeoning food shops, cafes, and market stalls, and would form the “shock troops” of Hari Kunzru’s “softening up” process. However, the account also demonstrates that such incomers cannot be solely defined as rich and self-interested. They appear to be on moderate incomes, with a professional background in the arts. They shop locally for food, rather than at chains, and are involved in local community-based politics to protect working class interests. More broadly, it is worth restating that the market manager does not accept that, as the area is being regenerated, this is necessarily to the detriment of longer-term, working class residents. She challenges the use of the word gentrification as a term of opprobrium to describe what is occurring. *“We got bad press to say we were gentrified. I bawled them out. I don’t care how long people have lived here. If regeneration is solely about gentrification, that can’t build communities. If it benefits long-suffering residents then you will win. We planned, have created, the first urban village; complimenting the shops that were already here”.*

In the market manager’s analysis the market has built on, rather than replaced, local food shops for local people, and a particular spatial model (the urban village) is invoked, of which more below. The market manager argues in a newspaper interview that she believes that market is *“an amazing catalyst for bringing people together. People from all types of background, financially, economically, socially. It’s beginning to become a platform for the community. It’s real urban space because it’s grown up itself. My fear though is that the property market would go nuts and it has. It’s gone nuts quicker than we anticipated”*.<sup>8</sup> The market manager points out the irony that high housing costs impose economic constraints on buyers that reinforce the need for them to consume food in a local way. *“Because of the cost of living/housing these people are what I call ‘rich poor’. They may have a flat that is worth ¼ million pounds but they have very little disposable income so they are coming to Broadway Market and being very selective about their food and getting the free social aspect”.*

#### *Broadway as a victim of its own success?*

The market manager sees the possibility of Broadway Market becoming a victim of its own economic success and thus deterring local “core” shoppers. She says that in the previous year she began to worry the market was getting too busy. *“We don’t want wall-to-wall pressure. We don’t want to grow down side streets as then there is more pressure. Some Borough traders were ringing up more sales but making less money. This would be shoppers buying one or two items. They will deter core shoppers who don’t want to stand in a queue. That’s what they escaped supermarkets for. On the continent, we go to markets later [in the morning], and let the core shoppers get in earlier”.* The fish pie seller interviewed says that the issue of too many visitors versus “core” shoppers may not be as significant a problem as it has become at

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<sup>8</sup> [http://www.hackneyindependent.org/news\\_archive\\_2006/the\\_saturday\\_market\\_debate.html](http://www.hackneyindependent.org/news_archive_2006/the_saturday_market_debate.html)

Borough. This, she believes, is due to the market street's location, substantially further from the centre of London, which means *"it's always going to have that local aspect. I don't really see it becoming like Borough because it's not quite central enough maybe...I think there is a better mixture here than at Borough. More local and there's less just people who go to look and try but they don't necessarily do their shopping. Here people definitely do and I think with the fact that it's in a place where there are shops, it's not just the market, it means I don't think it will really become that. It's a slightly different thing, a different atmosphere"*. A local resident who shops at the market, interviewed at around 11am on a Saturday morning, does suggest though that *"It will get really busy later on as well to the point when you just get really annoyed walking up and down. It's like at Borough"*.

The manager has a clear plan for the economic growth of the market over time and believes that local management has been crucial to success so far, by carefully approving potential traders from the *"hundreds of people who want a pitch"*. The intention is to build up numbers of stalls slowly to ensure quality and to manage competition. The manager argues in a newspaper article that other local people besides BMTRA (by implication this point is aimed at Hackney Independent's constituency) could have revitalised the market themselves but did not do so. *"Where are all the stalls that these people say should be here giving them what they want? Why did they go away in the first place? Because people stopped using this market. They went to supermarkets instead. They let it die. We all let it die. If any one from the local estates wanted to do (something similar) they could have done it too. We're just a bunch of ordinary people. They could've done it themselves. The longstanding businesses (on Broadway Market) would not have been here now if we'd not introduced the market"*.<sup>9</sup>

### **Exploring the urban design implications of food market regeneration**

Shifting to spatial aspects of the discussion of Broadway's economic revival, a key aspect of change at Broadway relates to its urban design. Urban design issues and qualities underpin a considerable number of the points about economic regeneration made by interviewees and observable at the site. A white, female, forty-something trader says that the shape of the space is important because the canal at one end forms a *"natural barrier and then you've got the park at the other so it becomes a kind of reach (sic) that people particularly want to [unfinished]"*. A tomato seller (white, male and twenty-something) agrees, mentioning what is, in effect, the street's enclosure as an important factor in building atmosphere. *"I think it's got that old sort of market feel to it. You've got sort of the shops on one road and the space is quite confined and that sort of builds to an atmosphere to the market. I think that does help this market a lot. Say at other markets I've worked, the space it can affect sort of custom and feel to a market. I wouldn't say it's ideal, but it helps"*. Another trader says, *"I think it [street shape] helps funnel sort of people in as well. It works well"*.

The olive seller, meanwhile, contrasts the spaces at Broadway and Borough, seeing the former as an intentionally designed set of spaces that he terms *"a kind of authentic farce"*. In regard to Broadway he

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<sup>9</sup> [http://www.hackneyindependent.org/news\\_archive\\_2006/the\\_saturday\\_market\\_debate.html](http://www.hackneyindependent.org/news_archive_2006/the_saturday_market_debate.html)

wonders if physical design has that much effect, although he does point out some of the less pleasant microclimate effects resulting from where his stall is positioned. *"Here, in many ways, from a purely practical point of view, it's a pretty bad space because the wind is kind of coming in [gestures to street leading onto Broadway Market behind stall]"*. The spaces at Broadway are also contrasted much more positively with spaces at farmer's markets at Islington and Clapham, with which one interviewee is familiar. The fish pie seller suggests the high street location at Broadway is very important whereas *"places like Islington - and the Clapham one is very similar - it's like a primary school car park. It's not on the high street. There is no flow to it. People have got to know where it is. You've got to come, buy your things and leave. That's it"*.

The idea that Broadway is turning into an "urban village", as suggested by the market manager, is one of the connections made between economic and social regeneration and the urban design of the local area. The fish pie seller seems to support this idea in her comments, as well as giving clues to typical socio-spatial practices and catchment range, of which more below. *"Yes, in the summer, especially here where our stalls is, people just sit on the pavement, you know, with their coffees if the cafes are really busy, read the papers. A lot of the places are outside things where you can sit. There's music. There's lots of other stalls. There's places with books, you can read. You can have lunch. And it's right next to London Fields so if it's nice.. so people are definitely using it in that way. I don't know whether it's just people from Hackney, it's really hard to see, but there is a lot of people who live locally it seems"*. For the market manager, the term 'urban village' denotes an inclusive, community-based place where food needs can be met locally at a reasonable price and with good quality.

The role of connectivity aspects of urban design is also reflected in the way that the area is experiencing an economic upturn. This, in turn, links to rising property prices. House price increases are related, among other factors, to spatial design changes occurring at a macro level (documented in The Evening Standard's New Homes Guide, Wednesday 20 September 2007, p. 4). The most obvious of these is the development of the new orbital rail network, which will open up new pockets of East London to the Underground. The ES Guide (ibid) points out that the East London line extension corridor is therefore a property hotspot, and it provides details of residential property for sale close to Broadway Market, while referring in passing to the contested nature of recent changes. *"Haggerston... is a place to watch. Sandwiched between bar-packed Hoxton to the south and Islington to the north, the pace of gentrification has been slower here, with some determined locals fighting off developers, notably on Broadway Market, where old East End traditions such as a pie-and-mash shop survive alongside a gastro-pub, deli, restaurant and art gallery"* (ibid).

At a finer grain, the market manager raises an urban design point about the potential for food market development and new housing to be in conflict with one another, because of amenity issues such as increased noise. *"At Columbia Road [flower market close by] developers moved in, values went up, residents started wanting the market to be closed as it was too noisy. That's what's happened at Borough. We've had one or two complaints here about noise. So regeneration has to be community oriented - for*



*both long term and new residents*". Other physical design issues noted by the manager include safety, which is thought to be likely to increase as an issue if the plans to run evening markets take off. Currently, the street is closed off at its northern end during market hours. *"I've learnt a lot about street safety etc. going just until 9pm. I can't yet get the council to close the road for this"*.

### **Identifying a 'submerged' account of Broadway Market as sustainable space**

This section explores Broadway Market as an environmental space, again drawing on interviews, online comments and fieldwork observations. There is substantially less direct reference to issues of environmental sustainability in relation to Broadway than found at Borough, yet the material presented demonstrates that similar concerns are present. These are often embedded in interviewees' narratives about Broadway as an economic or social space. For example, the market manager situates the development of Broadway Market within a broader movement of farmers' type markets, that is strongly environmentally conscious in tone, and which, to some extent, transcends class. *"London Farmers' Markets has led the way. They arrived at a time when foodies - that's all sorts of people - when I started I was on benefit, but I've always been into cooking, food, and was sick of just buying what jumps out at you in the supermarket - for me what happened, that's why they were such a success. People were ready to make a choice"*. At the same time, the manager rejects the idea that Broadway is a farmers' market. Instead, the stress is on good quality food at affordable prices for local people rather than defining a geographical limit to market suppliers as required by Farmers Market rules. Fieldwork observations demonstrate that there is emphasis on products from the South East of the UK, as well as specialist cheeses, meats, and dried goods from other parts of the UK, and from Italy, France, and other European sources.

In relation to stall shopping at Broadway Market, the focus, as at Borough, appears to be on the knowledgeability of market traders and purchasers about the sources and quality of their products. In interviews, a number of sellers mention the geographical background of their products, and from observations, these sources often appear ethnically and culturally distinct from those of the purchaser. This suggests reasonable levels of understanding of food products from outside the buyer's background. Thus, for example, an Italian pasta and pesto seller interviewed (white, female, Sicilian, twenty-something) is clearly well informed about her products. She was observed explaining in considerable detail both the geographical origins of her products, and the right cooking techniques a buyer would need to use to cook them properly. The market manager stresses the point about localism, diversity and quality. *"Broadway Market is about food, diversity, enjoying shopping on a more local, quality basis"*.

The tomato seller, meanwhile, argues that relatively high prices, previously discussed in relation to economic regeneration, are justified on the basis of outstanding environmental quality, and this is something recognised and accepted by buyers who are concerned with such quality. *"I've got to admit some of the stuff we sell, I think, you know, it is slightly on the more expensive side for a couple of things but the quality is there so, you know, it depends how much people are into their food. You know, if you are*

*willing to pay for the good quality stuff people will do that irrespective of how much rent basically”.* There is a suggestion that buyers at Broadway are making conscious choices about their consumption, which are driven by sustainability concerns. At least one does so on apparently more ideologically driven grounds, consuming in more sustainable ways than in the past. As an online comment explains, the methods used to consume are a mix of online and local.<sup>10</sup>

From the limited accounts collected, Broadway appears to be understood as a place in which individuals model aspects of more sustainable consumption, production and distribution patterns. While the range of accounts in this area is somewhat muted, the stress on food’s environmental quality can be discerned from both observations and interviews. There is an emphasis on localism and small scale, high quality, geographical typification, artisanal production and organic produce. It will be remembered from the economic evidence that high food prices are generally thought to be justified in terms of quality, which in turn reflects good environmental practice in food production. While food miles are not mentioned, there is an emphasis on sourcing produce from the South East of the UK. Well-informed buyers and sellers are together allowing sustainable shopping choices to be made by offering attractive alternatives to supermarket-based consumption.

### **Describing Broadway’s range of socio-spatial practices: connections to urban design**

This section on Broadway as social space describes a series of socio-spatial practices observed at the site and discussed by place users. Like Borough, the site supports a substantial range of practices contributing to the construction of everyday life in Lefebvre’s terms and reflecting a distinctive individual habitus. Observations and interviews suggest that Broadway Market provides numerous spaces for social encounters; some focusing on food buying and consumption, at stalls, shops, cafes and restaurants; and some simply of people meeting on the street in an unplanned way. In each unstructured observation undertaken during market operating hours, I noted a substantial number of casual meetings between individuals in the market area or on the market street. The fish pie seller says about these spontaneous meetings that, *“you always see people meeting other people that they know, just bumping into people randomly. There’s definitely that thing now where people do know each other and you see the same people here every week”*.

In some cases those meeting then go to market based or nearby cafes for coffee, or walk the length of the market street together. As the fish pie seller says, there are *“people who come here and literally do their weekly food shopping, and people who come just to buy a couple of things and sit and have a coffee or meet up with other people. If you look around you notice there are a lot of people doing that now”*. Broadway Market’s manager sees the local market as the kind of place where a richer social life can be “nudged along”. There is an implied commentary about the design of the market spaces in the following comment that also nods to Norbert Elias on civility. *“When the market started, I used to use quotes:*

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<sup>10</sup> strwberrydelight, 02 Feb 2006) <http://www.urbanpath.com/london/food-markets/broadway-market.htm>

*“burst your personal bubble, talk to people, smile”. People wanted to be a bit more relaxed. The control of etiquette began to relax”.*

The physical shape of Broadway Market is viewed as particularly well set up by one place user to facilitate such encounters. A white, thirty-something professional (specialist doctor), who lives locally with his wife and small child, says that *“we often meet friends here. We don't plan to. It's the physical structure. It's a bit like a promenade in a small town. I end up meeting A, B, C and D”*. The fish pie seller suggests that for some people the market provides a whole day's local entertainment. *“Here the farmers market is much longer, from 10 to 4, and sometimes in terms of people buying things it starts very late. They come in the morning, and get a coffee, have a sit about, have a mooch around, so it's a much longer thing to it. People come and they tend to spend some more time, and they buy their things maybe a bit later on and then they go home and eat or whatever and you can see people are planning on 'I'm going to do this, this evening' or 'we are going to have this late afternoon'. And that's their day really”*.

Like Borough, Broadway Market has a 'hidden gem' quality. The fish pie seller mentions that some of her customers stumbled on the market at Broadway by chance, or heard about it through word of mouth, and that it has enriched their social lives. *“Sometimes I see people who say 'I live really close by and I've only just discovered the market and isn't it fantastic'. I've had older people come up and say 'oh I used to live close by 20 years ago and it's just incredible how much it's changed and the same time is the same', you know”*. Part of the appeal is that the Broadway Market has become fashionable. A forty-something, female trader argues that Broadway offers the opportunity to see *“a cross section of the trendiest people in London”*. She suggests these are the kind of people who twenty years ago went to Portobello Road or Spitalfields Markets. *“You might see them at Columbia Road on a Sunday possibly...but you see the range, and then, as well as that, there are yummy mummies with kids”*. There is also a feeling that Broadway's catchment is widening. *“I think they're beginning to [come from further afield]. Definitely in the last year or so they're beginning to come as a destination to pose”*. A local twenty-something, male resident and shopper agrees that *“lots of people come and they pose”*. One recent observation found talent scouts looking for people to feature in a mobile phone advertisement, playing into the notion that Broadway is recognised as a place to find 'cool' people.

As at Borough, walking around the market is a socio-spatial practice much in evidence. While most of the observed walking does not appear to be self-consciously reflexive, it often does have performative aspects reminiscent of the passeggiata. While the passeggiata is normally an evening practice, I suggest it is fair to describe some of the combined strolling, socialising and shopping that takes place in the Broadway Market space, during the mornings and early afternoons when the market operates, as being in this promenading style (Figures 6.4 and 6.5). A considerable proportion of walking observed appears to be slow, thoughtful, observant, and sociable, with aspects of social display. The physical form of the space at Broadway Market also appears to affect the nature of walking being undertaken. A number of strollers traverse the space end to end, making a slow circuit around the food stalls. It appears that a substantial number are arriving from the north east (London Fields) end where pedestrian paths, roads and bus links

are best developed. The urban design related comments made earlier in the chapter would tend to support this view in relation to the use of the space.



Figure 6.4: Browsing and strolling at Broadway Market Source: photograph by researcher

As at Borough, shopping at market stalls and in small shops is a major socio-spatial practice at Broadway Market. Shopping is observed as an enjoyable and even an exciting practice. A number of comments contrast favourably the experience of food shopping at the street market with supermarket shopping. Interviewees and online accounts are both very positive about Broadway Market as a rejuvenated food market at which to browse and buy at stalls and small shops. The stalls and food shops that line the street appear to be the physical context for an important part of the social life of the space, which is described as “an absolute gem”<sup>11</sup> and offering “unusual and stunning merchandise at affordable prices”.<sup>12</sup> Like these online comments from market users, unstructured observations of behaviour at Broadway appear to support the contention that considerable enjoyment is to be had from browsing the human-scaled stalls, getting close to fresh produce and establishing a direct physical connection to the food and the people selling it. Broadway Market’s location makes it a good place just to “chill out”.<sup>13</sup> Few market users interviewed specifically connect their enjoyment of the food market with the nature of the physical spaces within which stall and small shop browsing and buying occur. However, the observations of their behaviour strongly suggest visitors like and feel comfortable in the enclosed space of the street.

<sup>11</sup> Anonymous, 04 Apr 2006, <http://www.urbanpath.com/london/food-markets/broadway-market.htm>

<sup>12</sup> Huw, 19 Apr 2006, <http://www.urbanpath.com/london/food-markets/broadway-market.htm>

<sup>13</sup> TD, 26 Apr 2006, <http://www.urbanpath.com/london/food-markets/broadway-market.htm>





Figure 6.5: Strolling at Broadway Market Source: photograph by researcher

Fieldwork observations show a great deal of street-based eating and drinking occurring as a socio-spatial practice at Broadway Market (as in Figures 6.6 and 6.7). The stall layout has been intentionally organised to include food-eating zones. Visitors eat food, and drink coffee and juice, from specialist stalls while sitting in, standing around or wandering through the food market. Those eating and drinking can be observed standing, or sitting on the pavement, as well as using folding chairs provided by food vendors at or near their stalls. As at Borough, eating in the street appears to be exempt from negative connotations about civility in Elias's terms. Rather, it is encouraged as a socio-spatial practice by both the shape of the space and the infrastructure provided by market management, stallholders and food business lining the street. A number of visitors are also frequenting cafes, pubs and restaurants along the market street during market hours. Interviewee comments and online commentary from local people tends to celebrate the eating and drinking diversity available in this area.<sup>14</sup> Broadway Market's own website notes an eclectic mix of possibilities, and the food contrasts in evidence: "*a recently refurbished gastro-pub with a sophisticated yet friendly atmosphere sits cheek to jowl with the traditional pie and mash shop.*"<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Anonymous, 05 Aug 2004, <http://www.urbanpath.com/london/food-markets/broadway-market.htm>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.broadwaymarket.co.uk/>



Figures 6.6 and 6.7: Eating in the street at Broadway Market Source: Photographs by researcher

#### Other socio-spatial practices: music, art and local politics

It is notable that the food market street attracts other kinds of social uses, such as art practice (Figures 6.8 and 6.9) and impromptu music making (Figures 6.10 and 6.11), to a considerably greater degree than Borough. During one fieldwork observation at Broadway Market I saw a number of small computer screens in shop windows showing images from the market street that were part of a performance art process, “Porta Porter”, underway over a week at the street, playing on visual and cultural associations with the street as food market.<sup>16</sup> Fieldwork observations and interviews also suggest that music is being used intentionally as part of the revival of the food market, as well as occurring in an impromptu way. During fieldwork observations two kinds of street musicians were seen. The first was a lone acoustic guitarist, the second a group of drummers at the northern park and bus stop end of the street. The market manager comments that the market has “started having local entertainment etc”, although such signs of liveliness cause anxieties with the local council. “The council got rid of the on street entertainment [buskers] as they were worried about risk”.



<sup>16</sup> <http://richair.waag.org/porta2030/london/index.html>



Figures 6.8 and 6.9: Art practice at Broadway Source: Photographs by researcher



Figures 6.10 and 6.11: Street based music at Broadway Market Source: Photographs by researcher

One of the most obvious socio-spatial practices to be seen at the site is people doing community based politics. As discussed earlier, Broadway has become a highly charged, overtly politicised place in which *"a greasy spoon café became the front line of a war between locals and developers"* (Kunzru, *The Guardian*, G2, 7 December, 2005: p.8).<sup>17</sup> Fieldwork observations tend to support the notion that political action is a common socio-spatial practice here. During one observation at Broadway Market, three groups were handing out leaflets for campaigns on local issues. These included a campaign to halt a luxury residential tower block development in the local area, and support for the previously described 'battle' in which local café and shop owners were "forced out by developers". On another observational visit, a group with signs, banners and clipboards was collecting signatures in support of its campaign to reopen the Haggerston pool, recently closed down by LB Hackney.

#### *Findings from food mapping*

As at Borough, food mapping was undertaken at Broadway Market in 2008 and generally supports the observations and interviews from the site. Table 6.1 provides a key to the various shops, cafes and stalls mapped at Figures 6.12 and 6.13. Stalls are found along most of the length of the street, halting at the gate close to the canal end, which is closed during market operating hours. There are loose groupings of both food and non-food stalls, although food stalls predominate. Around half way down the street there is a café 'zone', complete with an appealing clutter of chairs, tables and stools, making use of a natural broadening out of the space where Broadway meets the side roads of Meek Close and Benjamin Close. There is another such zone near the southern end, with stalls selling hot food, coffee, juice and cakes, as well as various places to sit. A wide variety of produce from fruit and vegetables to cheese, dairy products, pasta, meat, fish and olive oil can be found. There are specialist stalls for particular vegetables such as mushrooms, apples and pears, and tomatoes. The stress is on artisanal and (some) organic produce. Like Borough, the emphasis is on food to take home to cook, but there are also hot foods on offer including burgers, roast meat in rolls, and cakes, to eat on the street. Along either side of the street a

<sup>17</sup> See also, <http://libcom.org/news/article.php/broadway-market-hackney-270306>

number of individual shop fronts are given over to food related land uses, including off-licenses that sell fruit, vegetables, groceries and wine; and cafes, tea rooms, restaurants, pubs and bars. Many of these have large window and door openings to the street, and have seating against their frontages that is well used during market hours.

<p><b>Broadway Food Map Key</b></p> <p><b>Shops etc</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fruit and Veg - Off License</li> <li>2. Nutritious Food Gallery/Fresh Fish</li> <li>3. Climpson and Son Shopfront - cafe</li> <li>4. Cat and Mutton Pub</li> <li>5. Percy Ingle Bakery</li> <li>6. Organic and Vegetarian Coffee and Tea Room</li> <li>7. Broadway Café (caf)</li> <li>8. Broadway Wines</li> <li>9. H. Tidiman Butcher's and Poulterers</li> <li>10. La Bouche Delicatessen</li> <li>11. Costcutter's supermarket</li> <li>12. Broadway Supersaver - Off License</li> <li>13. The Dove Freehouse</li> <li>14. Off License</li> <li>15. Organic Food Fresh Food and Vegetables</li> <li>16. F. Cooke - Pie and Eel Shop</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>17. Solché Grill - Meze Bar</li> <li>18. La Vie en Rose cafe</li> <li>19. Broadway Fish Bar</li> </ol> <p><b>Stalls</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20. Fresh Pasta</li> <li>21. Eggs/Poultry/Meat Van</li> <li>22. Coffee Bar and seating</li> <li>23. Cake Stall</li> <li>24. Juice Box</li> <li>25. Bread Stall</li> <li>26. Sussex Smokers</li> <li>27. Roast Meat Stall</li> <li>28. Olive Oils</li> <li>29. Fruit and Vegetables</li> <li>30. German Deli</li> <li>31. Downland Produce</li> <li>32. Fruit and Vegetable Stall</li> <li>33. Olive Stall</li> <li>34. Bread Stall</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>35. Meat, eggs etc stall</li> <li>36. Popina Cakes</li> <li>37. The Cinnamon Tree Bakery</li> <li>38. Norbiton Fine Cheese</li> <li>39. Fishmonger</li> <li>40. Fruit and Vegetable Stall</li> <li>41. Flowers</li> <li>42. Café</li> <li>43. Cheese and Cured Meat Stall</li> <li>44. Crepes Stall</li> <li>45. Damascene Falafel</li> <li>46. Burgers and other hot food stall</li> <li>47. The Jewish Deli</li> <li>48. Flour Power Bread Stall</li> <li>49. Cookies and Cream</li> <li>50. Organic Cakes etc</li> <li>51. Cheese Stall</li> <li>52. Mushroom Stall</li> <li>53. Empty Stall</li> <li>54. Apple Stall</li> <li>55. Tomato Stall</li> </ol>
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Table 6.1: Broadway Food Map Key Source: Prepared by researcher

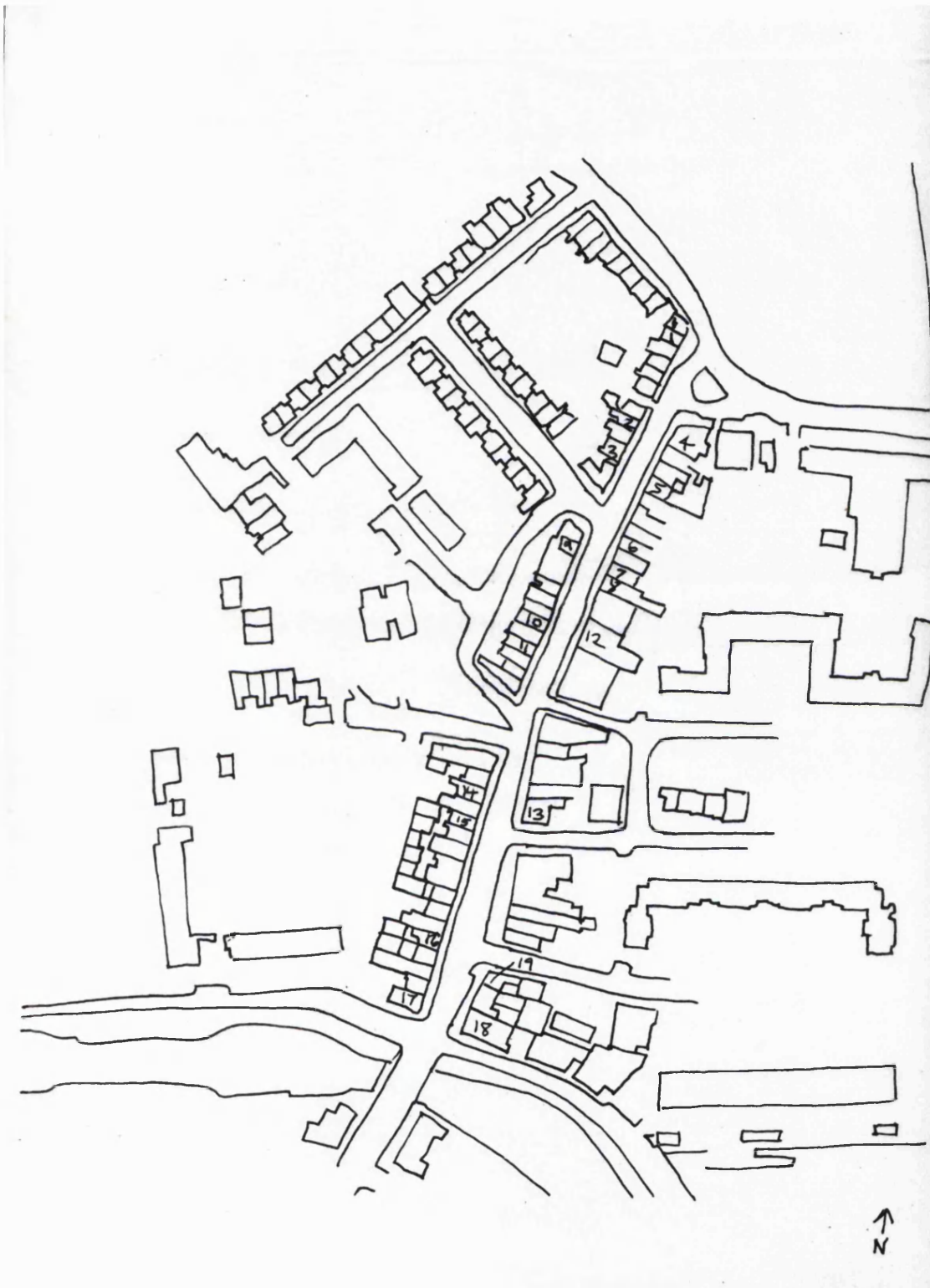


Figure 6.12: Broadway Market Food Shops and Land Uses Source: Prepared by researcher

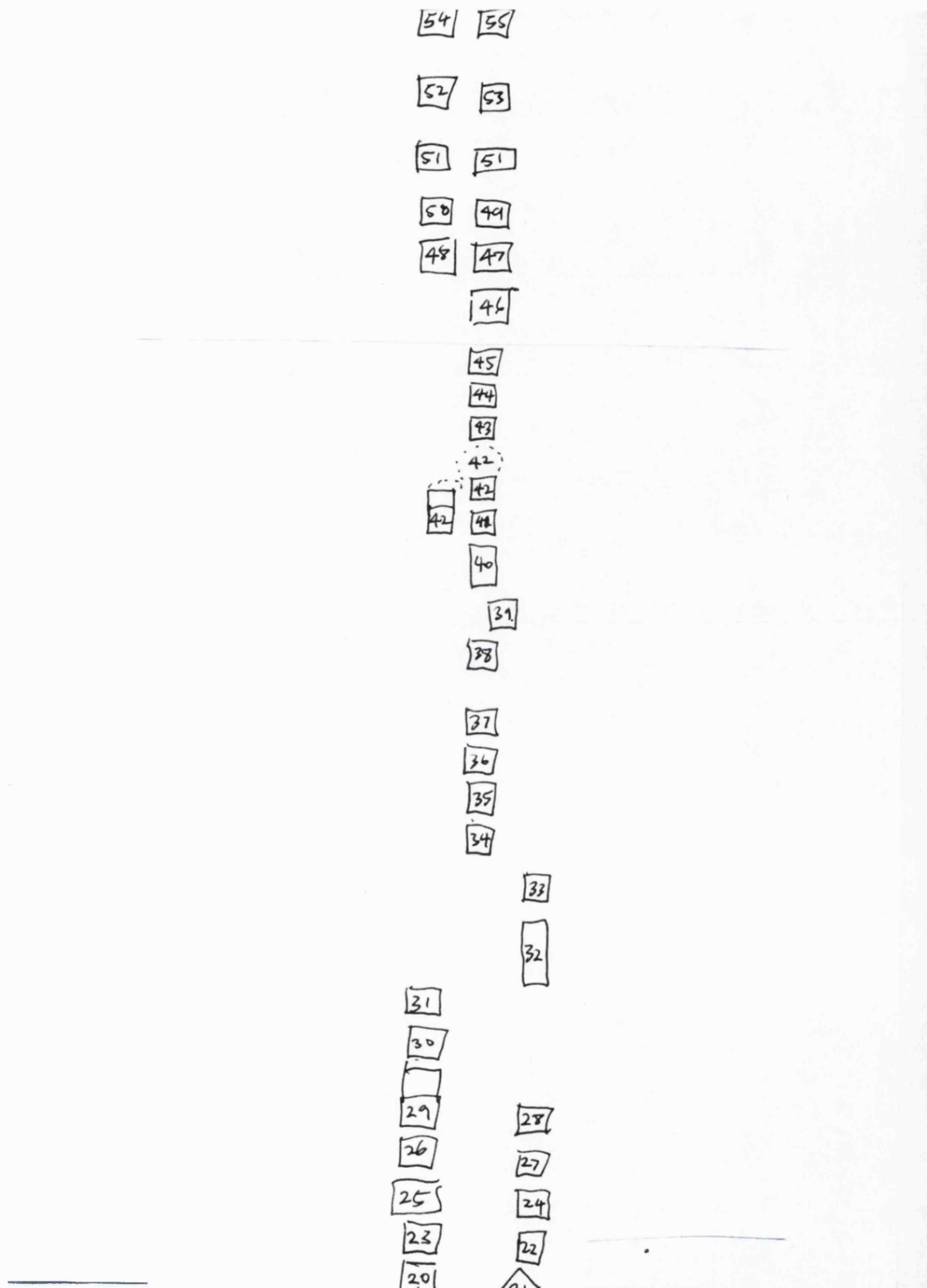


Figure 6.13: Broadway Market Food Stalls Source: prepared by researcher

### Analysis and conclusions from Broadway Market's community-led food quarter development

*A story of long-term decline and rapid food-led regeneration*

Broadway Market's recent history can be considered a story of deep economic decline and food-led regeneration within a particular urban design frame, and giving rise to some intriguing economic, environmental and convivial socio-spatial practices. While not formally a farmers' market, Broadway's revival can be set in the context of a broader movement around food, that is evident in London through the rise of farmer's style markets. At the same time, local authority governance failures have acted as a constraint on the Broadway Market quarter's rebirth, in the same way they did at Borough. In both cases this experience contrasts with the usual top-down regeneration practice in the UK. The adverse results of poor public sector management of renewal may have been even worse in Hackney than through LB Southwark's apparent neglect of Borough. After Broadway virtually ceased to function as a market, and the street itself went into apparently terminal decline, the local authority appeared to actively obstruct its revival.

Paralleling Borough's experience, the economic development and management gap was filled by the bottom-up action of the Broadway Market Traders and Residents Association to revive the food market, led by a charismatic and feisty community leader. The volunteer market manager from BMTRA set up a community-based management structure, featuring partnership working between traders, residents and other local stakeholders. Under her leadership, they have created a "*whole shopping experience*" centred on conviviality, civility, and a sense of place and community. Again, like Borough, the market has avoided "*dog-eat-dog*" competition between pitches, based on the same thinking that too sharp competition too early in the market's revival would be likely to destroy fledging food businesses. Economic success has created, and at the same time been created by, an increasing visitor catchment: local, borough wide and now extending into other parts of London. As at Borough, through its growth the market has developed a positive economic feedback loop.

#### *Catchment growth and gentrification issues*

However, the market's economic success has had uneven effects and there is thought to be profit taking by property developers and individual house buyers. Some local activist groups argue that catchment growth signifies not just regeneration but gentrification in action. This is very much in keeping with the analysis whereby regeneration based around creation of a new consumption space quickly shades into a gentrification process in the revanchist city that benefits incomers and excludes indigenous populations (Smith, 1996). It is certainly evident that incomers, including young media types, artists, writers, actors, "yummy mummies" and European migrants, find the market appealing as a fashionable space. Broadway may well be thought to present a gentrifying space, both a food and cultural quarter, in which individuals play out a particular 'hip' habitus. However, whether the food market's attraction to those incomers, defined by interviewees as primarily local residents and visitors rather than tourists, is predominantly a positive or negative trend is contested. There is also contention about other signs of gentrification: whether food prices are higher than supermarkets and whether that signifies that the market is only for middle class visitors and buyers.

Views differ as to whether the long-term local working class population benefits from economic renewal efforts, or is largely the victim of food market-led regeneration, that has seen the space develop from a food desert to a food quarter at the expense of existing traders and residents. In one reading, the food market's revival has contributed to increasing property prices that working class people cannot afford; to their exclusion from the environmental and social benefits of healthy food; and from enjoying the market as a social space. If this is the case, it is worth asking whether it is simply price that makes some local people feel uncomfortable at the food market? Or is it the market's stylish quality supporting an individual habitus for the more middle class visitor that contributes to their sense of no longer fitting in? In any case gentrification effects are being felt more broadly through a plethora of new, high-priced residential development of questionable quality, local businesses being driven out, rent hikes occurring, and empty shops and properties undermining the street's vitality, as developers sit on some of their newly acquired assets. One argument made locally is that the food market is excluding local people and attracting richer incomers, and thus unwittingly contributes to the conditions that produce this process. The first tranche of small food businesses in the market itself are also thought to be likely to suffer in the longer term from rapacious gentrification. This will occur because rent rises force out individual food business set up to cater for the first wave of incomers, and "clone town Britain" chains colonise the space.

While, overall, this chapter suggests gentrification is clearly occurring at the Broadway market food quarter, it is important to avoid underplaying the complexities inherent in the observed regeneration and gentrification processes. The rise of the food market can be seen in a nuanced way as typified by a mix of cultures and classes that contribute to its unique character. Food shops and stalls to some extent act in synergy as part of a deliberate strategy by the BMTRA. Thus far there are no chain stores in the street apart from the local Percy Ingle bakery and very few empty shops. Rather, traditional shops maintain some food services for the long-term working class population, while newer stalls, cafes and restaurants extend the range and quality of what is on offer, attracting a wider catchment of visitors. The market manager asks, if the existing local population was so keen to maintain its traditional street market, why did they allow it to die away by preferring to shop at supermarkets? One conclusion is that this points to powerful, external structural forces in urban political economy and spatiality impinging on and transforming consumption habits. Equally, some research material shows that incomers are supporting campaigns against shop evictions and other local campaigns against building luxury high-rise flats and the closure of the local pool. In the manager's view the market is about bringing people together and acts as an "*amazing catalyst*".

#### *Urban design support to food-led revitalisation*

Urban design issues and elements interconnect with Broadway's economic revitalisation. Broadway's ambience is as a cool place to hang out, rather than as an architecturally outstanding space, developed as the result of an explicit architectural strategy as at Borough. However, research material cited above suggests that its urban design characteristics have direct and indirect impacts on its economic and social



functioning. Broadway Market displays compact, walkable urbanism focused on the public realm, and immediately surrounded by a coherent urban fabric, although this gives way to various lost spaces a little further away. Its urban design qualities are embedded in its traditional urban spaces, providing a setting for and underpinning economic revival. And until recently, Broadway has also been a relatively cheap and somewhat inaccessible area of London to live, that has initially attracted people who possess considerable cultural capital of a certain kind, but less economic capital. Over time, the area has changed as some more affluent people move in, but the market's spatiality continues to reflect a diverse social mix, and what local interviewees describe as a "*random*" quality. At the same time, some see gentrification as not only signified through food itself, but through the socio-spatial practices of place-users, as well as through the spatiality that food has emphasised by way of shaping the configuration of food shops, stalls and spaces. In this way, as one interviewee puts it, traditional shops on Broadway Market like Cooke's, the eel and pie shop, can be understood as a sign of the area's authenticity for incomers but those same incomers do not often use them.

Aspects of both the design framework at broad and more immediate scales are more often an implicit than explicit element in interviewees' accounts, although a number make reference to qualities of the space that reflect design elements. The area's spatiality speaks of a traditional urban shaping which for one interviewee can be described as an urban village. A connection is made between the urban design of the space and local regeneration objectives. The street's location, between the canal to the south and the park to the north, helps funnel people into and along Broadway Market, and provides an excellent pathway for promenading and serial vision. The street has a high level of enclosure, generated by fine-grained, robust building frontages of shops down each side, and reinforced by stall structures around and along which people flow. At the micro scale, it can be seen that the way people use the edge of the space is very intricate and lively, in line with the urban design quality of vitality, and reflecting the range of convivial practices noted in the chapter. The fine grain of activity that the design of physical space allows at this human scale is another urban design quality richly in evidence. Although there are also negative urban design related effects include noise, wind, and safety issues, in part associated with the market's need to manage the interplay of walking, cycling and driving, these do not undermine the strong sense of place generated by Broadway Market.

These urban design qualities have underpinned Broadway Market's rapid revival, which, like Borough, could become a victim of its own success. Most interviewed agree that this is not yet an issue to the degree it is at Borough. It is generally thought unlikely that the market will develop to the extent to which local shoppers are deterred by tourist crowds. However, the market manager does acknowledge that she feared the property market would "*go nuts and it has*". This is among the external forces bearing on area regeneration that have a 'macro' urban design component. In this case, the development of sub-regional transport infrastructure promises to make the area more accessible in the next few years, and thus a more desirable place to live. This will in turn accelerate the pace of gentrification. Transport changes, such as the extension of the rail network, are one way that urban design at a broader level is having impacts on the

space at Broadway Market food quarter, and combining with the street's inherent design qualities to make the quarter a very attractive place to live.

Moving on to environmental aspects of food-led revitalisation, a number of sustainability issues can be identified. Like Borough, the food quarter space is a loci for the modern food system, covering both distribution and consumption phases. Its market is not a formal farmers' market but shares some of these markets' environmental characteristics. Again, like Borough, the market challenges certain aspects of the modern food system by promoting artisanal, small scale, seasonal foods. There is a stress on sustainability embedded in the focus on local, geographically typified foods for sale. Moreover, traders have a role in sharing expertise with consumers, with concern expressed on both sides to buy, cook and eat in an environmentally and gastronomically informed way. High prices (if they are indeed higher than the supermarket) are thought to reflect excellent quality and artisanal production methods, and are accepted by buyers on that basis. There are some mixed consumption methods in evidence that can be judged more sustainable than supermarket based shopping, with buyers reporting a combination of stall and shop buying, online purchases and home delivered box schemes. These consumption patterns fit well with the characterisation of a food quarter's more sustainable practices.

#### *The food quarter as convivial social space*

Considered as a social space, the market site acts as a rich physical territory for informal and spontaneous social interaction, giving rise to a wide range of opportunities for conviviality. It can be seen as supporting the construction of everyday life in a Lefebvrian sense through unmediated encounters, yet challenging notions of civility in Elias's terms by encouraging street-based eating. As noted above, place users report Broadway as a perfect space for promenading. For some it provides the context for a whole day's sociability, with various socio-spatial practices enacted over the course of some hours. Many of these practices are focused on food consumption at the market; first eating and drinking at cafes and in the street, then browsing, and finally buying food, followed by making meals at home after market hours. Like Borough, Broadway Market is described by interviewees as a hidden gem, discovered by simply stumbling across it, hearing of it by word of mouth, or reading about it in the print media as a 'cool' place to go. On the one hand, the Broadway Market food quarter possesses a form of stylishness, defined as a place to pose with a "certain milieu". It conforms to arguments about stylish consumption, the development of the space as a cultural quarter, and the construction and playing out of a particular individual habitus. In all these ways it is similar to Borough, although somewhat less fully realised and more modestly proportioned. On the other hand, again like Borough, it also appears to be developing a sense of community. This is variously spatial, food based or fashion based, or a mix of some or all of these. This suggests there is a complex array of motives and social positioning at play. The space is not entirely commodified but frames many unmediated encounters.

Looking at specific socio-spatial practices, through the observations and food mapping, walking is one of the most dominant. It appears to be both self-conscious, as in the passeggiata, and less mediated and more

instrumental, related to food browsing and buying. As explained, the street's physical shape both acts as a funnel and creates an outdoor room that supports pedestrian flow. Food browsing and buying are connected socio-spatial practices, which are seen as very positive and enjoyable. The street is a good place to visit because of the combination of the attractions of the food market and its proximity to other sites including London Fields, which are among the key elements that construct the quarter as a spatial entity. Eating and drinking in the street is a likewise a very common socio-spatial practice. There are food-eating 'zones' created by the relationship of the stall layout and fixed built structures that have been intentionally defined by the market's manager and traders. As at Borough, the foodscape appears exempt from taboos about public eating. Art and music occur in the street, but the former, in particular, seems to suffer from lack of substantial local connection to the community, as well as opaque language and objectives. However, it is interesting that the "Porta Porter" proponents chose Broadway Market as the stage for their art event. It seems likely that this is because Broadway has become an important local street culturally, and this is in part because of the food market. It can also be argued that this kind of socio-spatial practice connects to the early, "arty", stage of the gentrification process. Music as a socio-spatial practice, meanwhile, seems less mediated, and more connected. In part, this has been a conscious policy of the market manager; in part, an impromptu practice, but again the council has appeared in a blocking role.

Community politics is a common socio-spatial practice, unsurprisingly in such a highly charged and contested site, and its prevalence is intriguing in the social and design context of food-led renewal. The substantial number of fieldwork observations in which local political activity was observed, tend to suggest that the market street provides a particularly appealing physical and social venue for doing community politics. As the most important node of intensity in a food-based urban quarter, the street market attracts concentrations of people, who can then be approached with campaigning information, or potentially recruited to support local campaigns. It may also be assumed by campaigners that the values of visitors who seek out local, often organic, farmers' market style food, will also be sympathetic to their perspectives on various regeneration issues. Furthermore, the shape of the space supports this activity by providing a comfortable outdoor room in which to engage with others. Crucially, this is public space from which campaigners are not going to be moved on or asked to leave, in the way they would in a shopping centre or mall. And finally in this area, although there are equally vexed issues elsewhere locally, it is the future of this one street that appears to have particularly fired the local imagination and galvanised political action in relation to economic and social change. The food street and market are both the physical centre of the food quarter and the hotly contested symbol of local meaning and identity.

In conclusion, the chapter shows Broadway Market maturing as a food quarter, with many similarities to Borough's regeneration and gentrification trajectory, as well as distinctiveness as a part of individuals' habitus. In both Broadway and Borough Market food quarters a particular urban design context has framed and influenced a range of economic, environmental and socio-spatial practices around food. The next chapter provides the opportunity to compare these two case study examples with an even more recently regenerated food space, Clerkenwell's Exmouth Market.



## **Chapter Seven: A case of food-led renewal of a different kind at Exmouth Market**

## **Introduction to the Exmouth Market quarter**

This chapter explores food-related aspects of the economic, environmental and social life of the Exmouth Market quarter, following a broadly similar structure in presentation and analysis as for the other case study areas. The discussion draws predominantly on fieldwork interviews, informal observations and mapping, augmented by press reports and online commentary. References to material from other chapters and to the theoretical frame for the work are made where appropriate. As in the other fieldwork chapters, the material is refracted through a sustainability prism, and the social and economic aspects of sustainability receive substantial attention. As for the Broadway Market food quarter, little direct information was elicited about Exmouth's environmental performance, while at the same time, environmental issues permeate many points made by interviewees. The narrative of decline and food-led regeneration is a major theme. The Exmouth Market quarter has been regenerated as a food space even more recently than the other two sites. It demonstrates many similarities, including the urban design qualities of a particular kind of traditional city form. As at Borough, it has become a food space based on high quality, artisanal foods. As at Broadway, the communities of interest within the site's catchment are quite diverse and there appears to be some conflict between long-term, working class residents and newer, more middle class arrivals within a gentrification context. Food-related uses, including the revived market, are a focus for some contention. Exmouth's revived market has become predominantly a 'slow food' food court, rather than a fully-fledged street market, and along with a series of high quality restaurants, gives rise to a range of convivial socio-spatial practices. The map below (Figure 7.1) shows the location of the food quarter.



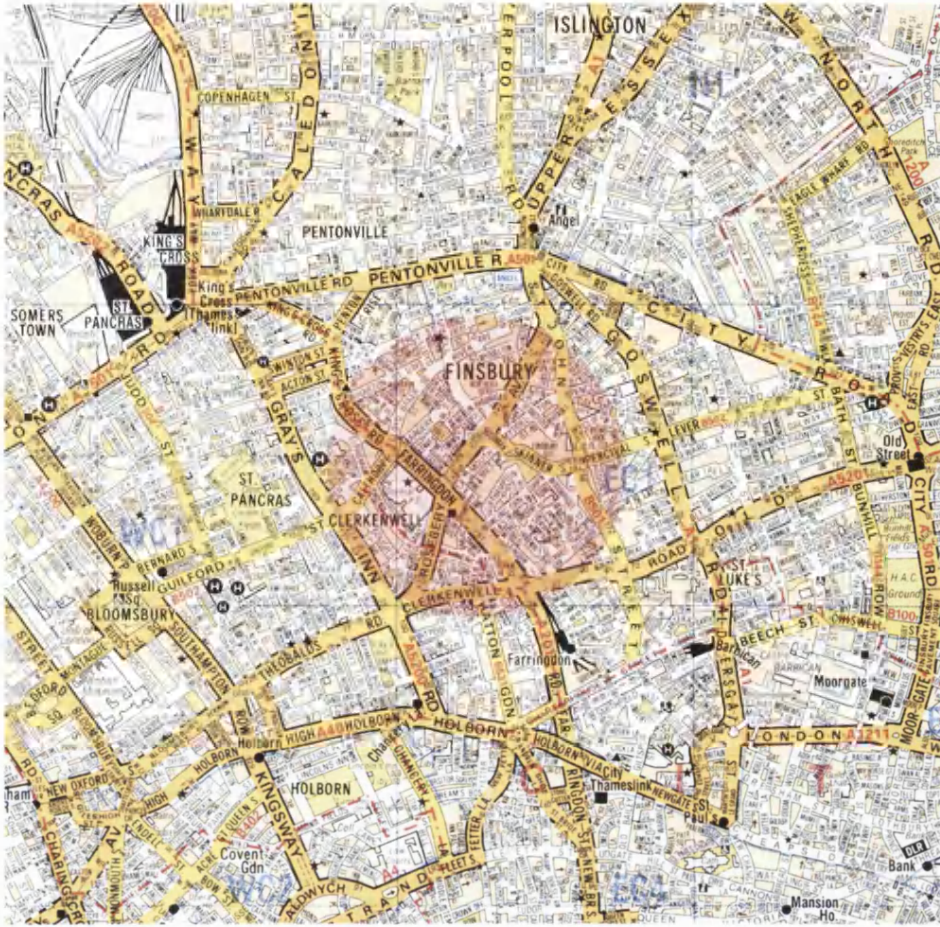


Figure 7.1: Exmouth Market food quarter Source: Prepared from A-Z base map

### Exploring Exmouth Market's decline and food-led revival

An analysis of Exmouth Market in the 1990s summed up its regeneration as having moved the focus of the street from a traditional food market to a much more upmarket site for restaurants and cafes, serving a predominantly middle class local catchment of businesses and residents (Whitelegg, 2002). This judgement remains relevant in 2008. The Exmouth Market area suffered an almost complete decline as a shopping and market street post war, especially in the period spanning the 1970s to mid 1990s, despite various regeneration efforts. Unsuccessful attempts were made to revive the market in the 1980s, and again in the early 1990s, including reducing stallholder charges and trying to attract stall holders from waiting lists for other markets (ibid). The major landlord in the street, Debenhams, was able to let only four shops between 1988 and 1995, despite substantially lowering rents, and the vacancy rate by 1996 was forty percent higher than that for the rest of LB Islington. A number of physical regeneration actions by the local council, included major repaving, but by the beginning of the 1990s the street's future remained uncertain, and arguments continued over "parking restrictions, poor access, refuse collection, poor lighting and general litter" (op cit). The street was seen to have sunk back to its pre-1986 state of decline. The Islington Gazette wrote at the time: "Exmouth Market, once the thriving heart of village life, is now a squalid and filthy shum - according to the people who live there" (op cit).

An Islington Council planning decision in November 1996 was seen to be the key to the street's revival (Whitelegg, 2002). Until 1992 the street had been designated as a protected shopping area and this was reflected in planning policy, which was unrealistically restrictive in terms of possible land uses that could lodge in the street. A change to letting policy to allow up to 50% of vacant property to be let for non-retail uses was the result of an increasingly partnership-based approach to regeneration between the Debenham Property Trust and the council, who together developed an Exmouth Market Working Party. This was supported by the pro-active intervention of council planning officers to drive forward a strategy of regeneration in the street based on cultural activity and maximising its resources of cultural capital (Whitelegg, 2002: 82).



Figure 7.2: Early rounds of SRB funding paid for initial physical upgrading to the street Source: photograph by researcher

Also in the mid 1990s Exmouth Market was able to attract Single Regeneration Budget funds and already food was central to these regeneration plans. Persuading restaurants to locate in Exmouth Market was an explicit aim. The street's revival keyed into the growth of a new breed of restaurateurs and bar owners in the mid 1990s, with the Chair of Urban Regeneration at Islington talking about *"how good restaurants and wine bars would help rejuvenate a dilapidated area, especially when in close proximity to Sadler's Wells"* (ibid). Debenhams had also proposed a "restaurant solution" in one of its reports. However, in words reminiscent of those used about Broadway Market, a local resident wrote: *"The more I read...about...the invasion of places like Exmouth Market by trendy restaurants and bars, etc., the more I am convinced that it is a conscious*



*policy of Islington Council to get rid of the working class of this borough to make way for the middle classes*" (Letters, Islington Gazette, 28 March, 1998, quoted in Whitelegg, 2002).

As at Broadway and Borough, it was informal channels of communication, rather than formal public sector-led regeneration partnerships, that were the most important in bring interesting cafes and restaurants to the street. Initially, Crowbar, and then a little later, Moro, were attracted in, as personal networks came into play to introduce possible restaurateurs to Debenhams. Interviewees share a similar narrative about the street's revival. An upmarket restaurant co-owner (white, male, thirty-something, English) says such networks were crucial. *"We have a friend who opened a coffee shop called the Crowbar then they came here... then I worked in the Eagle before that as well. So, but in the street there was this place, the Crowbar, and they were friends of ours and they said 'oh the landlords are really nice... and they said there are free spaces. So they were the first people who came down, then Starbucks opened opposite them"*. Debenhams actively pursued restaurateurs who could add to the street's uniqueness, and offered premises on extremely favourable terms. Locating on such an out of the way, down-at-heel street was still a precarious business in financial terms. As the restaurateur explains, *"[Crowbar] were expanded then they went bust. But they were the people that introduced us. [You've been here for the long haul...] 'We were quite worried. We were quite worried"*.

A restaurant manager (white, male, 20-something, English) traces a similar and more recent trajectory of restaurant openings, emphasising quality. *"I think Moro was one of the first, the Eagle was here and then Medcalf... these places provided high quality"*. An organic café owner (male, 60-something, Turkish) argues that, as the regenerating Upper Street nearby became too expensive to run a restaurant in, Exmouth became more attractive, although rents remain an issue. Despite slightly varying narratives, it is clear that restaurants have been central to the street's revival from the early 1990s to 2008, with Exmouth Market described as *"a street of gastronomic renown. Restaurants such as Metcalf, Moro, and the nearby Eagle pub have established the area as being synonymous with good food"* (The Evening Standard, 20.09.06: 36). The restaurant manager refers to the quality of uniqueness apparent among most food businesses at Exmouth Market. *"Everything is individual and unique, apart from Strada really, and a couple of others"*. This sense of uniqueness refers to individual food shops as well as restaurants on Exmouth Market.<sup>1</sup> The restaurant manager also makes a link to the economic basis for this unique quality, and the way that this connects up to achieving a sense of community between traditional and more recent businesses in the street. *"Everything is independent businesses. There's a really nice atmosphere between all the businesses and there's quite a close-knit community in the street. You know all the businesses get on really well. There's a couple of old family businesses... they have been there for a long time, especially the pie and mash shop. And then there's newer people. You know everyone knows everyone's names"*.

While restaurants and cafes were emerging independently through informal processes, by the early 1990s, there were also formal regeneration plans developing for the return (in some form) of the street's defunct food market. The council commented at the time that it was unrealistic to expect there would be any regeneration of Exmouth Market as a street market, with a reduced market the best that could be hoped for

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.countrylife.co.uk/culture/article/78975/Foodies\\_London.html](http://www.countrylife.co.uk/culture/article/78975/Foodies_London.html)

(Ham and High, 28 February, 1997: 7, quoted in Whitelegg, 2002). An idea for a renewed market was mooted under City Fringe Partnership funding but did not come to fruition. Earlier it had also been suggested that the market be relocated to the “Farringdon triangle” (that is the south western end of the street where it abuts Farringdon Road and Rosebery Avenue), to increase its visibility, and give an appearance of activity (ibid). Today this is the portion of the street where the hot food stalls are located, a placement considered later in the chapter when urban design aspects are discussed.



Figure 7.3: Farringdon ‘triangle’ end of Exmouth Market Source: photograph by researcher

#### *Set-up and failure of a fully-fledged food market*

The unpromising recent history of regeneration attempts at Exmouth contextualises the recent failure of another attempt to run a fully-fledged food market. From around 21<sup>st</sup> September 2006 a weekly food market, initially featuring fruit and vegetables, meat, cheese and hot food stalls, was begun on Fridays and Saturdays at the south-western end of the street. At that time it was noted that while local restaurants, *“have enjoyed bustling trade, the numbers of customers at local grocery shops have dwindled. In an effort to draw shoppers back to the area, two of its high profile restaurateurs are launching a farmer’s market this Friday”* (Evening Standard, 20.09.06: 36). A website was set up for the ‘farmer’s’ market, and made a direct connection between the nature of the street, as a place that houses small, individual businesses, and the notion of food mix and quality. It pointed to the eclectic nature of what may be available in food terms and its urban design context. *“Exmouth Market is a vibrant pedestrianised street in the heart of Clerkenwell flanked on either side by a colourful mixture of small independent design boutiques and long-standing traditional shops, as*

*well as the many bars, cafés and restaurants for which it is well known comprising an eclectic mix to satisfy even the most discerning shopper and gastronome”.*<sup>2</sup> However, for reasons explored below, by early in 2008 most of the fresh food stalls had disappeared, to be replaced by a Friday-only collection of hot food stalls, rather in the style of a particularly up market outdoor food court.

Notwithstanding this change in the nature of the market, Exmouth has clearly enjoyed a very considerable amount of food related regeneration. Central to the regeneration process are a number of key individuals with a strong background in food who established the briefly revived market. Like the other sites studied, there has been strong leadership apparent from non-governmental sources, including from Louise Brewood who is also manager of Broadway Market, Monika Linton from Brindisa and Sam Clark from Moro. *“Sam Clark’s Moro triggered a steady regeneration of Exmouth Market upon opening ten years ago, transforming the then run-down, boarded-up street into a focal point for fine food and quirky shops. Now Sam, Monika and Louise have decided that following the success of its annual summer festivals, Exmouth Market is finally ready to have its market reinstated”.*<sup>3</sup> Another figure linked to this grouping is Mark Sainsbury, Chairman of the Exmouth Traders’ Association, who is also a local restaurateur and owner of the Zetter, a fashionable hotel and restaurant south of Exmouth Market at Clerkenwell. Some of those named are also committee members on the Exmouth Market Traders Association.

The market’s proponents are reported as saying that the process of the market’s re-emergence was inspired by farmer’s markets in Marylebone, Stoke Newington and Broadway Market in Hackney, and required *“six months of intense negotiation with Islington council”* prior to its launch (Evening Standard, 20.09.06: 36). At the time of its launch, Samantha Clark of Moro said of the intended nature of the market, that it would be a place for the complete weekly shop and a rich food-centred social experience for the whole community. The market would provide a wide range of food rather than simply *“high end organic produce normally associated with farmers’ markets... we thought it would be good for the community to have a market here. It will be a place people can stroll around, have coffee, have lunch, wander into the shops, and look at the stalls. The idea is for people to do their weekly shop here too - buy fish, meat, eggs, everything... we’ll have everything from speciality cheese stalls such as Neal’s Yard and local bakers from St John Bread and Wine, to traditional greengrocer, Ted’s Veg. We want this to appeal to the whole community”* (Evening Standard, 20.09.06: 36). In a related way, a number of fieldwork respondents suggest that the revitalised food market was a logical outgrowth of the burgeoning restaurant scene in the street. The up market restaurant owner (and partner of Samantha Clark) explains one intended role for the food market was to bring more people to the street by acting as a *“magnet”* and emphasises the *“social, positive, life giving aspects of the market really. It means that street’s the focal point”*.

The restaurant owner explains how it was that the kind of complete food market envisaged failed to work, either in its own terms, or as a catalyst for the street’s revitalisation. One issue was that some of the food operators who were expected to run stalls did not do so. This is described as *“slightly chicken and egg. Like*

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.exmouthmarket.co.uk/>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.myislington.co.uk/islington/fe-community\\_new-exmouth-food-market.htm](http://www.myislington.co.uk/islington/fe-community_new-exmouth-food-market.htm)

*places like Neals' Yard, they said they were going to have.... but they weren't prepared to give it a go. So some of the big boys didn't come here because they thought it wasn't going to be big enough".* The new market's apparent decline early in its trading history is contrasted with Borough's success.<sup>4</sup> The market was still attracting around 20 stalls up until mid 2007 whereas *"until last year there were just three"* (The London Paper, 7<sup>th</sup> August 2007).

However, a number of those interviewed point to changes that came about over the course of the market's operation in 2006-7, that are largely viewed as double-edged or negative. By some time in 2007, rather than selling fresh produce; the market had shifted to being largely comprised of a hot food stalls trade for the lunch crowd on Fridays. *"It's kind of fallen apart a bit, the market, and I think it's closing. It's like on the way out"*. (Restaurant Manager). The market, he suggests, has become little more than a fast food space of an unusual kind and should have *"stuck to its original things"*. Now it is *"like decent fast food. Which is OK but it's not what Exmouth Market is about"*. This interviewee makes a direct comparison with Broadway Market as a food space in terms of the local aspirations for what the market might have provided. *"I thought when they started they wanted it to be more like Broadway, say, with fruit and veg... And I think they did but things have gone a bit.. They haven't really dictated who moves in there and they've found the most popular stalls are the ones who have these food stalls. So we will see what happens"*.

A number of owners and managers of small food businesses in the street view both the food market advent and its subsequent changes with some ambivalence. Criticisms coalesce around a few main points. It is thought that, on the one hand, these stalls do bring people to the street, but take business away from existing food traders (restaurant owner). A white, male, 40-something, English operator of a small 'caf' space at the north-eastern end of the street similarly sees the process as one primarily of unfair competition between different kinds of food business. His criticisms are focused on the food market rather than the restaurants that have been established, and relate to hygiene standards and differential rates. The restaurant manager also believes that fixed businesses pay higher rates, but views the effects of this as much more double-edged. For his business, the atmosphere that the food stalls-style market brings to the street offsets the negative effect of higher rates.

#### *Local analysis of the food market failure*

For some interviewees the food market is viewed as a failure in terms of its original aims, but not an outright economic failure. The upmarket restaurant owner, for example, points out the precariousness for individual stallholders of operating in a new market and the implications this had for the nature of the food market. *"I mean we all worked quite hard to get it off the ground but some of the stallholders weren't making enough money so... and they can make double the amount of money at the successful places. So it's slightly catch 22. How long do they stay on until it gets a reputation? But there are fewer [stallholders]. But that's sort of just really... every area is different and you never know until you try what is sustainable"*. The up market restaurant owner feels that the problem of economic sustainability experienced in operating as a broad range

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<sup>4</sup> [http://kristainlondon.typepad.com/dining/2006/10/exmouth\\_market\\_.html](http://kristainlondon.typepad.com/dining/2006/10/exmouth_market_.html)



food market may also be because there is insufficient passing trade in the street. If the food market has to rely predominantly on local residents doing their shopping there, it is difficult to make some fresh food stalls viable. This interviewee also notes the temporal aspect of this issue, with better trade noted on Fridays than Saturdays because there are more business people passing by. Catchment issues are discussed further below.

Another potentially contributing factor in food market failure as a 'complete' food market is competition between Exmouth Market and other nearby local street markets. Both the long-established Angel, with its Chapel Market, and the emergent Whitecross Street, could be alternative destinations for food trips. A coffee shop owner argues that the opening of the N1 Centre at Angel has had an effect *"because it has everything under one roof"*. Meanwhile, Whitecross Street may compete as another defunct market street slightly to the south-east in receipt of substantial regeneration funds from the EC1 New Deal for Communities for a periodic fine food festival. However, the restaurant owner does not believe that this would be having an effect on Exmouth's viability. Rather he argues that *"the social mix isn't quite right here and also the shopping mix isn't quite right, but it's a very delicate balance"*. The point made by this interviewee raises comparisons with Broadway Market, where a broad, food-focused, shopping and social mix are referred to as key to the street's resurgence. Others are more positive about the current social mix. The restaurant manager says there is sense of community apparent in Exmouth Market, comprising a positive interplay between traditional and newer "yuppie" incomers attracted to different food spaces in the street. *"You know, London's wonderfully mixed and there's two different types of people who are conserving this street: there are the people who've lived here for generations and then there's the yuppies who've moved in. And Ladbroke's, the cleaners, the eel shop, you know, have always been here, and are for the people who have been here always, the families have always been here and then the yuppies are more at the sort of little café style places with.. There is a crossover but not huge"*.

Problems with establishing the food market's catchment are seen by some interviewees (and others reported in the press) to reflect a local government management issue. Louise Brewood, the manager of Broadway Market, and for a time a consultant to the revamped Exmouth Market, notes in a newspaper interview that, *"This renaissance [of Exmouth Market] is no mean feat when overstretched councils, which have responsibility for our street markets, have a poor track record for innovation management. And the battle is not over yet"* (The London Paper, 07.08.2007: 10). Interviewees who are running Exmouth Market-based food businesses support this view. For example, the organic café owner says that the problem with the market failing to live up to its initial promise is in part due to poor planning and management by the council. He argues that the council does not have the governance capacity to make improvements. A focus for governance criticisms is the perceived lack of streetscape improvements such as barriers to pedestrianise it *"like Carnaby Street"*, tree planting, bicycle racks, public toilets and a security presence, but says these ideas were ignored. The coffee shop owner argues that the council is particularly at fault in the way they have managed the market and that this can be seen in a range of examples from the recent past including the *"inept"* placement of a French Market in the street *"with no consultation whatsoever. They have no idea how to manage any of those things. I couldn't find anyone to talk to there called a market manager.. There is in theory but they certainly don't encourage it"*. Perceived ineptitude is especially noticeable in the way that the

council consults, or is felt to fail to consult, with local traders and other businesses at Exmouth Market, resulting in unresolved issues, for example, about the placement and nature of stalls in front of fixed food businesses that is thought to have undermined competition.

The organic café owner does not think that the food market will change for the better in the foreseeable future, not only because of the perceived failure of council management, but also because of other food trader's unrealistic expectations. He suggests that the problems encountered were inherent to the proposal to revive the food market and that subsequent decline was inevitable given it was a flawed concept in the first place. *"I said to them if you do this, the market will be a failure. And it has been a failure. They will never learn because they don't want to listen"*. An additional factor for this interviewee is the role played by upmarket food shops in the street. *"And that market was originally a forum for the sale of food from Moro, Medcalf and Brindisa. They were pushing all the time but then they pulled out also. Their expectations didn't come true"*.

As the research material above shows, a number of interviewees are aware of Broadway Market's revival, and made unprompted comparisons between the two places. The coffee shop owner critically compares Exmouth with the management of Broadway Market's resurgence. *"I live in London Fields so I saw how Broadway was and I then saw what Broadway became. It was sort of moribund. Which was why I was so keen for something similar to happen here and it just never did"*. This interviewee suggests that while the renewal order in each place is somewhat different, with restaurants followed by a food market at Exmouth versus a food market then shops as a basis for regeneration at Broadway, both ways of managing regeneration might have been workable. He goes on to say that *"what was great about Broadway Market was it grew organically. It was about the community. There's things wrong with it but I still think it's a very good market"*. The coffee shop owner suggests that the economic strategy pursued at Broadway has also worked better because a conscious element of careful placement of market stalls to maximise synergies between businesses. *"I mean I know that Louise who organises it very consciously puts certain kinds of stalls together....kind of zones...there's the fresh food, then there's the bakery bit. I think it's really smartly done and I think that's how I always hoped it would be here. Sadly it hasn't"*.

A somewhat different analysis of the way the street has been redeveloped is presented by the owner of the small café at the north-eastern end of the street (the other end from the food market). Compared with other interviewees, this interviewee feels that there is a much more 'us and them' situation in the street between existing long-term working class residents on council estates and the newer middle class residential and business incomers. *"I also think that the big problem is local people feel let down. That's right. They feel left out. This has been their street for donkey's years. Yuppies come in, you know. Sandwiches are expensive. There are probably a few places they'll use down here but not many"*. The upmarket restaurant owner agrees that there is something of a two-speed economy in the street in relation to food. *"You know the yuppies will go and have a pie and eel, a pie and mash now and then, and probably have a bet now and then but not very often"*. The owner of a small café argues that other, more economically inclusive, ways to regenerate the street could have been chosen, over what he perceives to be a food market for yuppies. A distinction is made

between the market as launched, stressing very high quality, artisanal foods, and ideas for a more “normal” market. The organic café owner concurs about the need to develop a more broadly based retail strategy for the street; covering both market stalls and fixed shops, based on analysis of the street as currently operating. “Then once you have analysed you only allow specific stalls that will attract more people here”.

There is also some sense that the street has lost some of its traditional food appeal in the process of regenerating. Online commentary provides an insight into some of the food implications of recent changes to the street. “In 1978 I took on a studio in Clerkenwell, Easton St, just off Rosebery Avenue. In the 8 years that I was there Clerkenwell was discovered and in the last decade Exmouth Market has become a retail and culinary destination. But in the transition most of the shops and cafe's (sic) that gave it its colour have gone. Now, I absolutely don't miss the Wimpy Bar but I do miss Dino's Diner and the Quality Chop House. Yes, the Chop House is still there but only in a rather 'New Labour/Islington' sort of guise. You don't go in at 06.30am and get liver-egg-bubble-fried slice, two crusty slices with butter and a mug of tea as a hang-over cure” (<http://www.london-se1.co.uk/forum/read/1/34280>).

#### *Exmouth's transformation: a food-led gentrification process of a different kind*

The Independent Working Class Association, who will be remembered from the discussion of Broadway Market, take the view that the process of regeneration in different areas of London is a straightforward case of gentrification in action. They argue that political machinations are at the heart of the regeneration process at Exmouth.<sup>5</sup> Interviewees' comments suggest it is possible to see that gentrification is in progress while also accepting the idea that high quality restaurants have been a crucial basis for the social and economic renewal of the street. The majority of interviewees who comment on this theme, say that the resurgence of the street, led by food businesses, is broadly a good thing, even one to be celebrated. For some of these interviewees, gentrification is not problematised. The restaurant manager, for example, argues that there is a very high density of “fantastically high quality places” within a confined local radius such as “Moro, Medcalf, Brindisa, and it's fantastic. The Eagle at the end of the Road, the Quality Chop House, and even in the surrounding area The Easton. And then St John Street has St John, you know, so within a mile, 2 mile radius it's got some of the best restaurants in London”. This interviewee's point is that such restaurants do not just serve an entirely new population coming in to the area but attract longer-term residents as well. However, it is clear from the restaurant manager's comments that these longer-term residents are middle class and thus should be distinguished from the working class council estate dwellers referred to by the owner of the small caf.

Asked who comprises the visitor catchment for such restaurants and for the market, the restaurant manager argues that this varies over time, between lunch and dinner and between weekdays and weekends. Lunch is for local working people while for dinner “it's definitely residential... in the evening people who live in this area or towards Lamb's Conduit Street, that way”. In terms of the catchment's class origins it is apparent that the variation is within a narrow band of middle class business and residential place users. There are also

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<sup>5</sup> Autumn 1999, <http://www.iwca.info/>

views expressed about the kinds of industries now attracted to the area, and like to eat here. *“For us it changes. At lunch its people who work in the area because there’s a high density of architects, a high density of media type people. EMAP have just moved but, they’ve just all gone up to Mornington Crescent. The Guardian are obviously just over there. There is a mixture of architects. There is the highest density of architects in Europe I think in this area”* (Restaurant manager)

The organic café owner speculates about why this restaurant-led regeneration process works in Exmouth Market despite the problems with the development of the food market. He points to the populations generated by the theatre, large-scale businesses, public institutions like the Family Records Centre and courts, combined with cheap rents. *“And that’s why Exmouth Market became a food market. The rents were cheap but now they’re not.”* The impact of large rent increases was noted in research into the regeneration process in the street in the 1990s (Whitelegg, 2002) and remains a live issue. At that time it was reported that large increases would be likely to drive out small businesses, to have them replaced by large scale multiples, such as chain food businesses (ibid). Thus, the uniqueness that drew individual food businesses to the street would be destroyed. In fact, by 2008 this has not happened to a substantial degree although there are now three food business chains present: Starbucks, Strada and Café Nero.

Another financial issue among people running food businesses at Exmouth is that changes in the catchment population, from primarily business to more predominantly residential, may seriously affect the viability of their food trade in the future. Asked if that will that help generate a bigger food catchment for the street the upmarket restaurant owner argues that it is all a question of maintaining the right balance between different population segments. Recent press reports (Evening Standard, Homes and Property, Wednesday 21 February, 2007: 5) meanwhile suggest that the balance is tipping towards residential land uses. The Guardian newspaper’s site on Farringdon Road close to Exmouth Market has planning approval for 118 flats, while the Mount Pleasant Royal Mail Sorting Office site, just to the south, is described as the key to the regeneration of *“a neglected triangle of land that links Kings Cross, Clerkenwell and Bloomsbury... with potential for a 1.75 million sq ft redevelopment”* (ibid). Under a master plan developed by architects John McAslan and Partners, the 11 acre site at Mt Pleasant is proposed to be redeveloped as 1,500 homes, a public square, gallery and new sorting office. Proximity to Exmouth Market is one of the strongest aspects of its likely appeal to investors and new residents (ibid). This is reminiscent of the real estate boosterism occurring at both Borough and Broadway Market quarters, in which the charm of the nearby food spaces is central to the property marketing effort. It also supports the view that the area has shifted upmarket to become more middle class. Exmouth’s burgeoning as a food quarter is noted in press reports. *“Historically, Mount Pleasant has been a village in its own right, employing about 3,000 postal workers. In recent years, surrounding neighbourhoods have become gentrified. Exmouth Market, opposite Mount Pleasant, used to be all betting shops and cafes. Now it’s trendy bars and restaurants. The balance has shifted away from a working-class community to a more affluent one”* (ibid).

*Exmouth as a food destination*

While Exmouth Market has become something of a food destination in inner London, views vary between interviewees as to the role played in this by restaurants and the food market in its shifting forms. The upmarket restaurant owner says that certain restaurants are a destination for dinners, but neither the street nor the food market is yet a destination for most. *"Well there's a minute amount of walk-in trade but a lot of it is business or residential so we are not a destination yet. Moro is [a destination]. But you know the market itself isn't a destination"*. Again, comparisons are drawn with Broadway Market and the point is made that a visit to Broadway Market can be part of an East End "day out" that could take in other local attractions for visitors. *"You know they do a little East End thing, but they don't really do that here. But if there was another thing here which drew them then they might"*. Asked whether people might come to Exmouth Market then go south to St John Street, and perhaps Smithfield or the Barbican, the upmarket restaurant owner responds that this would be fairly unusual tourist behaviour. Rather, Exmouth Market might be a food stop for people going to Sadler's Wells. *"So sometimes they'll come here to have a pre-theatre supper. At that time the [food] stalls will still be out so that's quite positive"*.

The coffee shop owner echoes that Moro Restaurant clearly attracts people as a destination, but that other food shops in the street too may be a destination for some. *"There's really nowhere to touch Moro in terms of providing really high quality food. But also food that you can't really eat anywhere else. You can get variations on it but it's quite specific. And, to a certain extent, Brindisa."* This interviewee argues that the qualities of friendliness and community are also an important part of Exmouth Market's attractiveness to people as a food place. *"I've worked in the street for 8 years, so much of it is tied in with the friendliness and community. I know and like people in all the shops that I go to, so for me it's almost as much a kind of social thing"*. Thus, Exmouth Market as a social connector is an important part of its appeal. The coffee shop owner argues that the place acts to support developing social networks and that his shop provides a social space for people to network with each other to mutual advantage, but also for less instrumental reasons. Asked whether the advent of the food market has made any difference to the number of people coming to the street, or the mix of people, the coffee shop owner suggests that there may have been a "marginal increase" on Fridays but is not sure how well the market works in terms of its original aims. *"I still think it's a really positive thing, but in terms of business or changing the face of the market, not really"*.

Most interviewees agree that Exmouth Market has gone significantly 'upmarket' over the years that the restaurants, and more latterly the food market, have been in operation. The street has become less "rough" than in the past. The restaurant manager, for example, sees this as most likely the result of a conscious strategy by the local Exmouth Market Traders Association to benefit the community. He also notes the more visible presence of community policing officers in the street, concluding, *"I think it's probably tried to go upmarket... a lot more care is taken of the community"*. A number of interviewees make reference to a history of anti-social behaviour in the street. For example, in its early days in the late 1990s, Moro *"witnessing several alarming scenes with local youths"*, thought to be related to anger at older businesses being 'forced out' of the street by rent increases (Whitelegg, 2002: 87). It is possible to speculate that local anger could also be fuelled by witnessing scenes of conspicuous consumption in a once predominantly working class area. At the same time today, no doubt related to the demographic and social changes the street has

witnessed, the restaurant manager agrees that if there is anti-social behaviour it gets responded to. *“Yeah last summer there was a spate of like bikes being stolen and so they just, you know, stamped on that. It’s gone now. It doesn’t happen”*.

### **Connecting up regeneration and urban design**

As noted earlier in the chapter, a key part of Exmouth Market’s redevelopment in the late 1980s and early 1990s was the physical renovation programme to improve the streetscape, especially through paving and lighting treatments. The street’s vehicle space was narrowed and more room was given to outdoor tables for restaurants and cafes. These design changes *“became an object of hostility from the Neighbourhood Forum, as older residents in particular found it difficult to negotiate their way around the tables and found themselves increasingly forced into the road, which was still not completely closed to traffic”* (Whitelegg, 2002: 86). Pedestrianisation remains an issue for respondents in this research. There is little support from interviewees for a fully pedestrianised space (excepting the organic café owner) although a number appear to approve of a design arrangement that gives pedestrians a safe and pleasant walking route along Exmouth Market. The coffee shop owner, for instance, is vehemently opposed to pedestrianisation, and provides the example of Covent Garden in support of his view that it creates *“soulless places”*, although recognising not all agree.

A number of comments from interviewees touch on various other aspects of the design of Exmouth Market as a physical space, and the ways that this interconnects with various socio-spatial uses discussed below. One respondent, the upmarket restaurant manager, describes Exmouth Market as a *“secret space”*, in a similar way to comments in previous chapters about Borough and Broadway Markets. Like those spaces, the street demonstrates a high level of containment and enclosure as physical space, which keeps it hidden from view until in its immediate vicinity. *“The most interesting thing I find is that, I grew up in London and I’d never heard of Exmouth Market. It’s a well-kept secret. The number of people that I tell that I work in Exmouth Market and they say where’s that? Yeah and it’s actually five minutes, ten minutes from right in the centre of London, from Oxford Street...I can never decide if that’s a good thing or a bad thing because I think it’s nice that it’s a secret but kept away but then you want more people to come”* (Restaurant manager) Building on an earlier argument, that Clerkenwell has become a less rough area, this is seen to have urban design aspects. The restaurant manager says that the street’s location is an important element in this transformation. *“I think this street is in a really nice position. Its location is so good that you can’t really take that away from it. You know, ten years ago this used to be quite a rough area. Now it’s a pleasant area. It’s only really going to go in a good direction”*.

The food market (in its changing forms) is viewed by some interviewees as demonstrating commitment to the public realm, and supporting a kind of democracy in terms of setting up a business at Exmouth Market. The upmarket restaurant owner argues *“restaurants are behind closed doors and [gestures to exterior space], that’s what this street is designed for. Well, you know, at the end [gestures westward to food court style market] it works very well. It was designed for that...Also, anyone can just put up a stall there, so it’s*



*bringing people in from outside the area as well, which is good*". Street design is thought by a number interviewed to have a direct effect on how Exmouth Market is used by people. The restaurant manager compares Exmouth Market favourably with Bloomsbury to the west, commenting in particular on Exmouth Market's prettiness, human scale and small business frontages, whereas the latter is *"not a place where you can come and walk up the street and see the selection that you can see here. Exmouth Market is very nice because you've got everyone in a such small area and it's a really pretty street....the frontages are unique and there's some of the old...you know, the family businesses"*.



Figure 7.4: Fine grained, human scaled, enclosed street space at Exmouth Market Source: photograph by researcher

The street is described as comfortable and being like a pedestrianised street in that its layout privileges pedestrian over vehicular traffic, despite some difficulties with enforcement of traffic restrictions. The restaurant manager says that it is a really comfortable street to walk down. *"It's got a nice set up to it. It's almost like a pedestrianised street although its not pedestrianised but it feels pedestrianised"*. He notes that regulations are in place to control the hours within which vehicles can use the street. The restaurant manager describes a typical visitor (pedestrian) journey along the street from its south-western to north-eastern end. He believes that by far the largest proportion of visitors to the street arrive from this end. *"You can see it starts at the top [the western end?] Yeah and it's going down the street. It started with Al's Bar on the corner and you know that's where everyone comes into the street. If someone did a survey on how many people come into the street in an hour there it would be like 85% [starting from there]"*.

The restaurant manager also notes the spatial ‘triangle’ about half way along the street, made up of three food business, and a further couple of food business attractors nearer the north eastern end of the street. *“There’s Moro and then Medcalf and [Café] Kick making a kind of triangle there... and there is us and Sweet [patisserie] down there, and then there is Santori, so its filtering down this way, and I think eventually the whole street will be as busy as one another”*. The design configuration of the street, with its main road access from the south-western end, that end of the street will also remain busier in the restaurant manager’s view. *“Just for the fact that that’s on Farringdon Road, so I think that is always going to be the busier end of the street...a lot of those businesses pick up a lot more people just by being in that location. We are in our own little sub location”*. The restaurant manager also comments on the way the design of the street interplays with temporal aspects such as the rhythm of an evening out. Moreover, the street’s shape increases the capacity to socialise in the public realm, giving it a *“European feel”*. *“Here you can get all parts of your evening. You can go outside for a coffee, then you can go outside for a drink, have a meal then go somewhere else for a drink. Do you know what I mean? It’s got a really European feel, everyone outside”*.

The design relationship between the two ends of the street, in terms of the catchment for food business, is mentioned by a number of interviewees. This has been touched on earlier in this section, in relation to the subtleties of food space catchment changes over the length of the street. The owner of the hole-in-the-wall caf argues that there are substantial walkable catchment differences. *“It sort of attracts everyone up that end. Now people what they can buy there, they don’t need to walk down here to see what they wanna buy. So we tend to suffer.”* This interviewee feels that his business is declining as a direct result of the interplay between the physical layout of the street, and the location of the food stall market located at its busier southern end. *“You usually see your regular customers actually walking past you to go up there”*. However, given that both ends of the street are within a 500-metre walkability radius, the explanation for a ‘caf’ being ignored in favour of hip food stalls appears to relate to the way each individual habitus is played out, rather than being explained by design changes along the length of the street.

As well as the temporal changes noted on a day-to-day basis in relation to the catchment for the food market, one interviewee refers to seasonal changes connecting the street’s design to its various food spaces. The restaurant manager points out that summer weather allows people to make more use of exterior space. This is when the street’s enclosed, human-scaled public realm really comes into its own. He explains that until recently people would go no further north-east along the street’s length than to Medcalf - located around half way along Exmouth Market. *“It’s almost like when we first opened it was like a force field at the end of Medcalf. People would be like a scrum, I don’t know if you have seen it in the summer, and it’s really, really dense. Everyone goes to a few bars and drinks”*. It appears that the social need to be seen near a stylish, fashionable place (in this case the Medcalf bar/restaurant) is having a spatial expression. Place users do not want to stray too far from the hip centre of gravity. The restaurant manager points out that visitors to food business are now making use of the street’s whole length, suggesting this may be because restaurants, cafes and bars near the north-eastern end have now become ‘cool’. *“Now it’s OK because people know us but when we opened we didn’t really do PR. We would have like loads of empty tables and people would be there at Medcalf, but people would not push themselves down the street. It has got quite an interesting geography*

*although it's quite a small street. It can only really improve".* The comment about the street's "interesting geography" seems to reinforce the notion that Exmouth Market benefits from being a fine grained space with a number of narrow frontages of individual (mainly food related) businesses.

Other interviewees, by contrast, tend to see the physical shape of the street and its frontages as placing constraints on business development. The organic café owner does note that continuity in terms of colour treatments of frontages and improvements in lighting can help improve the quality of the public realm, but does not approve of the lights strung on lines across the street fixed to building frontages. Instead he believes a bespoke system should be developed to give particular character, *"something that will be completely unique to the street"*. The coffee shop owner also argues that the spatial qualities of the street have had paradoxical effects. *"Number one is that the council use the shape of the street and the fact that it was organised as a market 20 years ago as a justification for saying 'and therefore we can put a stall in front of your shop and that's fine'. Because historically it had been done. It's not a good policy"*. This interviewee also believes that in redeveloping the street and running the market it would be possible to be more creative in design terms. This would include positively interconnecting market stalls with other streetscape arrangements in the space at the south-western end, where Exmouth Market meets Rosebery Avenue and Farringdon Road. *"The council have been asked so many times to do something more creative with the space at the end, but they failed radically every time"*.

Some interviewees link urban design with crime. The coffee shop owner notes that the street's shape makes it easier to commit crimes such as bicycle theft (an Islington Crime and Disorder Audit of 1998 - 2001 did single out the Exmouth Market area as a moped theft hotspot). *"Ironically it's a perfect street for stealing things from. It's a very short street, there's an alleyway. You can be into the block of flats... its great for people stealing bikes. Absolutely fantastic"*. The coffee shop owner also believes it would be possible for the council to deal better with other design related issues that have emerged, such as dumping rubbish, redundant telephone boxes, and street drinkers colonising the seating space at the south-western end of Exmouth Market. *"And it could be - it seems like a classic urban design conundrum - you've got this place. If you put benches people drink, sit there, and create havoc, and people dump stuff under the trees, so how do you make it better?"* He notes the traders asked the council to remove the telephone boxes *"because people use them as toilets and the answer was they couldn't do that'... For whatever bureaucratic reason they couldn't move them"*.

### **Exmouth as a street for eating: passeggiatta and proximity**

Many of the points made in relation to the regeneration and urban design of Exmouth Market have socio-spatial practice implications or are reinforced by socio-spatial material. Food mapping and interviews with place users visiting the food market in 2008 generated a number of points about the social use of the space that largely confirm the views of traders and stall owners cited above. Those interviewed tend to be in their twenties, both male and female, and from a variety of ethnicities, with most working or studying in the area. They were interviewed after the food market had transmogrified into a kind of slow food court. Much in

evidence are the linked socio-spatial practices are browsing and buying at 'slow' fast food stalls, then eating in the street. Various food market visitors interviewed mention that they discovered Exmouth Market by chance. The pedestrianised nature of the street appeals to a number of them. *"I think it helps that it's a pedestrian street basically. The fact that it's pedestrianised is great"*. This is counter-pointed with the busy and loud Rosebery Avenue. *"If it wasn't it would be almost impossible. The traffic noise that's going along there (indicates Rosebery Avenue behind) that's ridiculous"*. There is still a suggestion of a passeggiata in operation at Exmouth, although with differences to that found at Borough and Broadway. Some food market visitors make their way along the whole length of the street, but most arrive from the southern end so only walk a short way along the food stalls. A kind of spatially short and temporally brief passeggiata is apparent. Various interviewees also mention the atmosphere of the street as a contributing, if not dominant, factor in their decision to come to the food market. One says, *"I quite like the atmosphere but it's mostly the choice"* while another comments that *"I suppose it creates a sort of ambience"*. Some visitors eat while at the street, others take their food back to the office, although one says, *"It would be nicer if there was somewhere to sit. I don't particularly want to take it back to the office"*. One comments that, *"If the weather's nice we sit in the green spaces around here"*.

In terms of material about visitor catchment size, it appears visitors are coming from close by, with one saying, *"it's just round the corner from where I work"* and *"we've been here for a week. There's a course down the road. So we just walk up here and see what's available"*. Some come from somewhat further afield: *"I've been about three of four times before and I work down on Holborn Viaduct. Usually it's like my Friday treat"*. A number cite the quality and variety of the food on offer. One says that *"I usually just come here because I can get a decent vegetarian meal"* while another notes that *"personally I would much prefer to come here than go to a sandwich shop"*. A typical response is *"there's lots of good stalls. And it's the nearest place to where I work that's got that kind of choice"*. Unlike Borough and Broadway, food market visitors do not spend a significant amount of time at Exmouth. Rather, most observed appear to visit to pick up food and take it away to eat elsewhere. Despite this rather instrumental quality, they do also seem to be individually playing out a kind of habitus. Buying lunch from stalls at Exmouth Market is a hip thing to do.

### *Food mapping*

The food mapping lends further support to interviewee comments and observations. Again, as for Borough and Broadway, this helps explain what and where food related uses are found in and around the market. The food related uses are listed in Table 7.1. As interviewees note, the weekly food stalls are congregated at the south-western end of the street, while there is an informal 'triangle' of cafes, bars and restaurants mid way along the street and a further number of cafes and restaurants at the northern end (see Figure 7.5). Two of the three chain food businesses are found at the busier end of the street facing onto the Farringdon 'triangle'. The different kinds of food uses include two pubs, two bars, two bar/cafes, four bar/restaurants, thirteen restaurants and seven cafes. There are five food shops, fourteen food stalls, and six fast food/takeaway places. Cafes and restaurants vary from the very upmarket Moro, Ambassador, Medcalf and Quality Chop House to the more informal Little Bay and Gulshan, and the highly traditional Clark's Pie and Mash Shop. Food shops equally vary widely but there is a preponderance of 'high end' food outlets such as Brindisa and

the very long established Gazzano’s Salumeria. As at Borough and Broadway, there is a focus on independently owned and operated artisanal, organic and specialist food and drink outlets.

<b>Exmouth Food Map Key</b>	19. Lemon and Thyme Café	39. Little Bay Café/Restaurant
1. Al's Bar and Café	20. Santoré restaurant	40. Gazzano's Salumeria
2. Gulshan Tandoori	21. Mark's caf	41. Giveaway Food Vouchers
3. Sofra restaurant	22. Starbuck's	42. Brindisa Chorizo
4. Strada restaurant	23. Sweet Patisserie/Café	43. Freebird Steak
5. Café Nero	24. Jessop's Bakery	44. Hot Satay Beef
6. China Silk restaurant	25. Rhum Jungle	45. Moro Paella
7. Exmouth Arms Pub	26. Budgen's Caribbean restaurant	46. Gujarati Rasoi
8. Harput Charcoal Grill takeaway	27. Wilmington Pub	47. The Veg Table
9. Colossi Greek restaurant	28. Rosebery Kebab	48. Fruit and vegetable Stall
10. Brill - Music, Coffee, Bagels	29. Perfect Chicken	49. Cake Stall
11. Brindisa Shop	30. Mix Grill	50. Turkish Food Stall
12. Moro	31. Di Popolo Deli	51. Koenwah Salads
13. Medcalf	32. Royal Caf	52. Jollof Pot
14. Café Kick	33. Tito's Sandwich Bar	53. Thai Stall
15. Ayla's Snacks and Café	34. Dollar Grill Bar/restaurant	54. Italian Sausage Stall
16. Clark's Pie and Mash Shop	35. Golden Fish restaurant	55. Crepes and Galettes Stall
17. Pride of Siam	36. Golden Fish Bar	56. La Porchetta Pizzeria
18. The Ambassador restaurant	37. Farringdon Grill	57. The Old China Hand bar
	38. Quality Chop House	

Table 7.1. Key to Exmouth Market Food Map Source: Prepared by researcher

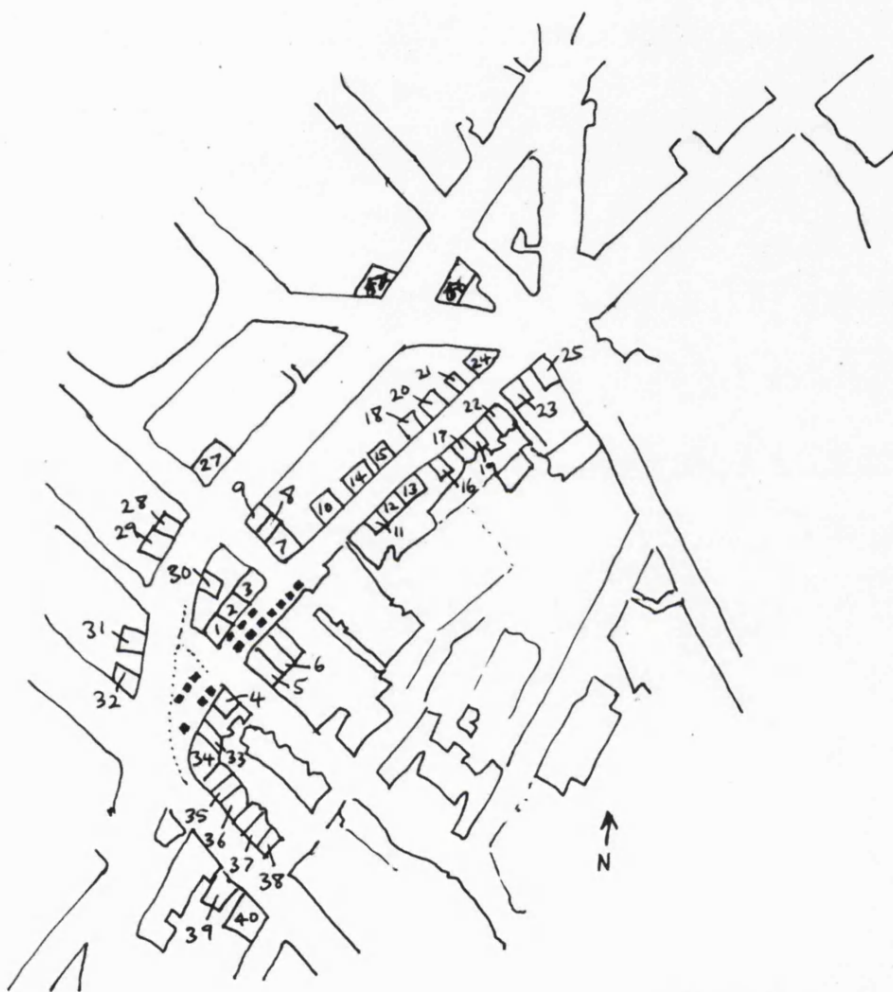


Figure 7.5: Food Map of Exmouth Market (black squares on the map are stalls) Source: Prepared by researcher

#### Analysis and conclusions from Exmouth Market's food-led renewal

The material presented in this chapter broadly supports the view that the Exmouth Market quarter is emerging as a food-centred space, with a particular regeneration and gentrification trajectory, and socio-



spatial practices which display both similarities and some distinct contrasts to those found at Borough and Broadway. Governance issues have been important, and, as at Broadway, there appear to be ongoing tensions between different players in the quarter's revitalisation. Within a broad narrative of urban improvement, there is considerable agreement, as well as some areas of dispute between stakeholders about the nature of the quarter's food-led renaissance. Exmouth Market, as the street on which the quarter focuses, emerges as a destination for certain kinds of stylish food consumption that can be considered to constitute an individual habitus for some visitors. At the same time, the street still appears to operate as a food desert for other long-term, working class residents who find themselves socially excluded from these changes.

Exmouth Market's recent history can be read as a story of food-centred regeneration, focused on restaurants and bars, as well as a revived food market, in a process that has now shaded into gentrification. Prior to regeneration efforts that began in the late 1980s, Exmouth Market was in a similar position to both Broadway and Borough Markets, with a moribund food market, empty shops and a declining population base. In this way, it fits well with the long-term processes connecting food and urbanisation. However, the outcomes of food-centred regeneration efforts in this street have been somewhat different to those in the other two sites. At Exmouth Market the loss of the fresh food market in the 1960s-70s came to symbolise the way the street and the surrounding neighbourhood were shifting from a solid working class area based on traditional trades to a more affluent, hip location for arts, architecture and media companies. A scheme of physical regeneration gave way in the early to mid 1990s to a more nuanced cultural regeneration strategy emphasising partnership between local authority and other stakeholders but appearing to exclude the area's working class residents. Key changes to local planning policy helped support a regeneration focus on a "*the restaurant solution*". Its implementation was based on both formal and informal networks encompassing council proponents and influential property owners actively pursuing potential restaurateurs to tenant empty shops and help attract cultural industries to the quarter. The local working class community, largely left out of this regeneration loop, resorted to oppositional politics.

By the early 2000s the vision of reviving the food market in a more modern form had started to solidify, but by this time, as at Borough and Broadway, local government was largely absent as an effective partner or stakeholder in these processes. What was proposed in food terms was similar to a farmer's market but not bound by the environmental criteria these impose such as food mile restrictions. The idea came to be seen, by now well-established restaurateurs and their backers, as a logical extension of the very successful 'destination dining' occurring in the street. However, some other food traders in Exmouth Market saw the concept as flawed from the start, based on insufficient research and analysis to determine its likely feasibility. Notwithstanding these dissenting voices, a revived food market was launched in 2006, using a combination of imported expertise from Broadway Market, and high-powered proponents with food credentials stretching well beyond the confines of the local area, to manage the process. This action was different from the bottom-up movement of traders and residents such as at Broadway Market, nor did it or arise from a long established community based charitable trust as at Borough. Instead, the process was more of a sideways moving in from outside rather than a typical top-down in approach. Given the importance of legitimacy in local leadership it is possible to speculate that the lack of such acknowledged legitimacy within the local community was a

central issue. Despite the market's gastronomic proponents possessing significant social capital in broader London terms, insufficient *local* social capital may be one of the reasons for the subsequent difficulties that arose with implementing the food market as originally envisioned.

The thinking appeared to be among its proponents that the street's substantial cultural capital based on uniqueness, social mix and high food quality (partly comprising fine grained design, partly independent food shops, and partly 'destination' restaurants such as Moro) could be built on to run a successful market in the Broadway Market mould. The role of the street's physical shape was identified as an important one in providing a desirable backdrop to the food market and broader regeneration efforts, although there was no conscious architectural or urban design strategy at play, as was the case at Borough. At the same time, the public realm was identified as an important focus, with the food market seen as a good thing in itself, as well as a tool for bringing more people to the street to reinforce regeneration efforts. Fairly sophisticated place-marketing was undertaken, but the market started to decline as a source of fresh produce soon after its launch in 2006. A number of the food business "big boys" either did not set up stalls as promised, or stopped running stalls quite quickly, preferring to concentrate their efforts on other "more successful" farmer's style markets. Relatively soon the complexion of the food market started to change from one focused on fresh produce into a kind of 'slow' fast food court of food stalls selling items like burritos, chorizo sausages in rolls, Thai and Ghanaian foods to workers and students walking there at lunchtime from local businesses and institutions. The slow food court that has emerged fits rather differently than do Borough and Broadway into the food system loci categories. Unlike the other two sites, the consumption phase of the human food system is stronger at this locus than is the distribution phase.

There is a feeling expressed by some of those interviewed, that while this alteration in the nature of the food market might be working out financially for the stall holders, it is "*not what Exmouth Market is about*". These interviewees are perhaps referring to the sense of community they identify at Exmouth Market, to which the food market is not seen to contribute. On these grounds Exmouth Market is adversely compared with Broadway Market. In particular, some interviewees see the revived market as a failure in terms of the original vision of a community centrepiece based on food, although not a wholesale commercial failure. There is also an alternative view, from a traditional café owner rather than more newly arrived restaurateurs, that sees the evolving 'food court' style market as an economic threat to existing food businesses in the street, with stallholders benefiting from unfair competition due to much lower rates and more lax hygiene standards. For restaurateurs at Exmouth Market, the busy atmosphere the food court style market brings to the street is seen to offset some of these negative effects. For visitors to the food court, meanwhile, the market is simply judged a success in its own terms.

The food market's proponents tend to describe its decline as a fresh produce market as about the difficult economics of getting a food market off the ground. They note a Catch 22 situation in which stallholders needed to keep trading while making little money but were unable to do so because they were generating such low incomes. Temporal aspects are also thought to have played a part, with the stronger Friday catchment for the food market unable to make up sufficiently for the low turnover on the much quieter

Saturdays. Catchment size is clearly an issue. The failure of the market as a fresh produce space suggests a number of factors may have contributed. Explanations include that there is too small a residential community in the quarter, there is too little passing trade, and that (some) local residents are unwilling to buy food from the market. Given the area still houses a substantial working class population it would be reasonable to suggest that both the prices and style of the market might not appeal. This is confirmed by at least one interviewee who described the new market (in its early phase) as not aimed at this population, and in fact likely to exclude them. As at Borough and Broadway, the narrative suggests that Exmouth may operate as a food desert for some while developing into a convivial food quarter for others, albeit with a somewhat different kind of food focus than a complete food market would offer.

While interviewees do not believe that competition, from other food markets like Whitecross Street or Chapel Market, or shopping centres like Angel, is taking trade away from Exmouth Market this remains a possible if partial explanation. It should be remembered too, that very substantial regeneration funding is going into Whitecross Street to support a food market modelled on Borough Market. This could well draw potential visitors there, instead of to Exmouth Market, which has no such funding base available. There may also be a question about getting the shopping ‘balance’ right, with Exmouth Market having insufficient ‘cool’ shops to attract visitors. Again, there are invidious comparisons made to Broadway Market’s well honed shopping and social mix, understood as key to successful food-led regeneration efforts in that quarter.

As with the other two food quarters it is impossible to avoid discussing issues of gentrification in relation to Exmouth Market based on food-led revitalisation. Two contrasting narratives emerge in this area. The first suggests that Exmouth Market displays a “wonderful mix” of traditional working class and newer, more affluent incomers who together act to conserve what is best about the street while developing it economically for the future. This challenges gentrification arguments by largely denying this is a contested space. The second narrative by contrast sees the street subject to aggressive competition for social and economic resources where the traditional community feels excluded from regeneration activity, and is unlikely to benefit from it or may even be driven out by gentrification. The stress on the notion of urban mix in Exmouth Market, in which the old rubs shoulders with the new, is contrasted with a reading of Exmouth as *“more about underpinning property prices and fusing ‘culture’ with ‘consumption’. As this consumption becomes increasingly conspicuous, as the ‘swells’ occupy the outside tables, the extent to which culture becomes implicitly exclusive is obvious”* (Whitelegg, 2002: 90).

For some of those interviewed, food-centred gentrification is not being problematised in this way. One interviewee sees Exmouth Market as simply a great place for social mixing and networking. Others situate Exmouth Market as a stylish and even unique food destination that is part of what will make the development of high quality residential units in the quarter increasingly socially and economically attractive to investors and incoming middle class residents. Interviewees may not be aware that this is a classic gentrification trajectory, given the way their “idealised narratives” are constructed. Exmouth Market’s growth does appear to fit well with aspects of the development of cultural quarters, in the way that the space itself is becoming commodified through cultural production and a site for its consumption. Interviewees’ stated fear, however,

in this case, is not whether gentrification will drive out traditional communities but whether the shift to residential over business land uses in the vicinity might adversely affect those visiting the street for food, now predominantly composed of business users. Already catchment variation from day to evening and from weekday to weekend is clearly evident and food businesses are not sure more residents replacing office workers will mean more business for them. In effect Exmouth is carving out a niche as a food destination for high quality restaurant food, pubs, bars and cafes, but not as a fresh food market, and these catchment issues may have been critical to the development of that situation. It is less clear to what extent the increasing amount of residential development is contributing to working class displacement effects, as there is still substantial public housing in the vicinity. Given high rents and sharply rising house prices it seems likely to be contributing to some working class flight.

Again, as for the other two food quarters, local government does not fare well in any one's view of how the street and wider quarter have developed as a food space. A lack of local government management expertise and governance capacity allied to occasional, inept interventions and defensive attitudes seems to sum up the view of most. Some food traders feel their ideas about developing Exmouth Market as a food street have been ignored and most expect little improvement to emerge in either council management practices or consultation on the street's future. An unspoken but possibly relevant issue is that regeneration funds and attention are going to Whitecross Street rather than Exmouth Market. The food market's gastronomic stakeholders also come in for some criticism for "*not listening*" and going ahead with a food market thought by some food businesses in the street to be under-researched and likely to fail. These issues have provoked negative comparisons with excellent community-based market management at Broadway Market. There is serious disappointment that Exmouth Market has not been able to regenerate in the way that Broadway Market has, as an apparently organically growing food space "*all about community*".

A main purpose of the research is to consider the interplay between physical design and socio-spatial processes around food. A number of relevant urban design points emerge from the research material from Exmouth and support findings from Borough and Broadway. These design points demonstrate that physical design has been significant to how the street has been used as a food space in the past, and is being used in relation to food in recent times. The street is seen to have benefited from being the traditional centrepiece of the local quarter, with a public realm designed expressly to house a food market. Despite the depredations of post-war redevelopment, Exmouth remains highly suitable for this kind of public space use. Exmouth Market is referred to as both well-located and a "secret space", a description that reflects its high level of enclosure, similar to the height-to-width ratios of the streets at both Broadway and Borough Markets. The design of the space underpins the potential for people to set up stalls in the public realm and thus, in turn, attract more people to the street. It is variously described as pretty, small scale, pedestrian friendly and having unique frontages. These are all physical design qualities that reinforce its attractiveness to place-users as a setting for conviviality and its particular sense of place. Again, physical comparisons with Broadway and Borough's fine-grained, compact, walkable spatiality seem clear.

The environmental aspects of the street's resurgence have produced little direct research material, yet many environmental points are implicit in interviewees comments and are further supported by observations and mapping. Market proponents speak of providing local people the opportunity to buy good quality, fresh fruit and vegetables locally, although the positive sustainability implications of doing so are not drawn out. Likewise, their intention to increase the surrounding community's capacity to buy food locally within a walkable catchment would have positive effects for individuals in avoiding "obesogenic" environments. Increased local food buying would also contribute to making the city more sustainable, including through careful use of food resources and production of less waste and pollution. More latterly, a number of the comments made by place-users, buying food from stalls at the 'food court' iteration of the market, suggest they are attracted by the bespoke, organic nature of what is on offer, so are choosing to avoid food chains and supermarket sandwiches, at least for lunch. Again these choices have positive sustainability implications.

Turning to the social life of the street, it's economic, environmental and design complexities have influenced socio-spatial practices observed, mapped, photographed and discussed with interviewees. Interviewees emphasise overall what a convivial place Exmouth market is while referring to the differences between the street's south-western and north-eastern ends. The south-western end is identified as busier due to visitors to the market and restaurants arriving by way of two major intersecting roads. Various food-related sub-locations have been identified, and the perceived need by place-users to maintain a close physical proximity to stylish food places along the street's length is one intriguing finding. The street's fairly subtle physical configuration is thought to have shaped its social use in relation to food to a significant extent, including determining the location of the revived market. While the north-eastern end of the street has been until recently the least frequented, this is changing as larger numbers of hip food business have established there. Meanwhile, the 'Farringdon triangle' at the south-western end presents some design challenges to deal with anti-social behaviour and an acceptable configuration of food stalls (from a fixed business point of view). There is also clearly an interplay between design quality and the temporal aspects of the street's food related use, with the shape of the street lending itself to what is seen as a rather 'European' style day and night time use. Well before the smoking ban came into effect in the UK from July 2007, place users would move from outdoor space to outdoor space connected to different food businesses and the public realm would be fully utilised for socialising. The perceived 'European' nature of the socio-spatial practices encouraged by the design of the street is reminiscent of users' comments about Borough and Broadway, and again reflects the sense that living convivially in the public domain is a European lifestyle. Analysis of food mapping, also demonstrates that the space is one where eating in the street is not only a popular social practice but appears an acceptable form of civilised behaviour. All of this appears to reflect the development of a distinct individual habitus played out in Exmouth Market.

The analysis of evidence from this chapter provides some interesting contrasts to conclusions from the other two case study spaces. One of the clearest differences is that unlike the other sites, the revived food market has not been a success as a produce market, although Exmouth overall is developing into a successful food quarter of a somewhat different complexion. All the sites share strong thematic territory in terms of food-led regeneration shading into gentrification. All are developing as cultural quarters, in which certain individuals

play out a similar habitus. All demonstrate the development for some users of a food quarter from a food desert. In each case, urban design features and elements, both traditional and new, support the quarter in playing a role both as gentrifying space and as an increasingly convivial and sustainable place within a largely alienating and unsustainable city. Based on the research material and analysis in these last four chapters, the next and final chapter considers how far the research material goes to supporting the study's research questions about the relationship between physical form and social processes relating to food. Chapter 8 provides the opportunity to draw together in more detail the analysis of the material from each fieldwork site within the frame provided by sociological and design theory and present the thesis's overall conclusions.



## **Chapter Eight: Summing up the food quarters**

### **Drawing comparative conclusions about the food quarters**

This chapter draws conclusions about three food-centred spaces in London from the thesis research. These conclusions are explored in the light of the study's argument that areas defined as developing food quarters are at once gentrifying spaces, and 'ordinary' places (Knox, 2005: 1) that may contribute to making more convivial, sustainable cities through the interplay of their physical design and the socio-spatial practices of everyday life. It will be remembered that the study focuses on the emergence of what is argued to be a new phenomenon of food-centred place design and regeneration, leading to the development of urban food quarters. These quarters are based on existing food spaces, but represent a break from the past through interactions between distinctively new combinations of socio-spatial practices and physical design features. A key concern for the thesis is the double-sided nature of the food quarters. How is it that they operate at once as zones of gentrification that may exclude yet equally appear to defy dominant spatial trends evident in London and elsewhere that are producing 'obesogenic' environments, to develop in a more convivial, gastronomically rich and sustainable way? In this chapter I reflect on the food quarters' complex nature in the light of the thesis research and analysis.

Through the study I have sought to apply spatialised thinking (Soja, 2000, 1980) about aspects of food and urban space to a number of fieldwork sites in London, in part, through analysis of their urban design elements, and exploration of the ways these design elements appear to influence their socio-spatial practices. The studied spaces are based in spatial terms upon a size and physical design configuration analogous to a typical urban quarter within traditional European urban space (Moughtin, 1992). This is no accident. The research material shows strong links in design terms between the emerging food quarters and such traditional spaces. In exploring these quarters, the thesis reflects and draws theoretically upon an increasing interest in food, the body and everyday life within sociology (Amin and Thrift, 2004, 2002; Beardsworth and Keil, 1997; Lupton, 1996; Zukin, 1995). A number of different sociological strands have proved relevant, including structuralist perspectives from Bourdieu (1984), while from historical sociology there has been work on food within an urban setting from Elias (1982), Mennell (1992), and Valentine (1998) among others. Urban sociology has acted as a way into spatialising the analysis.

The thesis crosses a number of boundaries between theoretical areas within sociology, and also between sociology and related disciplines; seeking insights from urban geography, morphology and urban design. This boundary crossing has been necessary in order to make relevant connections between spatiality understood in sociological, geographic and design terms, on the one hand, and individual socio-spatial practices on the other. I have sought to overcome the identified research problem of aspatiality in regard to theorising on food. Thus, key theoretical insights in relation to socio-spatial practices have been derived from the work of Bourdieu (1984), whose notion of the habitus is important for framing the discussion around structural issues evident in the sites, as these are represented in individual behaviours. Work by Butler (2007, 2006), Webber (2007), Butler with Robson (2001), and Bridge (2000) has all been very

useful in connecting the habitus to spatialised aspects of gentrification. The work of Lefebvre (1991) and de Certeau (1984) has helped in constructing an analysis of the making of everyday life through the socio-spatial practices found at the sites. Norbert Elias's (1982) theorising of the civilising process has been employed to explore how public behaviour in these places is developed and modulated in a dynamic way.

Meanwhile, the fieldwork sites have been defined as loci within the food system (Goody, Beardsworth and Keil, 1997), where they play both allocation and consumption roles, while challenging some of the inequitable and unsustainable aspects of that system. The contribution of spatiality has been further explored through the analysis of the changing political economy of the sites over time, through their contested regeneration and gentrification. This aspect of the analysis has made use of the work of, among others, Butler (2007), Whitelegg (2007), Mansvelt (2005), Miles and Miles (2004), Smith (1996), and Zukin (1995) to trace the sites' decline and resurgence, and explore how their regeneration and gentrification, as particular material places, has been critical to their social development. Spatiality has also been approached through insights from urban morphology from Whitehand and Larkham (1992) among others. From urban design, the work of design theorists including Cuthbert (2006), Madanipour (2003, 2001, 1996), Bentley (1999), Hayward and McGlynn (2002, 1993), Gehl (1996), Greenbie (1984), Bacon (1982), White (1980), and Alexander et al (1977), has helped focus on the shaping of the quarters' physical character over time. Work that interconnects urban design and health (Lake and Townshend, 2006; Parham, 1993, 1992) suggests a particular urban form character plays a distinct role in their development as social spaces that are in sharp contrast to obesogenic environments and food deserts. The study reveals that the physical settings of the food quarters play active roles in the social, economic and environmental processes of food allocation and consumption. It also helps make clearer the social distinctions evident in the habitus of individuals within these settings. The whole research focus has been undertaken within the paradigm of urban sustainability, helped by the work among others of Houghton and Hunter (2003) Hough (1994, 1984), and Stren, White and Whitney (1992), which has been employed to frame and bring together key aspects of food and spatiality in the fieldwork analysis.

The chapter first provides this introduction to the arguments, theoretical frame and a reminder of the methods used in the research. It then presents conclusions from the morphological and urban design investigations in a comparative way from across the sites. This helps contextualise broader conclusions about food quarters by summarising their changing gastronomic character over time. A relatively long section follows, presenting conclusions from the three food quarters; in particular focusing on the way physical space and socio-spatial practices interconnect through regeneration process and urban design. The subsequent sections provide conclusions in relation to the food quarters as expressions of an urban sustainability paradigm, and as sites for both rapid gentrification and increased conviviality. The penultimate section brings to a close the comparative analysis, with conclusions about food-centred spatial design as an apparently new phenomenon in urban development. The chapter ends with a section summing up overarching thesis conclusions.

#### **About the research methods used**

I have used a collective case study approach (Stake, 1995), chosen because it allows the illustration of a particular set of issues and processes in action, and for their study in depth at particular sites over time. It has been important as a researcher to acknowledge my own subjectivity through a reflexive approach to the research (Punch, 2005; Stark and Torrance, 2005; Tonkiss, in Seale, 2001), especially in the context of the nature of much urban design work that privileges practice over theory (Madanipour, 2003). The process of choosing suitable sites employed a method of condensed fieldwork (Walker, 1974), which began with a progressive focusing down (Ball, 1981) to determine which sites to study. This was followed by research to define the most relevant and then selection of the sites from a detailed short list. The sites finally chosen, at Borough, Broadway and Exmouth, were those thought to be well suited in London for research into the study of food-centred space. It has also been important to be as clear as possible about the boundaries of the area under study: phenomenological, spatial, social, and historically contextual. Comparison across sites was a useful way to explore nuances of difference within a single research subject. Verification was sought through triangulation (Creswell, 1998), and this was achieved by using multiple methods (Alasuutari, 1995) in exploring the three fieldwork sites.

The techniques used represent my judgement about the best fit between methods and desirable outcomes for collecting and analysing relevant social and spatial research material. In this case, following a defined research plan (Nachmias and Nachmias 1992), I first piloted methods then used them more broadly in relation to each fieldwork site. From the sociological mainstream, my methods have included semi-structured interviewing with experts and place users (Bryman, 2004) and unstructured observation at fieldwork sites (Jones and Somekh, in Somekh and Lewin, 2005), augmented by online commentary from place users and press reports. These have been matched with techniques from design-based disciplines, because sociological methods were judged insufficient alone to yield the kinds of research material on space needed to adequately interrogate the research questions. Although sociologists now increasingly use visual methods, these have shortcomings in relation to this research that were described in Chapter 3. Thus, the visually based methods primarily used for each research stage: data collection, analysis, and reporting, come from urban design and morphology. Design methods used include master planning techniques (Cowan, 2002; Urban Design Compendium, 2000) and morphological investigation (Whitehand and Larkham, 1992). The results from these have produced their own insights and have acted as a framing device and context for the sociologically based investigation of the sites and the overall conclusions from the research material that have emerged during the analysis process.

### **Contextualising the food quarter: the legacy of urban continuity and coherence**

The research enquiry began in Chapter 4 with a morphological and urban design analysis of the physical features of the three sites. These acted to both contextualise the food quarters and explore their changing gastronomic character over time. The 'ped-shed' maps shown in Chapter 4 indicate, in fuzzy-edged terms, the physical extent of each of the sites as walkable quarters, while the Ordnance Survey maps help identify some of their salient features. So, for Borough, it is possible to discern a complex series of

interior, exterior and transitional spaces; with a further, triangular shaped overlay of major rail infrastructure dominating the urban structure of the site area. For Broadway, by contrast, the market street traces a clear public space pathway from north to south, running between London Fields and the Regent's Canal. Exmouth similarly shows a quarter centred on a food market street, extending south-west to north-east within a larger urban grid, itself the product of successive layers of urban development. For all three sites, various disruptions to the street pattern and urban block structure can be seen in fairly close vicinity to the market street or market structures. The various site maps demonstrate that the traditional urban structure is complex and fine-grained in each site, but the urban fabric has suffered some serious interruptions to its pattern that have undercut its overall physical coherence.

The morphological research material, based on maps, photographs, plans and written records, was used to trace the physical evolution of food-related uses, and the mix with other land uses at the sites over time, drawing out food and design implications from this longitudinal analysis. A key conclusion from the research is that, despite many waves of development and redevelopment, especially in Borough's case, given its very long urban history, all three quarters can be judged as coherent places in built form terms over a substantial time period up until the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. Each quarter has been closely associated with food markets, from the beginnings of their emergence as urban space. For Borough, the antecedents of this urban form are extremely long term, possibly pre-Roman. For the other two sites, materialisation as urban space went hand in hand with development as public food markets in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, when both were for a short time at the urban edge of a rapidly expanding London. All three sites began with close links to food production or distribution. Borough was home to market gardens and other agricultural uses until quite late in its history. Broadway's emergence as a street began as a drover's route into London. Exmouth was part of a field track close to a cattle field for the Skinners Company, a London trade guild. While none of the sites' relationship with food was immutable in terms of their land use configuration, they all continued to operate as food-centred spaces in an unbroken line until modern times; roughly the late 19<sup>th</sup> century for Borough, and the mid to latter 20<sup>th</sup> century for Broadway and Exmouth. Thus, Borough was always a food market, although the market's location shifted a number of times over the centuries before finding a permanent home, with associated built structures, on its current site. At both Broadway and Exmouth, the street's built frontages provided a backdrop to food markets, which changed in character over time, but continued to operate as fresh produce markets without interruption until the 1960s.

In each case, the food market acted as a nodal point and focus for urban settlement and intensification based on food-related and other land uses, that mixed residential, business, leisure and cultural activities. Each fieldwork site developed into a dense, fine-grained urban quarter, with a thriving local economy in which the food market played an important role physically, socially and economically. The maps record and other visual material demonstrates very strongly how coherent the street pattern, block structure, and built form remained through successive layers of urban development until the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the first major infrastructure intrusions began to occur. Within the framework provided by the overarching similarities between the sites there were also significant differences identified. Borough

was unlike the other two sites, not only because it was settled for a far longer period, but because it was for many centuries one of London's principal wholesale markets, whereas both Broadway and Exmouth were primarily retail food markets serving much more local catchments. Borough and Exmouth, as sites closer to the centre and thriving heart of London, were both spaces where, for a time, marginal and radical social and political activities found a home. This was far less the case for Broadway given it remained as a village settlement outside built up London for longer than the other quarters.

### *Decline and renewal*

From a period that started in the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century for Borough, and the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century for Broadway and Exmouth, substantial physical changes began to significantly weaken the consistency of each of the sites' urban form. While the food market spaces at the centre of each site were not completely destroyed, each area suffered serious urban decline that was both a result of planned physical changes (notably railway infrastructure at Borough) and the consequence of approaches to regeneration that stressed wholesale demolition of traditional housing and streets (comprehensive housing renewal at Broadway and Exmouth). At Borough, the decline of the wholesale market from the middle part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was due, to a substantial extent, to external structural forces described in Chapters 4 and 5. Most notable were changing distribution and shopping patterns that saw food wholesaling methods and infrastructure alter in ways that Borough could not accommodate within its limited physical space. Lack of space, and poor road approaches, reinforced the operational problems created by miscellaneous market accommodation, and the railway viaducts cutting off light and access to and through the market. At Borough, by the post war period, the market itself was very badly rundown and the surrounding urban fabric had been partially demolished. At Broadway and Exmouth, meanwhile, the retail markets similarly declined in response to the same broad structural forces. These were related to alterations in food distribution and consumption on the one hand and post industrial decline in each area's local economy on the other. The effects were exacerbated by the comprehensive renewal post war, "*the municipal bulldozer*", which led to demolition of substantial areas around the markets and loss of community focus on, and catchment for them. All three sites suffered much more physical damage from post-war interventions than from bomb damage during WWII.

None of the sites' urban decline was entirely due to the destruction of large parts of their physical fabric, but these actions contributed materially to their decay from thriving food-centred spaces to remnant urban pockets, in Exmouth's case, described by their own residents as "*slums*". In each case, a series of lost spaces in Trancik's (1986) terms was created: in part by the unwontedly perverse outcomes of public policy for urban space and in part by structural changes to urban form brought about by the wider political economy of London. The result was breakdown in the sites' urban structure. The areas surrounding the market streets declined from human-scaled, fine-grained fabric, with solid-to-void relationships and levels of enclosure that made for excellent outdoor rooms focused on food retailing, to a series of depressed and depressing places, that had lost their identity, largely lacked sense of place and demonstrated minimal urban functionality in food terms.



The morphological findings show that in more recent days, predominantly since the 1980s at all three quarters, substantial physical redevelopment and revitalisation of the built fabric of the market buildings, market streets and market areas has been underway. At Borough, decrepit market structures have been redeveloped (as will be discussed below in relation to economic regeneration) through an ambitious staged programme of restoration and rebuilding. New frontages and buildings have been inserted into the ensemble of existing market halls. Existing buildings have been renovated and new apartment buildings have been built, or are planned, including the proposed “*shard of glass*” tower block at London Bridge Station. At Broadway, physical improvements are modest but include gates at either end, for closing the street to vehicles during hours of market operation, and some refurbishment of shops and other building frontages. Again, substantial new building, mostly residential, is underway in the area. At Exmouth, meanwhile, two programmes of streetscape improvements have been undertaken, and the street’s carriageway reconfigured to partially pedestrianise the space. A number of new residential and mixed-use buildings have been developed or are planned close to the market, including the redevelopment of the Mt Pleasant sorting office site.

### **The food quarters as public focal points in fine-grained urban fabric**

Building on the findings and conclusions from the morphological investigations, the urban design based urban structure analysis, using a limited palette of master planning methods, has helped to reveal key compositional aspects of the urban armature at the three sites, that support their emergence as food quarters. Through this analysis, the urban structure defined in terms of urban block layout; and building size, scale, density and active edges explored, while landmarks, vistas and focal points have been identified. The urban structure analysis has been augmented by figure-ground diagrams that show physical fabric at each site displays an excellent balance between positive and negative space, and thus a good degree of enclosure within the street and urban block structure. In each case, the conclusion is that the food market at the site’s centre is a focal point within the surrounding urban fabric. At Borough, the food market shares this role with other important foci in the area, while Broadway and Exmouth feature more modest landmark elements in the armature. In each case, landmarks in the immediate area of the market have worked as both vista terminations and social meeting points for food market visitors. Among other examples, the Monmouth Coffee corner plays this role at Borough; the junction of Broadway Market and Dericote Street at Broadway; and the Farringdon triangle at Exmouth. Each market space also provides interesting serial vision possibilities for the walker. This is especially marked at Borough, where numerous possible path sequences encompass a great deal of visual richness and variety focused on food. Interesting path sequences with a food focus can also be seen more modestly at both Broadway and Exmouth.

The urban structure analysis demonstrates that in terms of destruction of physical fabric in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the immediate area of the food market in each case escaped more unscathed than did the wider area around it. Each of the markets’ immediate physical settings retains a strong solid-to-void relationship,

and thus high levels of enclosure, but became marooned in a tabula rasa of poorly enclosed redevelopment space after WWII. The retention of remnants of traditionally shaped fabric in the markets' immediate area was not sufficient in the subsequent period to protect the food market as a fully functioning land use in any of the three sites. As its surrounding fabric was erased, including even portions of the street grid itself, each market declined and virtually disappeared. The market buildings at Borough, and the streetscape in all three sites, became dilapidated, empty and even dangerous places to be. By the 1960s and 1970s, each place was at risk of further destruction through proposed additional demolition activity, driven by notions of modernity in housing, road design and retailing. At the same time, each space has continued to possess rich urban structure qualities in terms of their physical form. Each has a fine grain of buildings up to street alignments, with active frontages, or frontages that could be reactivated, on ground floors. These buildings are rich in detail and have proved robust over time; representing long-life, loose-fit typologies. The streets themselves have retained human scale, with excellent height-to-width ratios and degrees of enclosure, good microclimates and high levels of connectivity, helping each site keep a strong sense of place at its centre. Further out this has declined, as the urban fabric was coarsened in both grain and scale. In each case, the wounds in the urban fabric seemed to be mirrored locally by dysfunction and incoherence in social, environmental and economic terms.

#### *Connectivity and catchment conclusions*

Following on from the urban structure analysis, the connectivity research included a (limited) movement assessment, which has helped demonstrate the level of permeability, legibility and walkability of each site. Catchment maps were created to show the 'ped-shed' or walkability range, which assists in defining the spatial area from which visitors will walk to the food markets at the heart of each quarter. Through the assessment at each site, a key conclusion is that its food market had once been at the centre of a very permeable, legible and walkable street grid, but each has suffered considerable damage to this fabric through active design interventions of various kinds. These include major transport infrastructure overlaying or bisecting the site; point block housing developments breaking up the surrounding street grid and block structure; and segregation of pedestrian paths from the street network undercutting permeability. In each case, the immediate food market area remains very permeable and walkable, but legibility has been compromised by interventions including those noted above.

The catchment analysis suggests that each food quarter has a strongly developed 'ped-shed' and retains a high degree of connectivity. In part, this reflects the strong grid pattern of the immediate street network. Despite some interruptions this grid offers walkers many ways to get to the markets. It also reflects the way that pedestrian use of the streets has been subtly privileged over cars and servicing vehicles. The walkability radius is reinforced in each case by excellent wider public transport links. In Borough's case, the ped-shed encompasses London Bridge Station, a major transport hub for tube and rail. For the other two sites, major rail stations lie slightly beyond 500 metres, the established ped-shed radius, but are within walking distance, and they also have multiple bus links. Broadway is due to benefit from major rail improvements in this sub-region of London and will be even better connected in the future. Thus, each

food market is highly accessible not only to a local catchment arriving on foot, but to visitors from further afield, using a range of public transport modes. Overall, the conclusion is that the sites' connectivity is excellent, allowing easy access by a local and broader visitor catchment. This is one of the factors that underpins their success as revived food spaces.

### *Street assessment conclusions*

The detailed street assessment for each quarter builds on these urban design investigations. It demonstrates that at the centre of each site, in the immediate vicinity of the food market, the buildings and spaces contribute strongly to sense of place and local identity. Among the positive design elements in play are the series of active frontages built up to street alignments, at a fine grain and human scale; height-to-width ratios that support the creation of a series of outdoor rooms; the dominance of robust building typologies; the well-composed streetscaping and lighting arrangements; and the visual richness provided by the details of the place. This is not to say any of the three food quarters are mannered or finished design spaces. These design elements predominantly arise from the existing built form and its careful redevelopment, rather than being built in as new. To some extent, each food quarter demonstrates a rough and ready quality that appears to reinforce its unique character and identity. This raw quality is most pronounced at Borough, although it has received the largest amount of overt design attention and has benefited from an ambitious building programme. Where, as at Borough, there has been substantial physical renewal, it has occurred in a highly contextual manner, through infilling and renewing rather than demolishing and transforming the basic urban structure. At Exmouth, meanwhile, the physical design improvements carried out in the 1980s and 1990s are much more modest in scope, and do not include any built structures apart from streetscape elements such as paving and bollards. At Broadway there has been even less overt design intervention. The overall conclusion from the street assessment aspect of the urban design analysis is that the existing traditional design elements, already found at each site prior to regeneration as food spaces, have formed a very important and positive streetscape context for that redevelopment to occur. Newer design interventions have generally served to reinforce existing quality through a contextual design approach.

### **Urban regeneration centred on food space: the intertwined roles of economic development and design**

The physical design findings and conclusions set the scene for discussing conclusions about the social, environmental and economic aspects of the research. The story of the emerging food quarters, as one of urban decline and regeneration, emerged from the fieldwork as a central, shared narrative, among those interviewed and from other material collected. As is clear from the physical design exploration, in each food quarter a long-term process of area decline left the food market as remnant space within a deteriorating broader physical environment. When regeneration occurred, the two examples that have been most successful as fresh produce markets have been largely the result of the actions of community-based organisations. At Borough Market this is in the form of a very long established charitable trust, and

at Broadway Market, a more recently emerging local traders and residents association. At Exmouth, conversely, the food market's proponents operate more as 'outsiders' in a local community sense, and are predominantly made up of gastronomic stakeholders who run restaurants and food businesses in the street. In all three cases, the proponents demonstrate a strongly altruistic sense of purpose about reviving the food market. They also all speak of their desire to have a positive impact on local sociability and community. My conclusion from the research is that altruism and goodwill is vital but not sufficient alone to ensure food market success. Having good links into the local community or being seen as part of it, appears to have been one determinant for food market success, if not for the broader revival of food-centred space.

A key conclusion from the case study material is that architecture and design have played a very important part in food-based urban renewal as an economic activity, notwithstanding that there is substantial variation between the food quarters in terms of design being part of a conscious strategy for this renewal. Architecture and design have been most clearly articulated as a tool for renewal at Borough, where design is being used as a conscious regeneration instrument, employing professional architects and designers to master plan the proposed built form changes. As was described in Chapter 5, a substantial design programme has been a central aspect of the regeneration effort over the medium term. This has occurred at a number of scales. Redundant warehouses were sold to help fund the regeneration programme; new infill buildings, frontages and covered spaces were designed and built; and existing structures have been renovated. For the design of market stalls, a new spatial model for retailing was developed, based on the design of Borough's unusual traditional food stand system. Design has thus been central to an economic revitalisation strategy based on the food market.

At the other two quarters, meanwhile, design has also played an important part, but in a somewhat different way. In both cases, the shape and quality of the street space has been important to attracting visitors. However, at Broadway, it is not clear that this was in the forefront of the food market proponents' thinking at the outset about making the market a financial and social success. Rather, at Broadway, the basic street structure provides an attractive, traditional urban backdrop, which, as noted early in this chapter and in Chapter 4, possesses the necessary design qualities to make a comfortable outdoor room. In other words, at Broadway Market, even without a conscious strategy of food-centred design, the existing spatial structure is suitable to support market revitalisation. At Exmouth Market, again, the existing spatial structure of the market street suits the redevelopment of individual food shops and a food market. After all, this is what it was originally designed to house. There appears to have been somewhat more consciousness at Exmouth than at Broadway that the shape and design of the street plays an important part in making it the centrepiece of an attractive food space, but one that needs to be looked after. At the time of its first physical upgrade, Exmouth was perceived as a place that had "*once been the heart of village life*" but was now described by local people as a "*squalid and filthy slum*". The research material suggests that there was some understanding of the need for both physical and economic renewal in the planning of the physical renovation of the street in the 1980s and 1990s. More recently, accounts of developing the revitalised market at Exmouth in 2007 highlight the explicit focus on the street itself as public social

space, rather than remaining associated only with restaurants “*behind closed doors*”, in order to “*give something back to the street*”.

#### *Food-based revitalisation strategies*

The research shows that stakeholders at all three food quarters have shared a strategic vision in which food is central to the revitalisation strategy. Although there are certainly differences evident within the strategic approach between the three food-centred spaces, such as varying levels of consciousness about the role of design, the overarching similarities are striking. As was explained in Chapter 5, Borough Market’s trustees believe that the wholesalers who located at the food market in its early days of renewal have been critically important in getting the regeneration process underway. Food businesses like Neal’s Yard Dairy, Brindisa and Monmouth Coffee originally intended just to run wholesaling from their premises, but Neal’s Yard, for example, were asked to sell cheese to people who turned up there “*from day one*”. In other cases, the trustees required wholesalers to also establish a retail presence. Such businesses have been very important to the initiation and expansion of the food market, as their individual growth trajectory first prefigured, then later mirrored, the growth of Borough Market overall. The strategy is described as running the retail trade “*off the back of the wholesale*”. A small retail space might thus have a substantial wholesale operation behind it that cross-subsidises its retail component, even if this is not apparent to retail buyers. A related strategy of discounting rents, to attract fledgling businesses, was also important to bringing excellent, individual food retailers and wholesalers to Borough in its early days. The stress from the outset has been on high food quality and the sociability of the shopping experience. In its more mature phase Borough has seen a number of food businesses add retailing to their wholesaling base and finally set up restaurants as well.

At a more modest scale, as was described in Chapter 6, there has been a similar emphasis at Broadway Market. The food market regeneration strategy was conceived of as a “*whole shopping experience*”, counter-pointed against the trading-down-on-price approach of the local authority. The market’s manager places great stress on the importance of both food quality and making Broadway Market into a highly sociable place, that local people of all backgrounds would be glad to shop at. Like Borough, the focus from the outset has been on supporting small-scale individual businesses and traders, and creating synergies between market stalls and food shops, cafes, pubs and restaurants. It is clear from Chapter 6, that some traditional food shops and cafes were forced out by what appear to be the aggressive actions of developers and a supine local council. Despite this, the overall strategy of charging low rents for stalls and local shops has been one of the ways renewal has been supported. Even more important has been clever market management apparent at both Borough and Broadway.

At Exmouth Market, the food strategy has been far more restaurant-focused from its inception than at either Borough or Broadway. In the mid 1990s this was partly because local government did not believe that it would be realistic to successfully revitalise the food market, after failed attempts to do so from the late 1980s. Local stakeholders and academic analysts (Whitelegg, 2007) argue that changes to planning

regulations helped loosen up land uses and permitted a new breed of restaurateurs and bar owners to set up there in the latter 1990s. This so-called “*restaurant solution*” was a conscious strategy by local government and its regeneration partners at the time, making use of both the street’s walkable catchment and its perceived “*destination dining*” capacity. By the early 2000s, Exmouth Market was being described as a street of gastronomic renown, whose uniqueness was based on high quality, individual food businesses. As at Borough and Broadway, low rents were initially one of the key strategies for attracting restaurateurs and bar operators to set up at Exmouth Market in the mid to late 1990s. Just as low rents helped wholesalers to set up and remain viable, despite thin early trading times at Borough, they provided a basis for the burgeoning restaurant scene at Exmouth. More recently, rent increases at Exmouth may have impacted on fledgling food businesses’ viability. It is evident that some early cafes, like Crossbar, did go out of business. As the street becomes more established as a food destination, there is a greater likelihood the food chains will move in and emphasise these economic disparities. Already Starbucks, Cafe Nero and Strada have a presence in the street. Given that chain food businesses are usually better capitalised than small food businesses tend to be, they are more able to wait to become viable while sitting out the competition, by employing saturation tactics as Starbucks is known to do.

#### *The role of external regeneration funds*

A related conclusion is that external regeneration programme funding has played an important but somewhat mixed role in supporting food-centred space renewal in two of the food quarters and almost no role in the third. The role of external funding can be judged as important at key points in the regeneration of Borough Market. National sources of funding, most notably Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) funds, were employed by the food market’s trustees to part finance their ambitious redevelopment plans. At the same time, this was by no means a simple or straightforward process. Changing funding criteria and funding levels, uncertainty about availability, and the failure of strategic economic partners (especially the local authority) meant that the trustees’ ability to obtain such funds at critical points was limited. It says much for the trustees’ caniness that they were able to deal successfully with these complexities, and match external funding with money derived from strategic property sales of surplus building stock, to find their way through a complex external funding thicket. In the event, they proved adept at leveraging in the funds they needed from public, and more importantly their own sources in the 1990s and early 2000s, to redevelop the food market’s decrepit physical structures and underpin its economic revitalisation.

At Exmouth Market external funds have also been involved in the redevelopment process, through regeneration money allocated to the street and surrounding area for physical upgrading in the 1980s and 1990s. The main sources were again national, through City Fringe Partnership and Single Regeneration Budget funding, but managed through local government led partnerships. Some of these external funds were used to finance physical refurbishment of streetscape elements at Exmouth. More recently, the focus of attention in food related regeneration at local authority level appears to have shifted, with substantial regeneration funds through the EC1 programme going to Whitecross Street Market to the south, rather than to Exmouth Market. In any case, it should be remembered that the externally funded physical



interventions were perceived in the 1990s as insufficient alone to turn the street around from its decayed and very economically depressed state. It is notable that it is only more latterly, since the emphasis has moved to private sector efforts in relation to food business development, and other structural changes have occurred in both food and the wider political economy of London, that the regeneration of the street as centrepiece of a food quarter has really accelerated.

A key conclusion is that although both Borough and Exmouth made use of external funding, it appears to have played a subsidiary role in all three sites, compared with the economic action generated by local stakeholders themselves. In Borough, external regeneration funding was useful, but the trustees generated more significant, reliable and timely income through property sales. At Exmouth, externally funded streetscape improvements were felt to have had little effect on deep-seated decline. And at Broadway, external funding appears to have played almost no role in the regeneration process. One of the most remarkable aspects at all three sites, but especially at Broadway, in its rise as a food quarter, is that the process has been almost entirely generated and financed by the local leaders, community and traders. At all three emerging food quarters, the research findings suggest that the local authority has not assisted financially, or has done so in a partial, grudging or minimal way. At both Broadway and Exmouth, the relevant local authority is thought to have placed economic, management and regulatory barriers in the way of the regenerating food market space.

Overall, then, it seems that external funds can have a very useful role, especially where substantial refurbishment and infilling of built structures is needed. However, Broadway, in particular, demonstrates that - among other factors - given a traditional market street as a suitable backdrop, external funds are not absolutely necessary for viability. In this case, the street was already designed in such a way that when redevelopment as a food market occurred it provided a highly suitable frame for the food quarter, without financial intervention. It seems that external funds alone cannot be considered as an absolute requirement for food-led regeneration, as one highly successful example has managed to develop without such support, and two others with only limited funding assistance. Rather, it appears that while funding helps, an appropriate physical design frame allied with inspired leadership, is critical to success.

#### *Partnership working, leadership and vision*

A strong theme running through the regeneration narrative at each emerging food quarter is the role of partnership working between stakeholders involved in the quarter's development. Partnership based action has been critical to the revival of each food quarter. However, within that overall judgement, considerable differences in approach and activities undertaken are evident, and have profoundly influenced the nature of food-centred space that has resulted. At Borough there has been a very interesting mix of partners, encompassing local trustees with significant regeneration skills; gastronomic leaders; and architects and designers with a strong food consciousness. This alliance has worked together closely, within a regeneration plan based on strategic, governance and master planning elements. Equally, at Broadway, regeneration action has been pursued through a resourceful partnership of local traders and residents,

formalised through an association. The rise of the food market at Broadway, to develop the Broadway Market quarter, represents successful community-based action in partnership that in part appears to transcend gentrification processes and class differences. The food market is the catalyst and material site for bringing people together socially, economically and environmentally. At both Borough and Broadway, partnership working has formed the basis of the food market's governance relationship to its financial strategy. Community-based structures of governance, through trustees at Borough, and local traders and residents at Broadway, have largely worked to regenerate the food markets and the wider physical space in which they operate.

By contrast, gastronomic partnership has not been as successful in launching and sustaining a "*weekly shop*" food market at Exmouth, although partnership working was important at various stages there too, to develop the area as a food quarter. In the late 1980s, local government regeneration officers were instrumental in creating a formal regeneration strategy based on bars and restaurants, in conjunction with the street's main landlord Debenham's, among others. However, it was not so much this formal structure but informal links and networks, created by key players at this time that were most important in attracting suitable restaurateurs and bar operators to the street. The landlords pursued those they hoped would start food businesses there. Partnership working has thus been critical again, but in a slightly different form.

A related and strongly marked conclusion that runs through the research from each emerging food quarter is the failure of local government to provide consistent leadership and vision for area-based renewal. This is a weakness shared across all three food quarters. Stakeholders in each case consider that they have experienced either poor or no support from the relevant local authority, leaving a yawning management gap. This situation is perhaps unsurprising. The three study areas were beginning their regeneration efforts in the 1980s when local government had fewer than ever governance tools to assist them. In London, as elsewhere, there was a deliberate political process underway to undercut any strategic planning for London as an entity. Thus, despite the existence of some national regeneration funds, the capacity to recognise and build on the food potential of the sites was very limited. By the 1990s, this specifically reflected a retreat from traditional service provision to food markets in a climate of new managerialism in the public sector (Clarke and Newman, 1997). Insofar as local government focused on these spaces, they generally did so from within a regeneration context, rather than as places requiring new kinds of food market management based on a positive vision about what such markets could be. The thesis conclusion is that local government, both at political and managerial level, has until very recently largely seen these places as sites in which they would need to manage decline, if they were to manage them at all. They still appear unprepared for the rapidity of the social transformations underway in these spaces and (for the most part) unwilling or unable to adequately provide governance for them. All in all, despite nuances in their performance that should not be overlooked - the positive role of Islington's regeneration officers in the 1990s in relation to Exmouth Market is one example - local government does not emerge with a great deal of credit from the narratives provided.

At Borough, as noted in Chapter 5, the story is one of the local authority's failure to work as a reliable financial, strategic planning or design partner with the food market. It will be remembered that the Head of Trustees described how the local authority dropped Borough Market from their regeneration funding plans at critical junctures, nearly wrecking their market redevelopment efforts. The overall judgement is that the local council had not been an effective partner in the regeneration effort and there is a sense that the trustees have had to work round, rather than with, the London Borough of Southwark to regenerate Borough Market. Taking up the slack, it was very fortunate that the Head of Trustees had the skills, knowledge and leadership qualities to work through complex regeneration issues and barriers and come up with an innovative food-led vision for the future.

At Broadway, meanwhile, local government has been identified as not simply a neutral bystander, but actively creating impediments to the local group keen on reviving the food market. The London Borough of Hackney is judged to have shown a lack of management skills and effective interest in Broadway as a developing food-centred space. A key example offered is the way the local authority has been selling off local buildings and shops on the market street against the wishes of sitting tenants who were excluded from the opportunity of buying their premises. Interviewees and online accounts speak of possible corruption in the process. In this case, the focus of regeneration was too narrowly conceived by the local authority, which did not appear able to deal with the social and economic aspects of bottom-up, community-based management founded on partnership working. In the event, the community-led network established through the BMTRA has been critical to the food market's renaissance, as has the leadership of the volunteer market manager, who has played a central role in the food quarter's regeneration process.

The situation at Exmouth is slightly different again. A number of stakeholders have made negative comments about Exmouth Market's partnership working capacity, in comparison with Broadway Market where regeneration management has been handled notably well (although not by local government). At Exmouth, partnership did start with the local authority, the London Borough of Islington, and it appears that individual regeneration officers in the 1990s had a strong vision for the street as a food space. However, the formal regeneration partnership at that time is judged by interviewees to have been less effective than later informal networks of gastronomic stakeholders. Informal connections have been most successful in attracting food businesses to the street. The regeneration partnership through the local council now focuses on other places in the borough, and its more recent governance interventions at Exmouth are thought to be inconsistent and inept. The local authority is reported to have shown a poor grasp of the governance, planning and management tasks needed, to have failed to listen to local views, and to lack a sufficiently nuanced analysis of food market development and management practice over the medium term.

### **Understanding the food quarters as new kinds of food space**

A key conclusion is that each market has been consciously created to be the centrepiece of a new kind of food space. Each of the three sets of market proponents planned to develop a food market that was not

simply a traditional street or hall-based market, or strictly a farmer's market. Instead, each envisioned a new and distinct form that stressed good quality fresh produce, with a clear provenance, that would be available to the whole local community within a local area, and in Borough's case also with a much wider catchment in mind. Being clear about the nature of the food market, as one based on high quality and good levels of local accessibility, has mattered to market proponents in each case because they have been trying to create something they perceive as new and better than the existing local food supply and retailing arrangements. More detached observation suggests that, in each fieldwork site, the revived market consciously built on, but is also unlike, previous food market forms. In each case, the aspiration was loosely to create a farmers' style market, without having the restrictions imposed by seeking official farmer's market designation. At Borough, for instance, the food market was intentionally developed not as a farmers' market, in relation to rules imposed on traders, but like a farmer's market in ethos and approach. There has also been a direct link made between the market's physical refurbishment, and its financing strategy based on a farmers' style market. At Broadway, the market is expressly described as "*not a farmers' market*", but equally clearly shares a number of its values, including commitment to quality and clear product sourcing. Likewise at Exmouth, the market was originally intended to be broader than a farmers' market: a place where everybody in the community could do their weekly food shop.

A related conclusion is that once set in train, market development has taken on a life of its own. The economic forces of revitalisation began to ripple out in ways that could not be entirely forecast, directed or controlled. Thus, in each case, the food market has changed over time, but in somewhat different ways. Both Borough and Broadway have remained fairly close in nature to the original aspirations set out for them; although it seems that their proponents have been surprised at just how successfully and quickly these food spaces have evolved and grown. At Exmouth, by contrast, as was described in Chapter 7, the alteration in the nature of the food market was not through any conscious strategy. Instead, the food market declined as a "*whole market*" because the range of stalls expected to set up did not materialise. Some of the stalls that did set up quickly stopped trading, as they were not generating sufficient business to stay viable. In counter-pointing Borough and Broadway's success with Exmouth's relative failure, in terms of the original food market vision, the reasons appear to reflect marked differences in the formation of social capital in Bourdieu's terms. At Borough and Broadway, the impetus for the food market arose from players within, or with close links to, the local community.

By contrast, the most recent attempt to revitalise Exmouth Market as a fresh food market has come from a consortia of individuals with substantial gastronomic credentials, for whom it was a logical outgrowth of their restaurant and retailing trade in the street. It seems probable from the material collected that these stakeholders, although leaders in terms of London's gastronomy, have not had sufficient local social capital to make their vision a shared one with local people. Other factors may also have come into play. Among these is the suspicion voiced locally that the market's proponents undertook insufficient research into the likely local visitor catchment to see whether a food market would be feasible. Competition from nearby supermarkets and food markets at Angel and Whitecross Street may also have played a part. A local interviewee says that despite the street being "*wonderfully mixed*" the balance wasn't yet quite right

between kinds of food shops and there were not yet enough hip shops to attract people as a destination in the way they visit Borough or Broadway.

#### *Infrastructure constraints and opportunities*

At both Borough and Broadway there have been both infrastructure constraints and opportunities that have affected the development of the food quarter. The constraints are most clearly apparent at Borough, where the food market's redesign had to take into account both the existing tangle of railway lines and the proposed development of a new rail line through the market space. The trustees commented on how unsympathetic and difficult the railway company had been to deal with during their redevelopment phase. Paradoxically, the overlay of rail lines from the 19<sup>th</sup> century has also been seen to positively shape the spaces at Borough in a design sense, adding to their unique character, which in turn is widely cited as a key element in the spaces' appeal to visitors and a support to economic success. Meanwhile, at Broadway, wider connectivity improvements to the local area, through the development of new rail infrastructure at sub-regional level, are likely to give a strong boost to the area's economy and attractiveness to incomers. The Exmouth Market quarter alone appears to have no infrastructure related constraints affecting its development as a food-centred space, but rather benefits economically from its superb level of connectivity.

#### *Catchment issues: the food quarter as local anchor and attractor*

An area for exploration that goes beyond the connectivity analysis is the extent and nature of the visitor catchment drawn to each food-centred space. The work done on catchment issues has explored whether the new phenomenon of food-centred spatial design is acting as a basis for successful redevelopment of urban space that will attract people as visitors. Borough is notable in drawing an extremely wide range of people: locally, from London, from other parts of the UK and from overseas. Its visitor catchment is now thought to be global. It will be remembered from Chapter 5, that Borough is thought by some to be at risk of becoming a victim of its own success; to the extent that those wishing to actually buy food there have difficulty making their way through the crowds who visit as tourists. This is particularly apparent on Saturdays, suggesting Borough has a strong leisure time component for visitors. At Broadway, meanwhile, as noted in Chapter 6, the catchment is mostly local, although attracting internal tourists from other parts of Hackney and London. Here, again, the visitor catchment shifts over time, with most visiting during market opening hours on Saturdays. The same issue of "*core shoppers*" versus tourists is found, as at Borough, but the effects are less pronounced, because the balance is more weighted towards weekly shoppers than tourist visitors.

At Exmouth, the catchment issues have played out differently given the failure of the fresh produce market. Even in terms of those drawn there by the operation of the hot food stall market, there is a split in the visitor catchment between Fridays and Saturdays, although local stakeholders believe the food market (in its 'slow' fast food form) has only made a marginal difference to the liveliness of the street overall.

The role of high quality restaurants has been equally important overall as a social attractor. The most long-term anchors in the street include the restaurants Moro and Medcalf, based on high quality, unique food. Restaurants and bars, rather than a produce market, have been instrumental in widening out the spatial range and the scale of the visitor catchment. Visitors are not only drawn from local business people, middle class residents and those visiting other local cultural attractions such as Sadler's Wells, but include diners coming from other parts of London, for whom these places are a destination in themselves. The local area is seen as gentrifying, through the effects of food-led regeneration. There is some concern that as the nature of the area's demography shifts (due to more residential development such as that caused by the redevelopment of Mount Pleasant) this may adversely affect the visitor catchment for the street. At the same time, Exmouth Market as the centrepiece of a food quarter, is acting as a social connector for a local catchment of people involved in business, retail, cultural and residential land uses.

Whether market or restaurant led, food-led regeneration has been critical to greatly increasing visitor catchments to each of the three food quarters. The catchment is mixed in terms of size, spatial reach and composition, encompassing both local people and incoming visitors and tourists, although the balance between these shifts according to site specific and temporal conditions. While it is clear that in each food uses work as local anchors and attractors, leading to increasing commodification of space based on design improvements, none of these spaces can be considered "*just for tourists*". Each demonstrates a broad range of visitors buying and eating food as an integral part of their weekday or weekend lifestyle. This seems to undercut the argument that such spaces are no more than packaged nostalgia zones that lack authenticity, and are only developed as tourism simulacra.

### **Problematising gentrification: competing narratives and paradoxical conclusions**

The research demonstrates that gentrification is a significant issue in all three emerging food quarters, although the way it is playing out in each varies considerably. At all three emerging food quarters, the arguments about gentrification have revolved around whether the food market created is only likely to attract middle class visitors, and therefore, albeit unintentionally, has promoted local social exclusion. At Borough, for example, most stakeholders, including trustees, traders and visitors, reject that analysis, arguing instead that the revived Borough Market draws a very broad range of visitors at all income levels and from a wide diversity of cultures and ethnicities. It will be remembered that one interviewee, a butcher, speaks of people spending all their money to buy a good quality piece of meat. Another, the market's chief architect, suggests that the assumption only people on higher incomes care about good quality food was mistaken in his experience of working with this and other food markets. My judgement is that although gentrification is clearly occurring in the vicinity of Borough Market, this does not seem to have been a central theme in the narratives and other research material from Borough, rather a subtext within an overall view of the food market as a wild success. The Borough Market quarter is indeed in the midst of a building boom, and property developers describe the food market as a key local attraction, of which well-off incomers will wish to take advantage. At the same time, the charitable objects of the Borough Market Trust, and the personal commitment of the Trustees, ensure that the food market is run to



benefit the local community through rate relief, and now provides more diverse benefits such as training, jobs and good quality food. All these activities and outcomes act as some counterbalance to the undoubted gentrification underway.

Gentrification needs to be problematised as a more central issue in relation to Broadway Market, and is clearly a highly contested theme in relation to the market's revival, for which there are competing narratives. For some, the renewed food market is thought to have contributed to significant gentrification that benefits richer incomers over a poorer indigenous population, with the area in the first stage of a classic gentrification trajectory. Working class local people are thus excluded from the food market's social and environmental benefits, and may be squeezed out of the area altogether by rising house prices. On the back of the market's success, a building boom is underway in the Broadway area, and it is becoming a less cheap place to live. Within this analysis, not only is food seen as the currency of urban change, but the food market is defined as the lynchpin of the gentrification process, even though this may be largely unintended and even rejected by its proponents. Thus, some view changes in the nature of Broadway Market as food-led gentrification in which the food market proponents have unwittingly unleashed a gentrification process through regenerating the market and giving the local area a new social focus. This has led to developers coming in to scoop up surplus value, with the story of the destruction of Tony's café seen as archetypal example of this process. This narrative has considerable substance, in that the cycle of regeneration and gentrification, as described in Chapter 6, appears a reasonably accurate depiction of the process in structural terms.

However, crude 'us and them' arguments, that situate local working class as victims and incoming "yuppies" as victors, do not deal sufficiently with the subtleties of the process as experienced by both indigenous and incoming individuals. Such arguments about gentrification at Broadway Market may underplay the degree to which local people of all backgrounds use the food market, and incomers support local campaigns to protect traditional residents and food traders. I do not think it is a coincidence that the food market is the site for significant political, social and cultural action aimed at supporting diversity and the socially excluded. It should be acknowledged that while gentrification effects are in evidence, the food market is typified by a mix of cultures and classes taking up opportunities for more convivial and sustainable ways of interacting around food, and that this has happened in part as a result of deliberate synergy effects aimed at by the market's managers.

Gentrification has also been problematised at Exmouth Market, where there are diverse communities of class and interest, and some information collected about class-based conflict in the course of the regeneration process. As was shown in Chapter 7, for some the story is of "*us and them*" between local working class residents of housing estates, and those described as "yuppie" incomers, taking local jobs and creating a demand for expensive housing. Similarly to the two other food quarters, there is a building boom underway for mixed-use, predominantly high-cost, residential development, and again Exmouth Market's food status is being incorporated into marketing and publicity material. The street and the market as food spaces are not viewed as socially inclusive enough to appeal to the long-term population at

Exmouth. One point made is that the proposed market was “*too farmers’ market*” or artisanal in nature to suit that long-term working class community. It was not “*normal*”. It follows that, for some local people, the new restaurants that arrived in the 1990s, and more latterly the food market, have been a focus for contestation because the working class residents have felt excluded and marginalised. This may, in turn, connect to why they did not support the new fresh produce market. For others, notably restaurateurs and food business people, the interplay between the existing working class population and incoming middle class residents and businesses has created “*a wonderful mix and sense of community*” encompassing old and new. Thus, the proponents of the re-launched food market expected it to be an economic and social attractor, but despite their large amount of cultural capital in broader London wide terms, they perhaps misjudged the local mood. In effect, Exmouth’s gastronomic stakeholders have been able to attract visitors from outside the area to dine, but not local people to use a fresh produce market, as they do not have sufficient local social capital to draw on.

Overall, then, it seems that gentrification is an important aspect of the development of food-centred space of the kind studied in this thesis. Gentrification is clearly occurring at each emerging food quarter. This upward social and economic trajectory is being enjoyed by more affluent incoming residents and exploited by property developers. Some negative effects on existing populations are being reported. Food is indeed one of the ways in which this gentrification is expressed. The food quarters provide material that is particularly interesting in demonstrating the way gentrification interconnects with the development of an individual habitus in which food is a ‘field’ like housing, employment and education. Food is crucial to the construction of ‘mini habituses’ for individuals within Butler’s metropolitan habitus. At the same time, like Butler, I suggest that gentrification in the context of the food quarters is a more subtle and complicated process than displacement explanations alone can adequately describe. Not all working class people in all circumstances are excluded from the benefits of developing food-centred space. Not all middle class residents and visitors are unaware of, or insensitive to, the displacement and other effects of their arrival. At Broadway and Borough, in particular, the effects of gentrification have been varied, complex and sometimes paradoxical. One conclusion from the research material is that the development of food quarters is benefiting local communities as well as challenging, excluding and displacing them.

### **Situating food quarters as expressions of urban sustainability**

#### *Slow food and more discerning shoppers*

A central aspect of the research concerned the role of food quarters in supporting the development of a more sustainable urban form and system in relation to food in cities. It will be recalled from Chapter 2 that food markets are at the distribution and consumption loci of the food system, and therefore have the potential to strongly influence important aspects of urban food sustainability, as discussed in Chapter 1. A proportion of the research material reflects how some aspects of these emerging food quarters work in sustainability terms, and suggests the resulting sustainability effects are broadly positive. While no one interviewed mentioned Slow Food and Slow Cities, as noted in Chapter 1, these linked movements have

direct connections in environmental terms to the thinking behind the development of these food-centred spaces. Thus, although individuals buying and selling at the food quarters are not necessarily part of any organised sustainability pressure group, the capacity to support more environmentally-conscious, discerning shopping choices is identified as a pull factor to the markets, especially at Borough and Broadway. This is occurring in the context of food scares, which also act as a push factor away from supermarkets and industrialised food products. Implicitly reflecting the discussion in Chapter 2 about the role of supermarkets in obesogenic environment creation, interviewees' and online commentators about the markets spoke of their opposition to industrialised farming, supermarket dominance, and long, opaque food chains.

The development of such food markets can reasonably be situated within a wider movement towards urban food sustainability that includes farmers' markets and markets with farmers' market-like attributes. Shopping at such markets is perceived as a way to avoid both supermarket shopping, and being "*brainwashed by supermarkets*". Interviewees are trying out new combinations of shopping methods and types of shopping, including online shopping and vegetable box schemes. For many these are quite deliberate choices in order to make their food consumption more sustainable. Market traders also see visitors as being more informed buyers, and some traders stress the sustainability aspects of the buyers' interest in food quality. This is repeatedly described as "*people wanting to eat real food and know where it has come from*". Although the situation is somewhat different at Exmouth, given that the food market did not succeed as expected, the street does have a reputation based on high quality, individual food shops and restaurants, and discernment in relation to environmental issues is perceived among shoppers visiting it. Thus, material from Exmouth about these concerns, while more muted, tends to go in the same direction on urban sustainability issues as that for Borough and Broadway.

#### *Achieving a symbiotic relationship with food producers: environmental standards, quality and food skills*

A linked conclusion is that shortening food supply chains, to make them more direct and transparent, has had positive economic implications for regeneration, not just locally in the emerging food quarters, but in food source locations supplying the markets. At both Borough and Broadway, a symbiotic relationship with producers has developed through the resurgent food market. A "*foodie*" community of interest at the consumption end of the food chain largely transcends class differences, although it might equally be thought of as an aspect of a particular individual habitus, through showing knowledge and discernment. At the other end of the food chain meanwhile, demand for high quality, more sustainably produced products encourages artisanal producers, and allows them to develop food supply in economically and environmentally sustainable ways. For example, at Borough, connections with farmers in Cumbria have had a positive effect on their viability as small scale, rural producers. At Broadway, the sale of artisanal produce from Italy benefits both producer and consumer, in relation to quality and environmental standards. At Exmouth, food shops like Brindisa support artisanal food producers in Spain. At the same time, findings about the related issue of food miles raise sustainability questions that the research has not resolved. One example is about increasing food miles, which tend to be seen as presenting complex issues

by interviewees, rather than being simply a bad thing. At both Borough and Broadway, the markets are not strict about the food catchment for produce, as it is argued by traders that the emphasis is on quality, rather than “*artificially*” limiting the geographical area for suppliers. The food miles implications of this approach deserve further attention.

Connected to developing relationships between producers and consumers is the demand shown by both for higher environmental standards in food produced and sold at the markets. At Borough, these higher standards key into the sustainability concerns of both buyers and sellers described above. There also seems to be a shared agreement at Borough that higher prices for some produce reflect higher quality and higher environmental standards, and this helps to produce a sustainable production base and food chain. At Broadway, similarly, the food sold is of high quality, and reflects an increasing environment consciousness, although not necessarily based on being organic. As at Borough, claims of higher prices are both contested and justified in terms of high quality and better environmental standards. This is not just about food being organic, but about knowing its origin and the methods by which it has been produced. In both cases, there is clearly increasing interest in food provenance, its geographical origin, artisanal production and ethical considerations in production. Concern about provenance is most evident at Borough but is also seen at Broadway, with customers very interested in their food’s origins.

Another related conclusion is that while observed browsing and buying behaviour often demonstrates a passionate concern for food quality, and this is sometimes matched by sophisticated food knowledge and skills, this is by no means always the case. The research also shows a distinct lack of food skills among a high proportion of buyers, in relation to purchasing, preparing and cooking food. Many observed at the markets clearly do not know what to buy, when to buy in season, or how to prepare the food they have bought. Loss of food skills was explored particularly in Chapter 5, and it will be remembered that traders perceive this as being about a loss of connection to food production allied to fast-paced urban lifestyles. Buying at the food markets provides a practical way to educate consumers who are already sympathetic to a sustainable food agenda but are not very clear about how to express that in a practical way through food.

### **Proposing food quarters as sites for increased conviviality**

#### *Unique spaces promote particular socio-spatial practices*

A central conclusion is that the studied sites are ‘ordinary’ places (Maitland, 2008; Knox, 2005) that provide rich sites for increased conviviality in everyday life. These emerging food quarters offer ample opportunities for expressing richness in human interaction, based in various ways on food. They appear to fit with Valentine’s (1998) view that they represent public space exempt from or reshaping notions of what constitutes civilised behaviour. While clearly signifying a lack of restraint in Elias’ terms, eating in the street at the same time offers opportunities for conviviality which are in contrast to the social impoverishment found in less developed food spaces or those that work predominantly as food deserts. The three food quarters provide considerable examples of users constructing new socio-spatial patterns

through their everyday practices. There seem to be examples of Bell's (2007) "hybrid hospitality" occurring in the food quarters' third spaces, where exchange is more authentic than those comprising mere commercial transactions. These examples of hybrid hospitality, as well as more unmediated encounters in a Lefebvrian sense, appear to be influenced by the design of the spaces themselves, and the opportunities this presents for food-based social life. Material collected suggests that the food quarters are unique spaces, for those who live and work there, and those who visit them. All three food-centred spaces are described as having a "*hidden gem*" quality; so part of the atmosphere derives from the sense that these are spaces that visitors have the opportunity to discover and explore for themselves. These unique spaces promote a large number of socio-spatial practices around food: strolling, browsing, buying, conversing, eating, and drinking, among others. The unique spatial quality of the food quarters promotes a particular atmosphere, which in turn is felt to contribute to social life, and this then links to high food quality. Together, these aspects support the development of a "convivial ecology" (Bell & Binnie, 2005) through which each food quarter demonstrates a strong sense of place.

Thus, at Borough, traditional design structure connects to a strong sense of place, and there is a complex interplay between character, design and food quality. At Broadway Market, too, the street is a rich space for spontaneous social encounters, unmediated in Lefebvre's terms, as well as for planned social meetings and even a day's entertainment. The place, as a physical entity, contributes to the development of a community of interest centred on the food market. Broadway Market is physically set up to allow for social encounters and this is expressed through design at both larger and smaller scales. At the broader level, the shape of the street funnels people along it. At a finer grain, subtle urban design changes along the street's length support a series of social spaces and socio-spatial practices. Like Borough and Broadway, Exmouth's high degree of enclosure as a street allows it to be seen as something of a secret space. Its fine grain reinforces the sense that it is both unique and well adapted for socio-spatial practices associated with food. As at the other two sites, at Exmouth the space connects urban design and socio-spatial practices and processes. It will be remembered that the street was originally designed to house a street food market, and still provides a focus on the public realm that is a human scaled and enclosed. Like Broadway, the space is divided in design terms into a number of smaller zones, including the so-called Farringdon triangle. There is also a less formal, food-defined triangle between Moro and Medcalf restaurants and the Ambassador bar. The shifting temporal aspects of the relationship between design and social use are palpable at each food quarter. Public realm-focused food journeys encompass daytime food browsing and buying, evening drinking and socialising, and night-time dining out. Overall, in all three sites, the physical backdrop provides an apt setting for a rich sociability based on food, and thus an increased degree of conviviality over that found in surrounding areas.

#### *Conviviality for all? Habitus construction*

It appears from the research material that a disparate selection of people in terms of class, occupation, ethnicity, gender and age are drawn together in a community of interest at each food quarter by their awareness about good food. At the same time, a related conclusion is that not everyone is using the food

spaces in the same way. Each space can be understood as a food quarter for some, but more of a food desert for others. The food quarters do not present a sharp choice to their users between complete exclusion and complete incorporation. The research demonstrates rather that individuals are differently situated in relation to each quarter even in regard to their own socio-spatial practices over time. At each space, they might be on the inside in some respects, such as buying market food, but on the outside in not being able to afford to dine at restaurants associated with the food market. This connects to the idea of the individual's habitus in all three places. Each market is without doubt a food space that attracts a "*certain crowd*". In this way each provides the context for a developed habitus for individuals, a mini habitus in Bridge's terms, in which visitors play out their own social distinctiveness through proximity to the good taste that the market represents in cultural terms. By visiting the food street or market they are expressing marks of distinction in Bourdieu's terms. Each food quarter thus represents a space for the construction of social capital. At Borough, visitors are typified as middle class and food aware, although this ascription is contested. Similarly, at Broadway and Exmouth, there is a sense that the place both attracts and creates "*a certain milieu*" and expresses a form of stylishness.

### **Food-centred practice and design as a new phenomenon in urban development?**

#### *Conclusions about food centred socio-spatial practices*

Taken together, the food centred socio-spatial practices evident at the three case study sites appear to support the making of a new food space phenomenon of urban food quarters. Through the construction of everyday life, played out in the form of everyday practices focused on food, place-users seem to be helping food quarters to emerge as a new kind of urban space. One key to this phenomenon is the very close relationship between socio-spatial practice and physical design, confirmed through both observational and interview material. Visitors are attracted by the interplay between physical space and food-based conviviality. These are not simply instrumental places, or places just for conspicuous consumption but places for unmediated encounters in which food plays a key role. Thus, while there is a great deal of food buying and browsing, there is also a very well developed passeggiata in evidence. Food is the medium for social interaction, through eating, drinking and talking in the street and at stalls and stands. The strength of the urban design context means that minimal specific physical infrastructure in the way of seats and other street furniture is needed to support this social richness. At the same time, there are tensions between instrumental and social use. In both Borough and Broadway, the head counts reflect the perceived gap between "*food tourists*" and "*real shoppers*". It is clear from observation, especially at Borough, that large numbers of visitors can make it difficult for shoppers to get to food stalls. In all the food quarters, the sheer range of socio-spatial practices around food reinforces the conclusion that these quarters are becoming the new centrepieces of social life for expanding visitor catchments. Their futures as urban space are hotly contested because they have come to matter to many people, and what food means is at the core of this contestation. It is notable, for example that at Broadway, community politics have become a central aspect of the quarter's development. Broadway is a key local site for engaging



people with local political issues and campaigns, but it is the street's own role as a food space that is most hotly contested.

Food centred spatial design - both existing and newly created - is a central factor in the development of this posited new phenomenon in urban development, that goes against the grain of dominant spatial and urban design trends. It will be remembered from the discussion in Chapter 2 that dominant spatial expressions in urban form in contemporary cities tend to produce coarse grained, mono-functional urban space at low densities with "*clone towns*" shopping areas. By contrast, the food quarters emerge as spaces that are resisting the imposition of these dominant patterns. Borough has an extremely fine urban grain, made even finer by the numerous small-scale food businesses allowed by the market's stand system. There has been a conscious strategy to keep clone town chains out of the market. Broadway Market, and the broader area of Hackney within which it sits, attract incoming residents because they are not clone town places, even though the very qualities that attract incomers are thought to have "*softened Hackney up*" for gentrification. Exmouth Market, too, has avoided developing as a clone town food street, as its food related land uses are (mostly) made up of numerous, individually owned, small businesses, housed in a fine grain of frontages to an enclosed outdoor room.

The avoidance of clone town qualities has made the emerging food quarters particularly attractive to property developers who wish to commodify these areas. At Borough Market, one significant local example is the previously mentioned "*London Bridge Quarter*" tower building while the market's own website also lists local attractions in the area of Borough Market. These examples suggest that place-branding action by developers, government, and the market's managers, is occurring to promote Borough as a food centred space. At Broadway, the commodification process is well underway, through the development of residential and other land uses, although the branding exercise has a far less formal cast in relation to the market's own publicity material. Similarly though, this process has been brought about in part by the resurgent market making the local area more attractive as a place to live and socialise. At Exmouth, meanwhile, the food quarter appears to be at the planning stages of a substantial commodification process. Although not yet showing on the ground, large mixed-use schemes such as the redevelopment of Mt Pleasant, are already well into the design stage. In all three emerging quarters, though, trends towards commodification can be set against the way the food market's governance works. The charitable trust in Borough's case, the traders and residents association at Broadway and the gastronomic stakeholders at Exmouth (with less success) are delivering economic and social benefits to the local community, variously through design and architecturally based improvements including rent relief, good food, educational services, skills training, and jobs.

#### *Key role of food related architecture and design*

A key conclusion from the research is that architecture and design contributes to a rich sociability at each site. At Borough, as noted above, the site's design is broadly agreed to be unique and characterful, contributing largely to the atmospheric quality of the market. A strong sense of place feeds into social life,

in which character and spectacle are important elements. Specific urban design qualities identified as valuable include enclosure; subtle transitional spaces; the richness of the edge of the space; the possibilities for serial vision and complex path sequences; the unusual design of the stall system as mini shops; and the heritage value of the buildings, among others. It is important that the space is not mannered but retains a raw and rough edged quality, even if this is now somewhat artful in places. A related design aspect that seems relevant is the high degree of temporal change in social life over the day, week, season and year at all three food quarters. Such change is connected to design, in the sense that human scaled, humane spaces allow a subtle shifting in social and economic practices at a variety of time scales. While food markets are traditionally morning places, changes in food-centred practices have broadened out their temporal use in nuanced ways.

At Broadway, the street is not architecturally outstanding, but is an example of solid, traditional urban fabric whose design qualities have a positive impact on social use of the space. Broadway Market is described as an urban village based on food. In this way it makes a direct link to the traditional urbanism of the city quarter, with a food market at the core. Comments about design qualities have tended to be inferred rather than direct at this site, but include that the shape of the space is important. The canal at one end, and the park at the other, make a funnel that reinforces the street as a promenading space, and contribute to a market feel in a confined area. At the same time, some possible negative externalities are also noted in design terms, such as wind, noise, safety and dirt. Equally, at Exmouth, the design that supports a walkable catchment promotes public space use, and its “*hidden gem*” quality makes those using the space feel they have made a special discovery. There are differences perceived in the level of use in food terms of the two ends of the street, and design characteristics including its plaza like quality are important to the primacy of the Farringdon triangle. Just as at Broadway, not all the design related comments are positive. Some feel there needs to be more creativity about the space in design terms, as well as a higher level of amenity and better management of anti-social behaviour from thieves and street drinkers. All these views, positive and less positive, go to reinforcing the sense that design and architecture are central to developing the sociability of the food-centred space.

#### *Design backdrop for the middle classes to conspicuously consume?*

An important question from the design and architecture of the emerging food quarters is whether they are designed predominantly for middle class people, as a stylish backdrop for their conspicuous consumption, to the detriment and exclusion of others locally which also reflects the habitus discussion above. For example, there has been some contestation over space apparent at Exmouth Market that has been read as working class resentment at middle class conspicuous consumption of space and place. Taken alongside other research material noted in the previous chapters, and touched on above, food-centred design at each quarter can be problematised as advancing gentrification. However, as all the food quarters are based on existing designed spaces, with only Borough including some new infill architecture in the design mix, this notion raises some difficulties. It would suggest that some existing urban forms are somehow more appealing to people than others on the basis of their class position.

Some interviewees raised the ‘gentrified design’ point simply in order to argue against the proposition. Moreover, a proportion of the research material (although not all of it) suggests that the appeal of each food quarter transcends class, despite some individuals playing out a certain habitus in each quarter. If each food quarter also represents the development of spatialised social capital, does that by its nature exclude those who are not part of the process of developing that capital? In each case there are varying views as to whether or not local working class people are victims of food-led change connected to the market or wider food space, such as growth in the local housing market and the arrival of richer incomers. At Broadway, it is suggested that this social mix is what gives the food market its unique cultural diversity and “arty” sense of place; and this might suggest the whole community, existing and new, benefits in social capital terms. As explained in Chapter 2, at least two of the food quarters - at Broadway Market and Exmouth Market - can be understood as developing cultural quarters. Yet the design aspects are marked by paradox. An example at both Broadway and Exmouth are the pie and eel shops whose architecture at once symbolises the traditional food businesses in the street, but appear to be rarely visited by most newer residents and visitors.

Each of the food quarters demonstrates clear links between spatial design and site catchment, which in turn reflects the particularity of their regeneration and gentrification process. At Borough Market, design is thought to influence the balance between local people and those from further afield, with larger numbers coming from a distance, to visit a space voted in 2007 as London’s best shopping experience.<sup>1</sup> It is evident that a very broad visitor catchment enjoys Borough as a set of designed social spaces. At Broadway, meanwhile, the catchment reflects the changing nature of the local community. Young couples and families are moving in, with many involved in hip, fashionable work areas such as media, new media, fashion and the arts, yet drawn by the street’s traditional spatial design appeal. These “*shock troops of regeneration*” are now, too, being priced out of the area, which may be losing some of its characteristic charm through unsympathetic, “boxy” residential design in the vicinity. A somewhat different process of food catchment growth is underway at Exmouth, as a mixed-use cultural quarter whose balance is likely to shift towards becoming a predominantly upmarket residential quarter in future.

#### *Potentials for food-led regeneration in London*

This subsection of Chapter 8 outlines the main contribution of the research to understanding of the various potentials for food led regeneration in London. Potentials are envisaged in four areas, some of which are closely linked. These are in relation to urban regeneration policy and practice, urban design guidance, urban sustainability and urban governance. I deal first with the urban regeneration potentials. The case study research findings suggest that there is potential that the regeneration of declining areas in London could be more food led than is currently the case in most such regeneration processes. The case study research findings suggest that there is potential that the regeneration of declining areas of London could be more food led than is currently the case in most such urban regeneration processes. Moreover, the

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.boroughmarket.org.uk/index.php?module=news>

thesis findings suggest that food led regeneration does not have to be targeted at places that are special 'flagship' development sites. The case of the Broadway Market fieldwork site, in particular, demonstrates that food led revival can happen in ordinary places in London, and can help these places to avoid becoming clone towns as they are revitalised. The research findings suggest that London has a wealth of places physically and socially configured to provide the basis for such food led regeneration but that in many this is not occurring. The thesis findings additionally suggest that food led regeneration has the potential to help combat or minimise the growth in obesogenic environments. In this way such food led regeneration process can contribute materially to reaching the urban sustainability and conviviality outcomes that were explained in the thesis. The research evidence suggests that this potential for food led regeneration does not need to be top down but can be more successful if it is pursued in a bottom up way, focusing on the demonstrated strengths and insights of local leaders in the partnership working process.

A second area of potential for food led regeneration in London is found at the level of both urban design theory and practice. A key conclusion is that urban design practitioners could usefully demonstrate a more nuanced understanding theoretically of the urban design quality of vitality, insofar as it relates to food, as a desirable urban design outcome for London. At the level of practice, this should be approached at a fine grain, with recognition of the specificity of particular places in the capital. Urban design practice could in this way become more developed in its approach to food events and spaces, which could in turn be reflected in more food sensitive urban design policy and guidance for London. Urban design and master planning guidance for food in London could be improved for example in relation to the specific areas of movement and connectivity, urban structure analysis, and in relation to establishing details of the place.

A third area of potential for food led regeneration relates to its urban sustainability component. The thesis analysis brings the sustainability implications of food in London into the picture in a spatialised way and makes a series of connections to urban design. In the context of the identified need for greater localism of consumption in the light of climate change concerns, it appears that the food quarter should be taken seriously as a way of helping regenerate London's urban space to more sustainable ends.

A fourth, linked, area of potential is in relation to food led regeneration in terms of urban policy development for London. The main conclusion here is that by better understanding the relatively new urban phenomenon of the food quarter it will be possible to include food related insights (about the positive potential of such places) in policy setting for local government in London. This should be useful in regeneration contexts in inner London but may also suggest transferable lessons, in outer London, for new area development on London's fringes and in the wider conurbation. As the thesis noted, London as a megalopolis has significant issues in its food spatiality. It is also increasingly a focus for regeneration policy. The previously mentioned governance, leadership and sustainability issues that need to be taken into account in food led regeneration could be pursued at a London conurbation wide level.

Among these are the clear lessons for London's regional and (especially) local governments, that they should not treat food markets as leftover or residual spaces in which they need merely to manage decline.

Instead they should connect up their strategic planning and day-to-day management of food spaces to a broader interest in, and understanding of, the regeneration implications of urban food production, distribution and consumption. In this way food led regeneration could benefit from a more informed approach which would link up aspects including design for walkable food consumption spaces; food and health concerns and the problem of obeseogenic environments; issues of food space management, funding, and retailing strategies; and the need to involve local leaders, listen to stakeholders, and accept the long term nature of social capital building that food markets require.

The overarching conclusion is that the food led regeneration potentials of the food quarter are as yet insufficiently explored but offer substantial opportunities for remaking London's urban spaces in more sustainable and convivial ways.

### **Summing up the food quarters**

The thesis research largely supports the existence of a range of socio-spatial practices that together underpin the development of fully realised food quarters, located in traditionally designed urban space. Each of the fieldwork sites is found a substantial way along a regeneration trajectory shading into gentrification, although each may also be experienced as a food desert to some extent by those excluded from some, or all, of its positive food aspects. The research appears to show that despite these experiential differences, each food-centred space allows enriching food related opportunities for conviviality for a considerable number of people, and that this largely transcends class; helping to develop a recognisable community of interest around food at each site. In each case, the social and environmental features that attract a growing visitor catchment to the emerging food quarters are strongly related to traditional design of the urban fabric, in one site augmented by contextual infill architecture. Thus, although design and architectural qualities have not created food quarters in themselves, the strength of the relationship between a particular set of urban design features and a new combination of socio-spatial practices is very strong indeed. This leads to the conclusion that contextual urban design has been critical to the creation of successful food centred space in each of the three food quarters.

All three food quarters can be understood as narratives of urban regeneration and gentrification that is food-led, and in which the themes of food quality and contextual design have been woven together in ways that are highly appealing to an increasing visitor catchment. The gentrification aspects of food quarter development are the most problematised and the most problematic of the themes studied. However, it appears that the forces leading to gentrification in food quarters stem as much from external causes residing in urban political economy, as the results of food-led revitalisation strategies themselves. Gentrification may be the unavoidable accompaniment to any successful regeneration programme, not just those focused on food. Given the food quarters' many benefits to local communities the problem of gentrification should not be used as a basis for ignoring the urban potential of food-centred design in social, environmental and economic terms.

Each emerging food quarter studied here presents a strongly marked example of urban redevelopment that has gone against dominant spatial trends. My judgement on the research findings is that they are broadly an economic, social and environmental success, in large part for that reason. Food quarters centred on farmers' style markets, located in outdoor rooms within finely-grained, richly-detailed, legible and walkable urban space, work as convivial urban places on a number of levels. They increase the opportunities for economic regeneration of deprived areas even where external funds and governance support are limited or absent. They offer opportunities for more sustainable production, distribution and consumption patterns that challenge unsustainable aspects of the modern food system and its pernicious effects on individuals. They help protect areas of cities at risk of remaining food deserts because unsustainable physical design approaches produce "*clone towns*". Finally, for individuals, food quarters offer opportunities for unmediated social encounters that enrich the making of everyday life.

I hope that these conclusions in relation to the nature of emerging food quarters in London provide a useful addition to sociological enquiry into spatiality, and more normatively, useful insights for urban design practice. The emergence of food quarters appears to be a new urban phenomenon offering significant opportunities to increase the conviviality and sustainability of London, as well as gentrification effects that may need to be ameliorated. Further work in other places should help to determine whether this combination of urban design and socio-spatial practice creates possibilities elsewhere for remaking urban space in similarly enriching ways.



## **Appendix One: Methods and evidence gathered**

**Purpose of the appendix**

This appendix is intended to help clarify the evidence base for the research. It explicates the various methodologies and research methods used in the thesis and the evidence gathered from them. This is categorised by research area. It also includes, as an exemplar, one of the place user interview transcripts drawn from an ‘ordinary’ voice, rather than one of the lead informants.

It will be remembered that four methods have been used to collect evidence:

- Morphological investigations
- Urban design analysis
- Observational data collection
- Semi-structured interviewing

This explication of the evidence base for the research is structured around these four methods.

**Morphological investigations**

The approach to morphology is set out in Chapter 3 and results presented in Chapter 4. Historical and contemporary Ordnance Survey maps, other historical maps, historical photographs, figure-ground drawings, and written and online accounts were used as the evidence base for the morphological research and analysis for each of the three case study sites.

The various evidence sources used are listed below by research site:

***Borough morphology evidence***

*Borough Market and surroundings* Source: Ordnance Survey base map (2006: grid reference TQ326802) at the scale of 1: 2,645.

*Rocque’s map of 1746, detail* Source: London Guildhall Library

*Horwood’s map of 1792-1799, detail* Source: London Guildhall Library

*Stanford’s map of London and its suburbs, 1862 (detail)* Source: London Guildhall Library

*Ordnance Survey map of Bermondsey and Wapping of 1894 (London Sheet 77)* Source: London Guildhall Library

*Ordnance Survey map of Bermondsey and Wapping of 1914 (London Sheet 77) detail* Source: London Guildhall Library

*Drawings and photographs of developing urban form in the area of Borough Market* Source: London Metropolitan Archive

*Borough Market floral hall frontage to Stoney Street* Source: Photograph by researcher, 2005  
*Publicity material from 'London Bridge Quarter'* Source: Photograph by researcher, 2008  
*'The Shard' by night* Source: Photograph by researcher, 2008  
*Figure-Ground of Borough Market and surrounds* Source: Drawn by researcher, based on Ordnance Survey map (2006, bar scale of 1:1,323)  
*Housing elevations on Borough High Street - from Tallis's 1840 survey* Source: London Metropolitan Archive  
*Housing elevations on Borough High Street from a 1948 survey by the London County Council* Source: London Metropolitan Archive

Authors cited (full citation is found in the bibliography):

Dean, 2005  
 Forshaw and Bergstrom, 1983  
 French, 2005  
 Greig, 2006 (Interview write-up)  
 Inwood, 1998  
 Maughan, 1931  
 Nicholson, 2005 (Interview write-up)  
 Passingham, 1935  
 Smith, 2007

Online sources:

<http://www.boroughmarket.org.uk/index.php?module=about:19>  
[http://www.shardlondonbridge.com/vertical\\_city/location.php](http://www.shardlondonbridge.com/vertical_city/location.php)

### ***Broadway morphology evidence***

*Ordnance Survey map of Broadway Market* (2006: grid reference TQ345837; Scale 1: 2,645) Source: British Library maps collection  
*Detail of Rocque's map of London and the Country 10 Miles Round (1746)* Source: London Guildhall Library  
*Ordnance Survey map of Dalston of 1870 (London Sheet 40: Scale 1:4340)* Source: London Guildhall Library  
*Ordnance Survey map of Shoreditch* (London Sheet 51: Scale 1:4340) Source: London Guildhall Library  
*Ordnance Survey map of Dalston of 1913 (London Sheet 40, Scale 1:4340, northern part of Broadway Market)* Source: London Guildhall Library  
*Ordnance Survey map of Shoreditch of 1914 (London Sheet 51, Scale 1:4340, southern part of Broadway Market)* Source: London Guildhall Library

*Public housing blocks to north and east of Broadway Market* Source: Photographs by researcher  
*Figure-ground of Broadway Market (north orientation)* Source: Drawn by researcher, based on OS map

Authors cited (full citation is found in the bibliography):  
Forshaw and Bergstrom, 1983  
Inwood, 1998

Online sources:  
<http://www.broadwaymarket.co.uk/history.html>, 2007  
<http://www.broadwaymarket.co.uk/>  
<http://www.findanewhome.com/s/ai/5661/rs/1/pt/2/new-homes-for-sale.fap>

**Exmouth morphology evidence**

*Ordnance Survey base map of Exmouth Market (based on grid reference TQ313825; scale 1: 2,645)*  
Source: British Library maps collection  
*Detail of Horwood's 1792 map* Source: London Guildhall Library  
*Detail of Horwood's 1819 map* Source: London Guildhall Library  
*Stanford's map of 1862 (Sheet 7 - detail)* Source: London Metropolitan Archive  
*Ordnance Survey 1894 map of Exmouth area (London Sheet 50: Scale 1: 1430; detail)* Source: London Metropolitan Archive  
*Ordnance Survey 1914 map of Exmouth area (London Sheet 50: Scale 1: 1430; detail)* Source: London Metropolitan Archive  
*Figure-ground of Exmouth Market (oriented north)* Source: Drawn by researcher, based on OS map

Authors cited (full citation is found in the bibliography):  
Forshaw and Bergstrom, 1983  
White, 2007  
Whitelegg, 2002

Online sources:  
<http://www.newlondonarchitecture.org/media/exhibitions/catalogues/TheGreatEstates.pdf>

**Urban design investigations**

Urban design methods were based on master planning techniques as described in the thesis in Chapters 3 and 4. Evidential representations included figure-grounds, base maps, drawings, diagrams,

and photographs for each of the three case study sites. The researcher prepared some of these, while others were drawn from secondary sources. They are listed below by research site:

### ***Borough urban design evidence***

*Monmouth Coffee Store (with green canopy) corner of Stoney and Park Streets*, Source: Photograph by researcher

*Neal's Yard Dairy Map of the Borough Market Area* Source: Photograph by researcher, map downloaded from Neal's Yard Dairy's website

*Two serial vision views of the market, looking south* Source: Photographs by researcher

*Two visual examples of fine-grained local built fabric on Stoney Street* Source: Photographs by researcher

*Area to the north and east of Borough High Street* Source: Photograph by researcher

*Area south and east of London Bridge Station* Source: Photograph by researcher

*Railway viaducts across Bedale Street* Source: Photograph by researcher

*500-metre radius ped-shed for Borough Market* Source: Prepared by researcher, using London A-Z base map

*Public Transport Accessibility Level Map for LB Southwark (detail)* Source: LB Southwark Transport Topic Paper (2005)

*Activity at the corner of Stoney and Park Streets* Source: Photograph by researcher

*Servicing at small-scale outside the Floral Hall* Source: Photograph by researcher

*Four details of the streetscape at Borough* Source: Photographs by researcher

Authors cited (full citation is found in the bibliography):

Brand, 1994

Cowan, 2003

Trancik, 1996

Urban Design Compendium, 2000

### ***Broadway urban design evidence***

*Broadway Market access map* Source: Broadway Market website

*Road closure on Broadway market* Source: Photograph by researcher

*500-metre radius ped-shed diagram for Broadway Market* Source: Prepared by researcher, using London A - Z base map

*PTAL map of LB Hackney (detail)* Source: Transport for London

*Two views of mixed-use at Broadway Market* Source: Photographs by researcher

*Two views of Broadway Market looking north-east and north* Source: Photographs by researcher

*Details of Broadway Market streetscape* Source: Photographs by researcher

<http://www.broadwaymarket.co.uk/info.html>

Authors cited (full citation is found in the bibliography):

Urban Design Compendium, 2000

***Exmouth urban design evidence***

*Exmouth Market view looking north-east* Source: Photograph by researcher

*Focal point, St Saviour’s spire* Source: Photograph by researcher

*Lack of enclosure in view from northeastern end of Exmouth Market* Source: Photograph by researcher

*500-metre radius ped-shed for Exmouth Market* Source: Prepared by researcher, using London A - Z base map

*Public Transport Accessibility Level Map of LB Islington (Exmouth area to south of map)* Source: LB Islington

*Views of walking, cycling, and parking along Exmouth Market* Source: Photographs by researcher

*Views of outdoor seating at Exmouth Market (note the coffee chains have arrived)* Source: Photographs by researcher

Authors cited (full citation is found in the bibliography):

Drijver, 2005

Kegler, 2005

Urban Design Compendium, 2000

**Unstructured observations**

A considerable number of unstructured observations were made at each fieldwork site over the study period. These were predominantly in the form of text-based fieldwork notes but also included headcounts at Borough Market as explained in Chapter 3, and shown in Chapter 5, and food mapping at all three sites as shown in Chapters 5 to 7. Representative observational examples are drawn from each site and are reproduced below as scans of the original documents. The examples are shown in whole or in part for field notes, headcounts and food mapping.

***Borough observational evidence***

Two representative examples of short fieldwork observational notes made at the Borough site are shown below. As can be seen there was no attempt to group material but impressions were recorded in each case as they arose. The data was sorted and characterised thematically later during the analysis phase.

Scan 1: Short field note from Borough Market, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2007



hot food stall - Thursday, good before 11.30am  
gastromomica - come back next Monday.  
4th Dec

momomom - passed in into to the HR

Spoke to - cafe owner (2) / male middle aged  
interviewed - type (3) / male middle aged  
butcher (1) - tourist  
Organic veg. from Vienna  
Seller - Gang. male - middle aged

### Observation note:

quite busy with tourists, some shoppers,  
mostly people having coffee or lunch nearby.  
Sitting at Momomom coffee at 12.45 - business clothes  
Spoke to HR person who said she appreciated  
that I wouldn't approach people while they are  
drinking their coffee

visitors look more local than in last  
in 'London' clothes - although obviously  
Italian tourists in cord. trousers, leather jackets

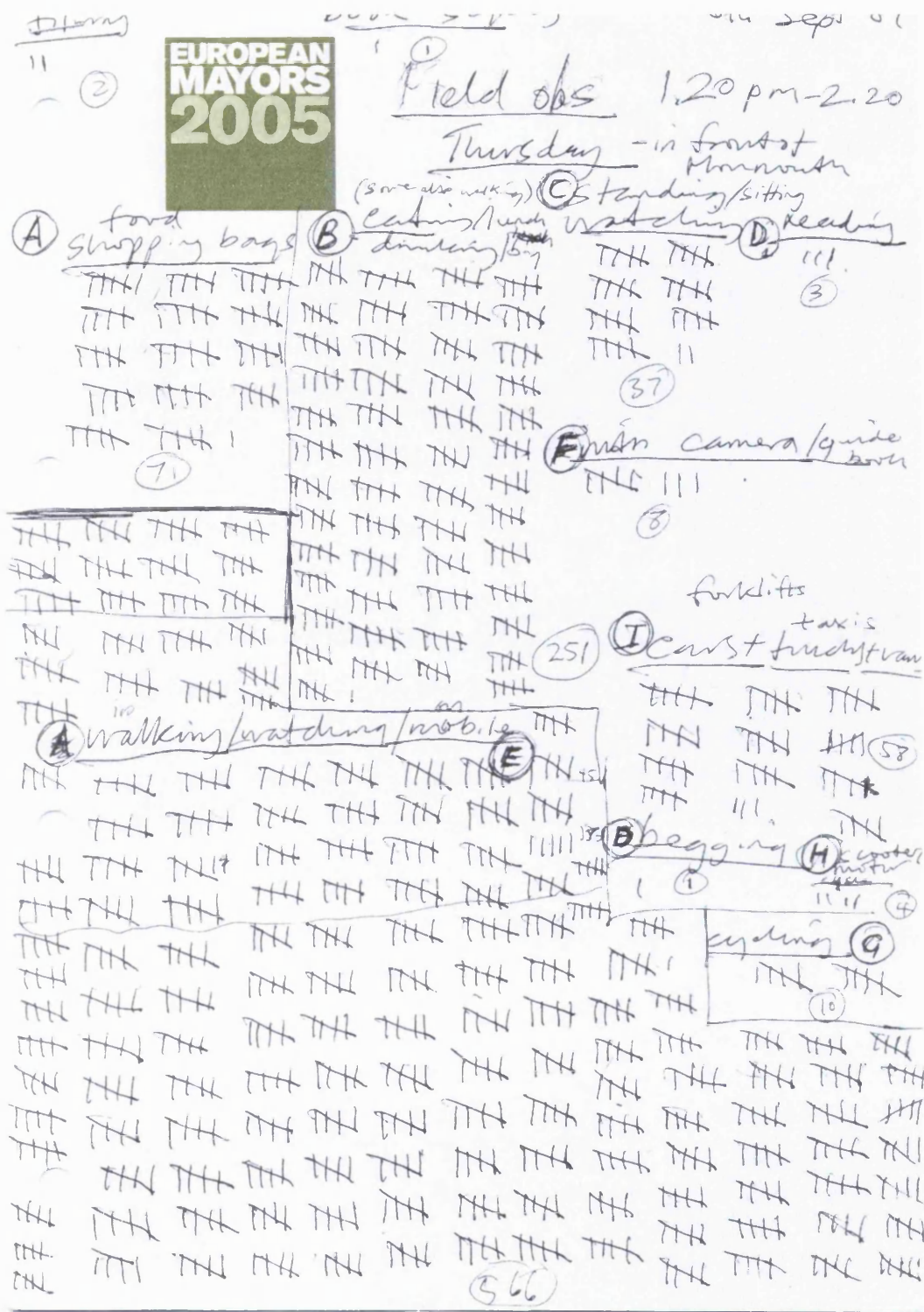
Spoke to Kathryn + her baby (Eva)  
and gave her a handout sheet

### obs. note 9.9.07

- "your money ~~won't~~ never goes for here"  
trader to customer at bread stall
- "isn't it amazing" - tourist to other tourist
- market v.v. busy - lots of watches + walkers.  
lots of people forming queues at hot food stalls  
then eating while standing around people  
watching or walking around doing the same
- many languages heard.
- quite a few young families with kids in pushers
- not so many old people
- lots of 'cool' weekend clothes in evidence
- impression that reasonably subs. no. of people  
buying food to take home as well as to eat there

Also at Borough as discussed in Chapters 3 and 5, headcounts were undertaken to explore the range and balance between various socio-spatial practices observed. A page from the original headcount pages is provided below. It relates to the first of three days on which the headcounts were made (over the period of 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> of September 2007). It was made on the Thursday, which is Borough Market's least busy day.

Scan 3: Headcount page from Borough Market, 6<sup>th</sup> September 2007



The third kind of observational evidence collected was to map the food uses found at the three sites. It was argued in Chapter 3 that this would assist in demonstrating the range and the physical extent of food uses at each site. The three scans below show the mapping undertaken at Borough Market using the OS map as a base. The method was to walk the site noting each food stall, shop, café or other land use related to food and then draw it in on the base map, with a key providing names for each food use.

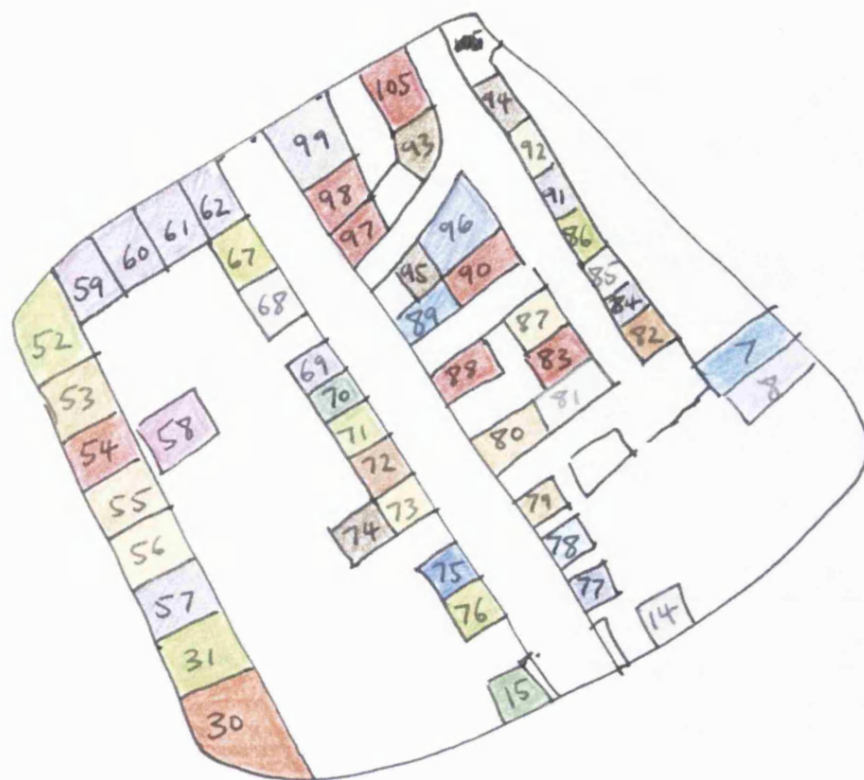
Scan 4: Food land use mapping example from Borough market fieldwork site



Given the complexity of the food related land uses at Borough it was decided to also show a section of these with the range of different kinds of food related land uses shown. The example made for Borough is shown below as Scan 5.

Scan 5: Food land use mapping 'cluster' example from Borough Market





- |               |                    |              |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------|
| ● Spanish     | ● butchers         | ● Italian    |
| ● fruit+veg   | ● cakes/pies       | ○ cafe       |
| ● fish        | ○ pasta            | ● coffee     |
| ● cheese      | ● poultry          | ● bags       |
| ● bread       | ● oils             | ● plates     |
| ● flowers     | ● wine/beer        | ● restaurant |
| ● dried fruit | ● deli             |              |
| ● tea         | ● chocolate/sweets |              |

Scan 6: Food land uses 'key' from Borough

<b>Broadway Food Map Key</b>  <b>Shops etc</b>  1. Fruit and Veg - Off License 2. Nutritious Food Gallery/Fresh Fish 3. Climpson and Son Shopfront - cafe 4. Cat and Mutton Pub 5. Percy Ingle Bakery 6. Organic and Vegetarian Coffee and Tea Room 7. Broadway Café (caf) 8. Broadway Wines 9. H. Tidiman Butcher's and Poulterers 10. La Bouche Delicatessen 11. Costcutter's supermarket 12. Broadway Supersaver - Off License 13. The Dove Freehouse 14. Off License 15. Organic Food Fresh Food and Vegetables 16. F. Cooke - Pie and Eel Shop	17. Solché Grill - Meze Bar 18. La Vie en Rose cafe 19. Broadway Fish Bar  <b>Stalls</b>  20. Fresh Pasta 21. Eggs/Poultry/Meat Van 22. Coffee Bar and seating 23. Cake Stall 24. Juice Box 25. Bread Stall 26. Sussex Smokers 27. Roast Meat Stall 28. Olive Oils 29. Fruit and Vegetables 30. German Deli 31. Downland Produce 32. Fruit and Vegetable Stall 33. Olive Stall 34. Bread Stall	35. Meat, eggs etc stall 36. Popina Cakes 37. The Cinnamon Tree Bakery 38. Norbiton Fine Cheese 39. Fishmonger 40. Fruit and Vegetable Stall 41. Flowers 42. Café 43. Cheese and Cured Meat Stall 44. Crepes Stall 45. Damascene Falafel 46. Burgers and other hot food stall 47. The Jewish Deli 48. Flour Power Bread Stall 49. Cookies and Cream 50. Organic Cakes etc 51. Cheese Stall 52. Mushroom Stall 53. Empty Stall 54. Apple Stall 55. Tomato Stall
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### *Broadway observational evidence*

A typical short field note from Broadway, made on the 26<sup>th</sup> July 2008, is shown below. The same points as made above apply, in that the notes are impressionistic, covering both social practices and physical form aspects.

Scan 7: Fieldwork note Broadway Market, 26 July 2008

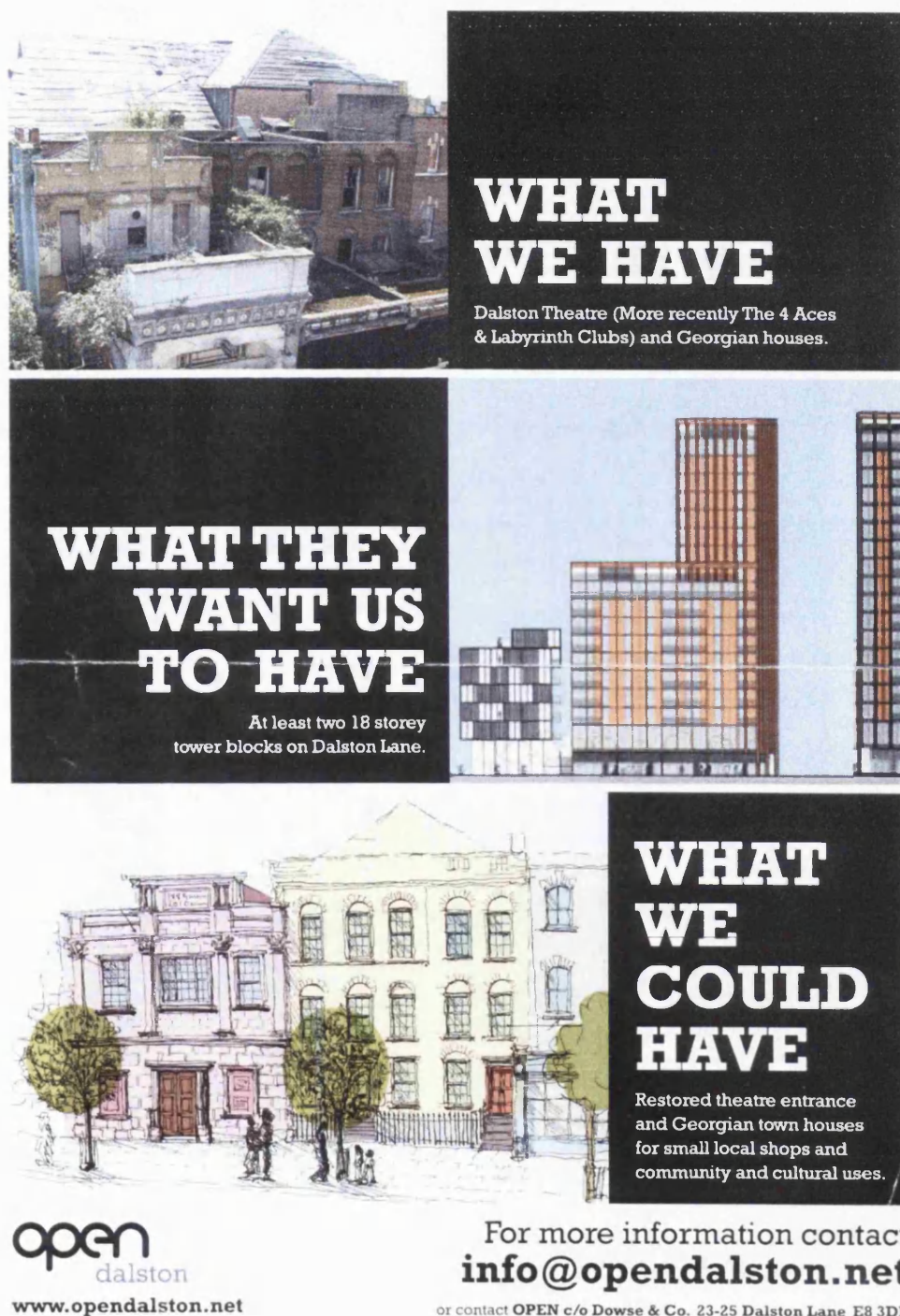
Broadway Market  
Obs - Saturday 26 July 08

- heavily
- predominantly 20-something
- lots of 'hip' outfits
- lots of 'passagista' activity
- lots of people on bikes
- lots of couples w kids
- signif. no.s sitting outside cafes w coffees + reading papers
- stream of people from across London Fields
- in pub - casting agents for mobile phone commercial - through Broad. M. "a good place to find pos.ive, smiley people"



A notable aspect of Broadway Market's social functioning observed at the site was the practice of community politics, as discussed in Chapter 6. It was noted that a number of flyers and campaigning materials were handed out while I was undertaking observational work. One of those, directly focused on built form issues, is reproduced below.

Scan 8: Local anti-high-rise flats campaign flyer, Broadway Market



**WHAT WE HAVE**  
Dalston Theatre (More recently The 4 Aces & Labyrinth Clubs) and Georgian houses.

**WHAT THEY WANT US TO HAVE**  
At least two 18 storey tower blocks on Dalston Lane.

**WHAT WE COULD HAVE**  
Restored theatre entrance and Georgian town houses for small local shops and community and cultural uses.

**open**  
dalston  
[www.opendalston.net](http://www.opendalston.net)

For more information contact  
**info@opendalston.net**  
or contact OPEN c/o Dowse & Co. 23-25 Dalston Lane E8 3DF

### Exmouth observational evidence

A typical short field note from Exmouth is shown below, made on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2007. Again, like all the field notes, it is impressionistic and provides a snapshot of activity at the time.

Scan 9: Field note, Exmouth Market, 1st August 2007

#### Exmouth Market Field Work Note

Aug 1st 2007 - at the Hole in the Wall

3.15 pm - guy running the cafe talking to bloke eating at outdoor table. - said used to be really rough. "spit rough". At Italian fest. guy got smacked over head w/ knuddleduster. street was derelict.

Street busy with pedestrians (some w/ shopping bags) people at outdoor cafes.

Cafe kids open for 10 years. - will be celebrating lively atmosphere.

Oldish lady w/ shopping trolley stops to talk to cafe owner (joshing her). Another old guy with big plastic bag.

Mix of people - business people in Sweet boulangerie + patisserie - at lunch time.

Get a sense that lot of shops that sell food + drink.

Spa Fields behind to South - gives sense of connection but also street as hollowed out space. Still has cars going through but det. slowed down - sense that shared surface

reinforced by paving straight across.  
Shopping area stops at Tysoe st to east, Fanning Mts to West.  
A few business people

## **Semi-structured interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were a key method for the thesis research. Two ‘research information’ sheets were prepared for potential interviewees, and as explained in the body of the thesis were emailed to experts and handed out to place users. These two research information notes were slightly differently worded, for experts and place users, as noted in Chapter 3, reflecting the somewhat divergent focus of the two kinds of interviews. These two versions of the research background note are reproduced in the boxes below. As can be seen from Box 1, the sheet for the expert interviews was prepared before the Ridley Road Market area was dropped from the case study list.

Box 1: Research information sheet for expert interviewees

**Food-centred space  
PhD research - Susan Parham  
London School of Economics and Political Science  
Cities Programme**

**About the research project, interview themes  
and background information**

**About the research**

I am a part time doctoral student at the London School of Economics and Political Science. I am researching the way ‘food centred’ spaces have grown and regenerated in London and elsewhere. I am focusing my field work on Broadway and Ridley Road markets and their surrounding areas but am equally interested in contextualising this research by exploring more dominant food consumption trends and practices (including on high streets and in supermarkets). For more about the project please see: [http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/cities/who\\_research%20students.htm](http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/cities/who_research%20students.htm)

The research is being undertaken under the supervision of Dr Fran Tonkiss (See <http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/cities/>) and the fieldwork programme is underway over the first half of 2006.

**Interview themes I would like to cover**

The interviews are intended to explore at least some of the following themes but I am not expecting everyone interviewed to necessarily discuss all the themes. Equally, other themes not noted below may emerge during interviews.

- Issues in regenerating existing food space: both social and about built form
- The social, economic and environmental role of markets and other shopping environments in London
- Relationship of food and the design of urban space
- Issues in retrofitting existing food spaces
- Issues in building new ‘food centred’ urban fabric
- Specific urban design issues relevant to food: connectivity, legibility, robustness, variety, visual richness, grain, scale etc
- Possible differences between UK and mainland European experience

**About the interviews**

Interviews should take around 45 minutes and will be recorded either using handwritten notes or by a Dictaphone type recorder. Any comments used in the thesis will not be attributed to named individuals.

Once interviews are typed up, I will supply the interviewee with a copy and will make any changes that are needed to ensure it is an accurate record of the discussion.

#### **How research material will be used**

The results of interviews with experts in the social, economic and environmental aspects of shopping, consumption practices, markets, food, and city design will be used in various chapters of my doctoral thesis. There is no commercial or economic purpose behind the work; it is being undertaken purely for academic reasons.

#### **Contact details - Susan Parham**

My contact details are provided below:

University email address: s.e.parham@lse.ac.uk  
Work email address details: sp@cagconsult.co.uk  
Tel: 020 7704 0018 Mob: 07967 816295

Box 2: Research information sheet for place user interviewees

## **Food-Centred Space – PhD Research Project London School of Economics**

#### **About this research project**

This research is about the way ‘food-centred’ spaces have grown and regenerated in London and how these work as social spaces. The research is looking at whether the design of these spaces affects the way they are used. The fieldwork is focused on three market areas: Broadway Market, Borough Market and Exmouth Market. The research is part of PhD study at the London School of Economics Cities Programme.

#### **Interviews with people who manage, work in, shop at or just like to visit the market**

I am hoping to interview people who manage, work in, shop at or just like to visit food markets. I would like to explore some different themes – but these will also depend on what people want to talk about. Some areas I hope to cover are:

- What you feel is positive, interesting or important about this market and its surrounding area in food terms
- Anything about the design of the place that contributes to the market
- Any less positive things you’ve noticed about the food market area – i.e. how it operates or how the market and local space is designed
- How you see food markets like this developing in the future
- And anything else you think could be relevant.

#### **How research material will be used**

The results of these interviews will be used in my doctoral thesis. Once completed, the thesis may eventually be developed into a book. *No one who is interviewed will be named in the thesis or in any book that might be developed from it.*

#### **If you would like to be interviewed**

If you or someone you know who uses the market would like to be interviewed – it should take about 10 to 15 minutes – and can be done when you are visiting the market - please contact me on the

following email address to set up a time:

**Susan Parham:** Email address: [s.e.parham@lse.ac.uk](mailto:s.e.parham@lse.ac.uk)

**If you would just like to find out more about the research project**

For more about the project and the researcher:

[http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/cities/who\\_research%20students.htm](http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/cities/who_research%20students.htm)

The research is being undertaken under the supervision of Dr Fran Tonkiss:

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/cities/>

As explained in the thesis, expert and place user interviews were recorded first by way of handwritten notes at the piloting stage, and then by recording and transcribing from tape for the great majority of the interviews.

An exemplar example of a 'place user' interview transcript, which is drawn from the Borough Market interview series, is provided in the box below.

Box 3: Place user interview transcript exemplar

**Interview Number: Place User Interview Four**

**Date/Location: 2006-12-15 Borough Market**

**Subject: Organic vegetable stall holder, middle-aged, white male**

**Questions and answers**

*The first thing I've been asking people is what they think is positive, good or interesting about Borough Market?*

Well the whole concept of it is people regain an interest in what they are eating. They can actually come and see what it is. They can actually talk to people that grow, farm, whatever, instead of being constantly brainwashed by supermarkets into 'you must have this shaped apple'. And that's the whole concept of Borough market. It's for people to actually come and see food.

*Do you think that is actually educating people's sensibilities, their gastronomic understanding of the world?*

Without any question it opens a lot of peoples' eyes because we get asked questions that to us are frankly staggering but obviously to some people really do not have clue.

*What sort of things?*

Ah it's where things come from, 'I didn't know what that was'. Its sometimes quite mind-boggling how much people don't know and that's a lack of education and too much convenience I suppose. Because we don't have a culture necessarily in this country like they do on the continent where people who actually go every day and shop at markets.

*That was one of the things that provoked this study. I was comparing the continent and here is just that everybody has such an emphasis on quality and a sensibility about food... and I was intrigued about why that maybe got lost in the UK... and how it might be coming back*

Well I think possibly because we believe we live in such a busy, hectic society we don't actually have time to do anything. And I think possibly its kind of got lost, as having dinner when you get home from work is just something you do in between doing something else.

*Refuelling like you're putting petrol in the car...*

But I mean you know people do take you back to basics. That is actually what we are doing. There is a lot said about food that is nonsense

*Pretentious?*

Yes it is because at the end of the day that is exactly what we are doing.

*It's about our physical recreation of ourselves... what about Borough Market as a physical space, a designed space? Do you think that has any influence on people's enjoyment?*

Oh absolutely. Absolutely. The ambience of the place is probably one of the key factors. It always has been. History I mean why this building was 1760 or something but there has probably been a market of some description on this site since the Romans so you are talking nearly 2,000 years of some form of market here.

*What do you think of the physical space people do like here?*

Its... Its.... Although we sell very good food here, very good top quality food its not dressed like Harrods Food Hall. Its quirky, its odd. It has that old London feel about it. It just has a sense of history.

*I think what I would call a sense of place... what about your catchment? Do you think you're getting people who are mostly local or are they mostly Londoners or further than that?*

We have people coming from all over the place. I mean we are now so firmly entrenched on the tourist circuit. People who come to London um from all over the country if they are in London for a weekend if they have an interest in food they come to Borough Market. My girlfriend I met her here. She lives in Stockholm and she was over here visiting somebody and came to the market and that's how we met. She said she had seen me in a two-page article in the Stockholm daily news. So yes it comes from all over the place. And I think it's a fairly good model for other markets though not all markets can be like this.

*You say a model. What sort of things would you say should be part of that model? The elements of that model?*

A fairly good relationship with the people that own the market. That's essential. Because if we know what we are doing we get together and there is common ground. It's not just a landlord and tenant whatever. Because every body fully realises that we are interdependent on each other. So lots of the time we spend our time directing people to other people's stalls and just making sure that people know where to go, what to do.

*Looking around on Saturday it was really heaving and I wondered if it might be a victim of its own success? With tourists who don't actually buy food...*

It can be that way. Um..and obviously London being what it is anyway you are always going to get supermarkets.. When it was new you have too many people then they will move on. Now Marylebone is in the place. So, yeah, you're bound to get a certain element of that. I have to say most of our regular customers as far as I'm concerned know when to come. Yeah like first thing Saturday morning: 'shop there, shop there shop there'.



*What time do you reckon they need to get in here to avoid the masses?*

Certainly before 10. Actually last week it wasn't very busy at all relatively speaking. But then again it's become one of the social meeting places as well. You hear people talking to their friends on the phone: 'We'll meet you at so and so'. A lot of people will spend virtually all day here. They'll wander off to Southbank or whatever; people have lunch. It's become quite a meeting place as well, which I think is good. I don't think its just about selling produce. I think it's also about people being involved in a place they can come to and have a fairly decent, enjoyable experience.

*So what do you see as the future of Borough Market?*

Um, its kind of difficult because when I first started for the first few months there was 12 - 14 people, um, at most. It was down to us to reinvent ourselves from time to time. I think personally its very important that we do things to engage our customers all the time and introduce produce that we don't cater for now. Because there is still plenty of stuff...for we are not a farmer's market.

*Its not like Ridley Road say where there is lots of Turkish stuff..*

As I say this is not a farmers' market. It's a combination of many things and there are many food products from many countries, many individual suppliers that could enhance what we have here. I think space is the biggest constraint.

*I hear Railtrack is going to be coming through...*

Well that has been on the cards for 20 years. I think it's going to happen.

*It's a whole lot of individual operators like the European model...small shops so you avoid the chains and agribusiness and everything that is related to that...do you see that as one of the critical success factors?*

It does. I mean I deal in organics and I have to say I am not a huge proponent of food miles. So I believe that I should be in a position to support organic growers wherever they are. I mean I do not have things that are air freighted but we have to import quite a bit of stuff because people don't produce it here. But to me I'm dealing with a grower somewhere that is like - to me especially if their from a so-called third world country I don't think we have the moral high ground to say because of food miles we wont take your stuff. Not only that but we've exploited these people for the last 300 years and now we are going to turn round and say "actually we're not going to have your pineapples". I think that's... especially in the organic..I mean we sell bananas from Colombia where farmers get paid more for that than they do get from growing cocaine.

*Well if things are going by ship food miles aren't so bad...?*

As I say we live in a competitive world and nations need to export to some degree to maintain... and if they can produce quality produce for export I don't see the problem. If local producers can't fulfil that that to me means they need to get their act together. I think New Zealand is a perfect example of how you can get.. you know...it used to be the NZ apple and pear board.. now they can get everybody together and say this is our product and get it to market. I don't see that as a problem.

*I'm intrigued about far people who come here as punters start to understand the food system...the economics of that which sits behind the transaction at the market?*

We obviously talk to people, lots of people, a lot of people, one of the biggest complaints you will get about this market is price. Well its not expensive if you hunt around but then again we have been brainwashed into the fact that cheap supermarket price is the real price of food and it isn't. I'm not saying this is the real price of food but its far closer. If people realised how much of the money out of their taxes went to the common market agricultural policy just as subsidy they would fall apart. We find it hard to sell English beef in France because they just won't yet it's probably the best beef there is now. I find probably one of the most stupid things is if you try and give perhaps too much information to people often its very, very simple if you take ....

The normal thing I do with people with kiwi fruit strangely enough because if you airfreight kiwi fruit from NZ one kiwi fruit uses about 5 times its own body weight in aviation fuel and because its fresh you put it in their hand and explain it to em then suddenly a light bulb goes off. I think that's more the way to go than trying to... I think the more you beat them over the head with something, the more they are likely to dig their heels in and not just think its about our mentality. Small things just make people think and start asking questions and I thinks that's probably the best way.

I think it will be perhaps another two generations, maybe more before we finally ...you know I'm talking on an organic basis but I'm preaching to the converted yeah. I'm talking to people who already buy organic but 80% of people don't know and 50% of them couldn't give a stuff and that's the people we need to, to convert but you know again a lot of this stuff (points round market) is not organic. It's still the same.

*Anything else?*

For this market in particular there is the same buzz it had when I first started coming. It just has that something and I think it's unique.

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