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The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park: Whose Values, Whose Benefits?

A Case Study Exploring the role of Cultural Values in Ethnic Minority Under-Representation in UK Parks.

Bridget Snaith CMLI

Thesis Submitted for the Award of Doctor of Philosophy,

Department of Sociology, City University London

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City, University of London
Northampton Square
London
EC1V 0HB
United Kingdom

T +44 (0)20 7040 5060

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Abstract

Siting the Olympics in the Lower Lea Valley has been widely represented as a means to improve quality of life for the ethnically diverse, deprived communities living there, in part through the creation of a new 'community parkland', the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Ethnic minorities however, are under-represented as users of parks and other green spaces across the UK, at a far greater level than can be explained by income alone. Little has been done to investigate this phenomenon, despite its implications for social justice and public health. Limited research has found examples of ethnic variations in normative cultural practices, racist and territorial behaviour in the public realm at large, and structural discrimination with less greenspace in the areas where ethnic minorities live.

Aiming to address a gap in the existing research literature, this case study investigates the relationship between the cultural inscription of park spaces, spatial practices of park making by the primarily 'Anglo' groups designing this new city space, and the experiences, preferences and values of the ethnically diverse communities who currently live around the London Olympic site.

Using a mixed methods approach, the empirical research finds that while seeking inclusion, exclusionary values are unintentionally embedded in production and management of UK parks. This thesis evidences the cultural values embedded in UK spatial practices, their exclusionary nature, along class and ethnic dimensions, and reflects on the importance of cultural consciousness in spatial design in our increasingly multicultural cities.

Fig 1.2. Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park Location and Context (map © OpenStreetMap contributors)

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

One of the main outcomes originally proposed for the 2012 Olympic Games and subsequent Olympic Legacy was to improve quality of life for the ethnically diverse, deprived communities of the Lower Lea Valley. The social and economic transformation of this part of east London is to be achieved in large part through major public investment in the physical environment, including the creation of a new 'community parkland' (Department for Culture Media & Sport, 2008) now called the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, which has been claimed to be one of the largest parks to be built in the Europe in the last 150 years (Olympic Delivery Authority, 2007).

Ethnic minority populations have been found to be under-represented as users of many parks and other green spaces across the UK. In some cases this under-representation is extreme. Visitor statistics gathered by London Borough of Tower Hamlets for Victoria Park, on the western edge of the London Olympic site, showed only 3% of park users were from BME (black & minority ethnic) groups but the background BME population in their catchment area is recorded as 35% (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2012). Academic research commissioned by CABE Space through the OPENSpace Research Centre at Edinburgh / Heriot Watt University identified significant differences in the frequency of visits to urban parks by different ethnic groups, which could not be explained by income alone. While low income groups generally visit parks less than the national average, low income groups identifying themselves as white British are close to the average frequency, and minority British ethnicities, especially those identifying as Bangladeshi, visit parks significantly less (CABE Space 2010).

If parks, which are funded primarily through public money, are benefitting white British people more than other British nationals along ethnic or racial lines, through processes of exclusion, there is clearly a question of social justice. However, while this would be significant in itself, impacts may go further than that, unfairly affecting mortality rates and lifespan. There is evidence that residents of urban neighbourhoods with high indices of deprivation, and limited access to parks and green spaces display more symptoms of chronic stress and poor health, and a lower life expectancy, independent of their individual characteristics, and there is evidence that park use can have significant health benefits (Seaman, 2010; Mitchell & Popham, 2008; Van den Berg, et al., 2007). Use has been found to be linked to perceived park quality (Vries, et al., 2009). People from BME groups in the UK are significantly more likely than white British people to live in areas of deprivation, and to have less access to quality green space (CABE, 2010; CABE Space, 2010) . Ensuring that UK parks located in deprived areas meet the needs of all British ethnicities in their catchment should therefore clearly be a priority.

A variety of hypotheses have informed the limited research investigating ethnic minority under-representation in park spaces in the UK, and US. Ideas put forward range from: variations in normative cultural practices or tastes, (Rishbeth, 2004; Gomez, 1999; Agyeman & Spooner, 1997; Washburne, 1978); processes of social exclusion, such as fear of racial attack, (Stodolska, et al., 2011; Livengood & Stodolska, 2004; Floyd, 1998; Madge, 1997; Burgess, et al., 1988); structural

societal discrimination, resulting in, as discussed, less quality green space in low income areas and more ethnic minorities in those areas, (CABE, 2010; Seaman, 2010; Bramley, et al., 2009; Washburne, 1978); or to the Anglo-centric cultural and economic preferences dominating park production which can be excluding to other cultural groups (Byrne, 2012; Byrne & Wolch, 2009).

Research findings have contradicted some of these theories (CABE Space 2010), other findings are inconsistent, (for example see Gomez 1999, and Gobster 2002) . Entire bodies of work have been critiqued as generalised, ethno-racially stereotyping, and insufficiently spatial (Byrne 2012), or poorly defined (Gomez, 2008; Floyd, 1998). There is a general recognition that research on the topic in the UK is limited (CABE Space 2010, Morris 2003, Dunnett, et al., 2002), and there are calls for further research into several areas, including the impact of the 'ethno racial' background of the 'elite' groups who shape park space, on park use by those of other ethnicities (Byrne 2012).

The core research question, to be investigated through this case study, is: "Could people of minority ethnicities be under-represented as users of British parks because of a failure by those producing and regulating park space to recognise that their own spatial practices / preferences are culturally biased, and not universally shared, particularly on ethnic dimensions?''

Through this thesis, using the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park as a case study, I seek to investigate whether cultural and ideological 'ethnic' values are reflected in the production and management of UK parks; if distinct culturally based preference for park spaces can be determined in different ethnic groups living within the park's catchment; are culturally based differences recognised by those shaping park spaces, and if so, how are differences addressed; and ultimately whether UK park making practices reinforce the ''playing out of unequal social relations'' that are an essential part of negotiating our rights to access public space (Massey 2005) .

I will draw on social theorists Pierre Bourdieu, Henri Lefebvre, Doreen Massey and others, as well as the existing literature on landscape preferences, park use & ethnicity, mainly from the UK and US, to explore issues of perceived spatial quality or taste, identity, ideology, and hierarchical social relations, as represented both in spatial practices of designers /client advisors, and in the preferences and lives of people currently resident in the case study area.

The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park is a project very much in the public eye, and intended to be subject to substantial evaluation. Many of the UK's and some of the world's leading landscape architects have been tasked with creating the new community park, as part of a process guided by some of London's most powerful design decision makers. The London bid to the International Olympic committee made much of the ethnic diversity of London's 'East End' (Evans, 2011). Promotional documents claim that the design of London's Olympic park will provide a global demonstration of the creative strength of cultural diversity (Olympic Delivery Authority, 2007) , and reports and images associated with the development of the Games and Games Legacy demonstrate that ethnicity and diversity are known considerations of the social actors empowered to shape the new spaces of the Olympic Legacy parklands (for example see images and discussion of diversity in London Development Agency 2009a,c, Davis, 2011). The Olympic Legacy park can therefore make an exemplary case study of current 'spatial practices' in urban

park creation in the UK (Lefebvre, 1991[1974]), and one fully cognisant of the significant presence of ethnic minority groups as an aspirational participant, and proposed beneficiary.

Using a mixed methods approach, this empirical research has found that while seeking inclusion, exclusionary values are unintentionally embedded in production and management of UK parks. This thesis evidences the cultural values ingrained in UK spatial practices, their exclusionary nature, along class and ethnic dimensions, and suggests how more inclusive parks might be created through greater cultural consciousness in spatial design and management in our increasingly multicultural cities.

1.2 Objectives

This PhD explores the practices of park production by spatial design 'elites' in UK society, and, by using the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park as a case study, investigates design professionals' and decision makers' engagement with the attitudes and spatial preferences/ practices of an ethnically diverse population living in the catchment area defined for the Legacy park. In their critique of contemporary Leisure Studies research into the topic of ethnic and racial minority under-representation of park users in the US, Jason Byrne & Jennifer Wolch suggest researchers should question how

> **ethno-racial formations might configure park spaces themselves—and how in turn ethno-racially inscribed park spaces may influence park use or non-use.**
> (Byrne & Wolch, 2009:473)

By linking the ethnic/ cultural formation/ production of park space and its impact on park use by ethnicity, this study aims to address the research gap identified. Using mixed methods, and an interdisciplinary approach, the study will seek to establish through a case study, answers to the following research question

"Could people of minority ethnicities be under-represented as users of British parks because of a failure by those producing and regulating park space to recognise that their own spatial practices / preferences are culturally based, and not universally shared, particularly on ethnic dimensions?''

Through interviews with designers and senior advisors on the park, and through design analysis, I aim to establish if underlying assumptions regarding cultural and spatial practices have been made in developing the park and its surrounding urban framework. I am seeking to understand how designers are motivated, what benefits are prioritised in their decision making, and how effective designers are in spatial formation.

Through qualitative and quantitative research with local residents from the park catchment I will seek to establish if their lived experience, and preferences would support any underlying assumptions that may have been made by designers/design advisors. I hope to identify if there are any substantive conflicts at a cultural or ideological level between the tastes and preferences

of residents, and the working assumptions of designers/client advisors. Potential beneficiaries will be identified, and likely benefits to different groups hypothesised.

The end stage of the process will be to look at early use patterns of the publicly accessible areas of the park from its public opening in April 2014, to make a preliminary assessment of the park's users, and whether users are ethnically representative of the surrounding population.

1.3 Hypothesis

Research has claimed that all ethnicities in UK cities give an equal value to accessing outdoor green spaces where they live (CABE Space, 2010; Burgess, et al., 1988). It has been proposed that variation in the frequency of visits to parks by ethnicity is mainly a matter of choice, due to cultural variations in leisure patterns, preferences that predispose some groups of people to use parks less, and that white 'Anglo' park use patterns should not be considered normative (Gomez 1999). However, internal cultural preferences of this type do not adequately explain anomalies in use patterns by ethnicity that are seen in different parks. Why would white British people be significantly under-represented as users of some parks, and overrepresented in others (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2012; CABE Space, 2010) if it were just a matter of cultural predisposition to use parks in general? Similar anomalies occur in US cities. Recent research by Jason Byrne looking at a major new park development in Los Angeles found indications that the Latino population did not use their nearby park as they felt it was a 'white space', that they would face challenges in making use of it, and would not be welcome there. Although the park was spatially accessible, and fitted with their stated preferences for outdoor recreation as perceived by the author, it was significantly underused by Latinos resident in its catchment (Byrne 2012). Other papers describe spaces identified as 'black parks' or 'Hispanic parks' (Stodolska et al 2011).

While normative use levels may well vary, despite high hopes for public spaces as ''the foundation for public interaction and social integration'' (Urban Task Force, 2005), public parks and the streets of the city around them are not unproblematically and equally open to all (Back 2005, Massey 2005, Madge 1997, Marne 1996). According to Doreen Massey,

> **'public' space unregulated leaves a heterogeneous urban population to work out for itself who really is going to have the right to be there. All spaces are socially regulated in some way, if not by explicit rules… then by the potentially more competitive … regulation which exists in the absence of explicit ….. .controls. 'Open Space' in that particular sense is a dubious concept.**
> (Massey, 2005 : 152)

The hypothesis I wish to explore is that, because rights to use urban parks are contested, they sometimes become dominated territories, appropriated by particular groups, whose needs, tastes and practices may be incompatible with preferences and needs of others. I propose there is a strong likelihood that, symbolically and functionally, the design and management of parks by dominant ethnic groups, will create spaces that reflect their tastes, preferences, practices and underlying ideologies, diminishing the ability and desire of people who are not from the

Fig 1.3. Promotional Image of Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park (Pro Landscaper Magazine 2013)

majority culture to claim or practice equal rights to contested space. While park use is likely to reflect the particular social relations in a locality, institutional design and management of park space will reinforce the UK's dominant social hierarchy and power relations, along lines of race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, and age. Park design and management can therefore reinforce territorial domination of space by the most powerful, and mark some practices as more legitimate, negatively impacting on park enjoyment, and therefore use by less dominant groups.

1.4 Further Options for Investigation

The (unpublished) visitor statistics produced in meeting conditions for park restoration and enhancement through Lottery funding show overall that under-representation of ethnic minorities is the norm for most UK parks, however some parks show very high numbers of visitors from ethnic minorities compared with the catchment population, and some, like Victoria Park, very low representation. Comparative case studies would allow these anomalies to be investigated against the 'standard' condition, and would be a valuable area for further research.

There have been many publications and presentations made by those leading the development of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in the run up to the Olympic Games and in development of Legacy plans, putting forward a positive vision for the park. Some analysis of the images used to represent the 'future' Legacy of the Olympic Games is presented in Juliet Davis's PhD Thesis (Davis, 2011). Further public discourse analysis, and document analysis, including illustrative visual images could enrich the findings from elite interviews, helping to establish the ideological underpinnings and assumptions of the parklands design, and the values expressed in its development. For example, there is an overwhelmingly 'white' crowd pictured in the illustration above used on Transport for London's public website in 2013, to advertise a park in what is a predominantly non-white area. (For examples of public 'facing' documents see

London Development Agency, 2009c; Department of Culture Media & Sport, 2008, or for a list of publications, visit the London Legacy Development Corporation website).

1.5 Definitions

This PhD is focussed on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, referring in particular to the planned and built green public open space, water space, and public realm forming the North & South Park on the Stratford site of the London 2012 Olympic Games, which was planned prior to the Games, and opened to the public in its entirity in April 2014. Using this park as a case study, I am seeking to investigate reasons for ethnic minority under-representation in parks more broadly in the UK. The thesis title 'Whose Values, whose benefits?' reflects the research questions I am posing, with value defined in terms of cultural, ethno-racial and ideological values, and benefits being those derived from open space, in terms of physical and psychological well being, and increased economic or social status benefits.

Ethnicity and race are contested terms (Back & Solomos, 2009; Alexander, 2002; Hall, 2000; Gilroy, 1992) , and are explored theoretically in Chapter Three. In summary, the proposed definition of 'ethnic minority' groups in this study are those self identified groups of people who have, and claim, a common cultural 'heritage' other than, or in addition to, the cultural 'heritage' claimed by the majority of residents in the UK. In the UK, the majority 'ethnicity', using the terms of the National Census, describes itself as 'white British' (79.8 % in 2011 Office for National Statistics 2013). This is also the 'ethnicity' that generates and reinforces dominant social structures and 'values' in the UK by being the majority of those in power politically, in the media, in design of the built environment, and in education (Wood & Cracknell, 2013; Satchwell, 2012; Centre for Ethnic Minority Studies, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2005).

Culture is interpreted here in terms similar to Tylor's definition of 1871, referring to a learned complex of knowledge, belief, art, morals, law and custom (Oxford Paperback Reference, 1998), which will influence an individual's ideology and behaviour. The concept of ethnicity and culture is linked here to Bourdieu's notion of 'habitus' and De Certeau et als ideas of the practices of everyday life (Bourdieu, 1999[1979]; de Certau, et al., 1998; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990[1977]).

The dominant cultural context, particularly in terms of UK landscape / park design, can be termed 'Anglo European', and 'Protestant', most influenced by northern European and North American society, culture and history. This statement will be elaborated and supported further in Chapter Three.

The term 'elite' as it is used here, refers to the broad definition of 'elite' used in the social research method of 'elite interviewing', a method allowing exploration of the views of people at the top of any social stratification system (Jupp, 2006) . In this instance, the stratification system considered applies in the field of spatial design, and the term is used to refer to those influential individuals who have been responsible for creation of the urban and park spaces at the Queen

Elizabeth Olympic park, claimed to be the highest profile spatial design 'showcase' in London and the UK since the Festival of Britain in 1951 and claimed to be the largest park designed in Europe for over 150 years (Olympic Delivery Authority, 2007). These individuals hold the power to shape space, create and reinforce the dominant spatial discourses and generate the 'representations of space' (Lefebvre, 1991[1974]) that have ultimately been given concrete expression in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and surrounding developments on the former London 2012 Olympic site. The term is not used here in wider political or economic contexts, or in reference to 'elite theory' of Vilfredo Pareto and Gaetano Mosca (Oxford Paperback Reference, 1998) .

1.6 Basic Assumptions

This research is based on measures of ethnicity, and to some extent of race, both of which are contested terms. I have set out the definition of ethnicity on which this research will be based:

An 'ethnic minority' group in this study are those self identified groups of people who have, and claim, a common cultural 'heritage' other than, or in addition to, the cultural 'heritage' claimed by the majority of residents in the UK.

The Oxford Dictionary of Sociology defines ethnicity thus

Ethnicity defines individuals who consider themselves or are considered by others, to share common characteristics which differentiate them from other collectivities in a society within which they develop distinct cultural behaviour. The term was coined in contradistinction to race, since although members of an ethnic group may be identifiable in terms of racial attributes, they may also share other cultural characteristics, such as religion, language, occupation or politics.
(Oxford Paperback Reference, 1998: 201)

In other words, ethnicity is a cultural/ social categorisation, race is a phenotypical categorisation. Either can cross cut the other. I do not consider a given ethnicity as representing an unvarying set of values or beliefs, nor that every individual who claims a given ethnicity has equivalent interpretations of their identity, or an identical set of values; however I am assuming there are some cultural values and ideologies that are broadly shared by people within an ethnic group, some will be supported, others subject to resistance, change and critique, and others may not even be consciously articulated.

1.7 Limitations

1.7.1 Case Study Choice

The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park is, in its origination, clearly not typical of most projects to create or enhance urban park spaces in the UK. This is the only park space generated through an Olympic Games here to date. A more detailed review of the Olympic context is set out in

Chapter 4. I propose that while the park's origin in an Olympic development presents unique circumstances, the park's formation is still typical in key respects of processes that generate park spaces elsewhere in the UK, both now and historically, and exemplifies the discourse linking parks, public space and urban regeneration that has been dominant in the UK since the establishment of the Urban Task Force in 1998 (Davis, 2011; Evans, 2011). I also argue that the high profile of the project in an international context would tend to foster a current 'best practice' approach to park making, as it is understood by decision makers, and their advisors in the UK. It can therefore serve to generally illustrate park making practices of contemporary designers and the UK's design decision makers.

1.7.2 Sampling

In gathering quantitative data , entirely random survey sampling could have offered a more robust dataset, however at an early stage it became clear that the resources available for this study required targeted purposive sampling to ensure large enough comparable populations from self identified ethnic groups. While 'ethnicity' is a familiar term in use administratively within the UK, it's meaning may not be clear or boundaries defined, in the same ways by all those I seek to include in empirical research. I will seek to record additional information to complement self identified ethnicity as indicators of cultural 'heritage' for example information regarding religious beliefs, spoken languages and any national or regional affiliations held by research participants.

1.7.3 Generalisability of Findings

With regard to the generalisability of the research findings regarding park making/ spatial practices , and preferences of different ethnicities sampled in the residential community surrounding the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, the methods used here aim to provide a triangulated, evidence supported, snapshot of behaviours and values at this time and in this place, which will be compared with findings of others working with similar people elsewhere at other times in the UK. These findings are intended therefore to be arguably representative, and could be tested through more statistically robust research to establish generalisability should resources be available.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The first part of this literature review takes as its starting point research linking ethnicity, and the use of urban green space, in particular urban parks. While there is a body of research investigating leisure use of rural settings by minority communities in the UK, this literature review is intentionally primarily focussed on investigations of use of urban green space linked to ethnicity, as this is more directly relevant to the case study and the research question.

The second part of the literature review critically engages with a further body of empirical research and theoretical development, one that continues to be influential within the disciplines of landscape architecture and geography (Royal Geographical Society, 2014; Turner & Monro, 2014; Jorgensen, 2008). This literature investigates people's aesthetic landscape preferences, and speculates as to the reasons for them. This work has been included here specifically for its relevance in relation to the question of perceived park quality, or landscape 'taste'.

This is an interdisciplinary research thesis, with studies included from sociology, geography, social policy, leisure studies, environmental psychology and from cultural studies. Research has been drawn where possible from the UK, supplemented by European studies, and from the large body of work exploring issues of ethnicity, park use and landscape preference from the US.

In the next chapter, the main constructs identified in this focussed literature review are linked with broader social theories of space, of ethnicity, of Britishness, and Anglo-European landscape 'taste'.

2.2 Parks & Minority Ethnicities: Under-Representation and Frequency of Visits.

Over the last 50 years, Leisure Sciences in the United States has provided a body of work that has statistically and qualitatively established significant variations in park use patterns and frequency of visit by ethnicity and or race in the United States. There has been relatively little work done over the same time frame linking use of urban parks and ethnicity in UK based research. Two significant literature reviews undertaken in more recent years by the OPENSpace research unit at Edinburgh College of Art Heriot Watt University, looking at ethnicity and green space use in the UK, found that those studies that have been carried out in urban contexts show black & minority ethnic groups are likely to be under-represented as park users in the UK (CABE Space, 2010; Morris, 2003).

Generally speaking, there has been a paucity of statistical information of any kind gathered on the use and perceived social value of urban parks in the UK (Hall Aitken, 2011; CABE Space, 2010; Dunnett, et al., 2002). This had begun to change, as a result of the establishment of Government funded research and advice body Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) in 1999, following recommendations of Lord Rogers 'Urban Task Force' (DETR, 1999), special

landscape unit CABE Space set up in 2003, and the Urban Parks programme Lottery funding requirements for park user counts. CABE, no longer funded by the Government and absorbed into the Design Council, were responsible for building an evidence base for parks policy under the last Labour Government. As Hall Aitken noted however in their 2011 evaluation of the Lottery funded 'Parks for People' Programme :

collecting data from a large number of (park) projects which can then be aggregated .... still presents a challenge; projects use a variety of methods and it is impossible to verify that all data is accurate.
(Hall Aitken 2011:16)

The strongest evidence to date that ethnicity in itself is a significant factor influencing use of parks in the UK was gathered by the OPENSpace research Group for CABE in their study Community Green (CABE Space 2010). The study addressed a research gap they had identified, by looking specifically at income inequality, ethnicity and use of park spaces. Combining literature review, quantitative and qualitative methodologies, OPENSpace interviewed over 500 people from ethnically diverse, economically deprived urban communities in six areas across the UK, people of ethnicities identified as African/African Caribbean, Bangladeshi, white British, Indian, and Pakistani with sample sizes reflecting the ethnic composition of the population in the sample areas. The study found that while use of urban parks reduced overall with reduced household income, the frequency of use of parks was most strongly correlated with ethnicity, echoing findings of quantitative studies in the US (Payne, et al., 2002).

The average percentage of the population in the UK who visit a park once a week or more, year round, is about 48% (Dunnett, et al., 2002). Community Green reported 41% of white British interviewees of low income visited their local park at least weekly year round, whereas less than 20 % of other ethnic groups did so. There were also significant variations in visit frequency between ethnic minority groups. Indians and white British people made the most use of parks near their homes, and Bangladeshis the least.

The report provides amalgamated and tabulated data by ethnicity across all the parks, and also provides information by geographic location, but without ethnicity data. The implication of this approach to reporting the survey findings is that differences in park use patterns have been consistent along ethnic lines in terms of frequency, irrespective of geographic location and can be aggregated. There are ethnic 'norms' for park use (or in the case of the amalgamated African/ African- Caribbean people, racial norms), and there has been no identified 'place effect' or local variation in behaviours or perceptions that might be worthy of investigations. It is clear that Indians and Bangladeshis are discussing use of different parks, as this is identified in the study area descriptions, but in some cases, parks' visitors are drawn from varied ethnicities. Further interrogation of the raw data would perhaps allow cross comparison between people of the same ethnic groups in different locations, and between people of varied ethnic groups at the same location. These further investigations may be of significant value in understanding any place based reasons why variations in frequency of use occur.

The finding that most Bangladeshis perceived one local park to be of low quality, when the same park was assessed by a multi ethnic assessment group to be of very high quality, might also have been investigated more thoroughly. This anomaly potentially points to a difference in the view of what constitutes a 'high quality park', possibly a difference in tastes or values, between people of Bangladeshi heritage and those of other ethnic backgrounds, including other South Asian backgrounds.

The Community Green study established that all participants placed the same value on access to green space, regardless of their ethnicity, when assessed against a range of factors that they considered would make a good neighbourhood. This finding used the same methodology and was consistent with a wider European attitudes survey (PLUREL, 2010). Jacqueline Burgess, et al's study of a different neighbourhood residents' feelings about open spaces in Greenwich found that everyone valued the experience of nature, and the opportunity to spend time outside, regardless of ethnicity. (Burgess, et al., 1988), and from Urban Green Nation :

The Place Survey shows that .... ninety-five per cent of people think it is very or fairly important to have green spaces near to where they live.
(CABE 2010:119)

The OpenSPACE researchers seem to infer from this that if all ethnicities value parks equally, but ethnic minorities are under-represented as park users, then something external is inhibiting ethnic minorities from using parks. They then link this idea with previous research findings (CABE 2010) that people of minority ethnicities have less quality parks in their neighbourhoods, determine the issue must be distance from home, and conclude that green space closer to home, for example in social housing areas, should be improved to encourage use, and better deliver health benefits from using outdoor space to people of ethnic minorities.

This recommendation would of course increase the amount of nearby quality green space for many people, but as a conclusion to the study, it does not seem to follow from their research findings. Distance from home to parks was not greater for people of minority ethnicities than for white British people in the areas studied, the areas chosen had roughly equal distribution and quantity of green space, and nor was 'independently assessed' quality of green space associated with greater frequency of use by BME participants. Perceived quality by participants was however of great significance, though not explored, and was variable by ethnicity even for the same park.

Finding that study participants value access to nature or green space equally does not rule out the possibility that people or groups of people may have different things in mind when considering ''nature'', ''access'' and ''green space'', differing perceptions of what a quality green space would have in it, or be like. Even where there is a generally positive reaction to the presence of planting and greenery, and pleasure at spending time outside, it remains the case that different types of green space or configurations of 'nature' might be more or less attractive to different groups, as suggested by Byrne & Wolch, and that this may influence perceptions of quality, and frequency of visit (Byrne & Wolch, 2009).

It may equally be that the frequency of visits vary primarily for 'internal' cultural reasons. Gomez (1999) points out that normal levels of park use for each ethnicity may vary irrespective of any value placed on the park, and that white (American in his study) behaviour should not be taken as normative. What the CABE Community Green study does provide however, is statistical support for the theory that there is significant variation in park use frequency by ethnicity in the UK, at a greater level than differences due to income variation, and this variation in frequency of use would be likely to result in under-representation of BME groups as park users in any user count. What the study fails to do in my view is to adequately explain why.

2.3 Why Ethnic Minority Groups May Use Parks Less .

The use of parks for leisure activity is of course optional, and levels of use could therefore be primarily a result of preference, cultural practices and norms, and/or broader societal structures, or a combination of these factors.

Leisure Studies in the US has been attempting to investigate this question since at least the 1960s, when interest was sparked by a study published by the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission (Gomez, 2008). Broadly speaking the two approaches proposed to explain observed differences in levels of and preferences for park use by ethnicity are to identify socioeconomic factors and structures at a societal level as the most influential, or to identify agency, at either a group or individual level as the most influential. Much of the critique within US Leisure Studies of this body of work has revolved around inconsistency in measurements of variables, and also in the definition of 'ethnicity' and 'race', with many researchers seemingly using the terms interchangeably. Edwin Gomez in his PhD research working with the Puerto Rican community in Massachusetts makes the point that race and ethnicity are not interchangeable, describing how the Puerto Rican community have a strong ethnic identity within US society, however their skin colour and other racial attributes are very varied (Gomez, 1999). It is obvious that there are many cultures and traditions with different values within continents like Europe, or Africa, and even within the individual countries of these continents, that are not discernable by phenotypical variation. The critique of equating race and ethnicity, which has been levelled at Leisure Studies researchers in the US is equally valid in the UK, (not least in the UK census), a point I will return to later in this literature review.

Rebecca Stanfield McCown and Daniel Lavin summarised the key US hypotheses under commonly used headings outlined below, echoing Gomez (1999) and others (Stanfield McCown & Laven, 2008). While UK academic research in the subject has been less prolific, and is perhaps less willingly/readily categorised, the principle theories referred to in US Leisure Studies can be seen in UK papers, and I believe the US categorisation can provide a useful framework for discussion of the main propositions, with more detail in some areas being provided in subsequent sections.

2.4 Marginality/ Deprivation Hypothesis

Marginality is the US equivalent of the UK term 'deprivation'. In the marginality hypothesis, differences in racial / ethnic minority representation in park use, (in most studies National Parks and wilderness areas), are largely attributed to the structural racism that results in lower employment, greater poverty, higher crime rates, lower educational attainment and fewer quality parks and open spaces in areas where minorities live. This hypothesis has faced challenges since the early 1970s. Myron Floyd (1998) has critiqued researchers testing the marginality hypothesis for not adequately defining marginalisation, and in particular for generally failing to operationalise racial discrimination as part of its definition, and consequently for testing only class based rather than race based effects. The factors measured typically include financial resources, measures of educational achievement, and employment opportunities. (Floyd, 1998; Floyd and Gramman, 1995; Dwyer and Hutchison, 1990; Woodward, 1988, Washburnee, 1978;Lindsay and Ogle1972). In general, 'marginality' or deprivation is found to be an issue affecting access to and use of parks, both in the US and UK, but has not been found to be the most significant variable predicting frequency of visit or patterns of park use. The key study investigating, and ultimately contesting marginality hypothesis in regard to the use of urban parks in the UK (at least in terms of socioeconomic deprivation) is 'Community Green' (CABE Space 2010), described in some detail above.

With regard to ethnic minorities access to the countryside and National Parks in the UK, research has tended to be hampered by a general lack of information on visitors generally. Quoting from a 2007 visitor survey for the Chilterns Area of Outstanding National Beauty

The role of ethnicity and culture in countryside recreation has not received adequate research attention in the UK. Relatively few local and national site visitor surveys collect information on ethnic background so it is difficult to gauge the actual levels of participation/under-participation across the UK.
(Tourism South East 2008 :19)

The Chiltern's study's literature review and findings from its own research however indicate that visitors to the countryside are mainly drawn from a relatively small social group, of a narrow age and income/ employment profile, suggesting therefore that actually, in the UK, the majority of the population are under-represented as countryside/ National Park users.

2.5 Opportunity Hypothesis

The marginality hypothesis is linked to what is termed the opportunity hypothesis, which proposes that recreation patterns and preferences are to a large extent formed by the available facilities near where people live, and that patterns of preference for park use and activities are constrained by economic opportunity to experience a wider range of spaces at greater distance. It is common sense that it would be harder to visit a park often if it was far away from rather than near to your location, particularly for those with financial and time constraints, and that habits

of park use are likely to form in, or to adapt to a space more readily available to you. Research papers support this finding broadly (Stodolska et al, 2011; Gordon-Larsen et al , 2006; Powell, et al , 2004).

Studies cited as exploring this hypothesis have examined the relationship between the residential location of minority populations, attitudes to open space provision, proximity and type of recreational sites, and recreation preferences (Payne, Mowen, and Orsega-Smith, 2002, O'Leary and Benjamin, 1982, Lindsay and Ogle, 1972). The cited studies have not all concluded that opportunity is the prevailing formative factor in preferences for outdoor recreation. Payne et al (2002) for instance, concluded from a quantitative study of 800 people in two areas of Cleveland, that race was a stronger indicator of park use and preference than location, and cite a number of studies that contradict the opportunity hypothesis (Stamps & Stamps 1985, Dwyer 1984). Theories of the interplay between configuration of space and social structure are discussed in greater depth in Chapter Three.

British Waterways: Birmingham and Black Country Canals Perception Survey 1995 (Inland Waterways Amenity Council 2001) provides quantitative data that seems to challenge the supposition that proximity is key to, or formative of use. Their interview survey conducted with 504 residents of mixed age, income and ethnicity living close to the Birmingham and Black Country Canals, showed that nearly 60% of those living nearby had made no visit to the canals in the previous six months. A majority of residents were therefore under-represented as visitors. Women, especially those with children in the household, retired people, young people, and Asian respondents were the least likely to have visited the canal.

Their finding indicates that proximity and social status, though influential, are not the only factors influencing use of open space. In the US, Gomez's 1999 PhD study described in more detail below, also clearly shows that distance/opportunity is not the only factor at work Distant facilities can be preferred and even more frequently used by some people than park spaces closer to home.

2.6 Subculture / Ethnicity Hypothesis

The subculture /ethnicity hypothesis attributes differences in park visitation, at least partially, to an ethnic minority's cultural norms, value systems, social organization, and socialization practices (Gobster, 2002; Chavez, 2000; Floyd, 1999; Dwyer, 1993; Dwyer and Gobster, 1992; Dwyer and Hutchison, 1990; Washburne, 1978). Examples of culturally based preferences have been found to include size of recreational groups (more lone/ two person visits by white 'Anglo' people, larger groups more typical for minority ethnicities, including highest frequency of visits with extended family groups), different preferred activities (e.g. more active individual activities e.g. walking, cycling preferred by white ethnicities, versus more 'passive' social activities e.g. picnicking, celebrating festivals etc amongst minority ethnicities), and differences in preferred development level of sites (e.g. importance of provision of toilets, pavilions, visitor centres). US studies tend to be quantitative in approach. Gobster's study of the 404 hectare Lincoln

Park Chicago (2002) was based on interviews with just over 900 individuals, roughly equally representing four main racial groups, from 25 main ethnic groups. Gobster found that ethnic variations were discernible in park use patterns and preferences, however he stresses there were many similarities in activities, in what participants said they enjoyed, and what they disliked.

Floyd's 1998 critique of US Leisure research makes the important point that ethnic identity is not fixed, immutable and clearly bounded, but fluid and continuously being re-formed and affirmed. The performance of spatial practices in public are part of the process of creating and sustaining of ethnic identity. The collective use of space can assist in the establishment of sense of a collectivity with shared values and customs (Floyd 1998).

In the UK, studies focussing on ethnic variation in preferences for open space features, for planting types etc have tended to use qualitative methods, and focus on small groups, which presents challenges for generalisability of findings (Rishbeth 2011, 2004; MacNaghten & Urry 2000; Agyeman & Spooner 1997). It is also possible to identify different use patterns and preferences by age, by sexuality and by gender (MacNaghten & Urry 2000).

There are however common themes raised by participants of some ethnicities, and noted by researchers, such as a preference among some minority groups for collective extended group use rather than individual park visits (CABE 2010; Greenhalgh & Worpole 1995), or concerns with the lack of provision of single gender spaces (Morris, 2003), and the presence of too many dogs (CABE Space, 2010; Bell, 2005; Madge, 1997). Cultural variation is looked at in greater detail in section 2.9 below.

Comparing these studies, as well as the common themes emerging from them, there are also differences notable between the reported preferences of people of the same stated ethnicity in different places, even within the same country. For example while Gobster (2002) found limited use of the fishing lake by Puerto Ricans compared with other ethnicities in Chicago, Gomez (1999) found opportunities to fish to be a primary driver of significant use of a distant park for a Puerto Rican community in Massachusetts. Such anomalies may be an effect of: difference within ethnic group identities in different locations, countering the assumption of a standard and fixed ethnic categorisation (Floyd 1998); variation in the types of questions asked, study method used , or author definitions; or a 'place effect' providing evidence perhaps either of local customs or traditions arising in specific places/ spaces, or of other factors in particular locations that might inhibit some groups beyond cultural preference .

2.7 Acculturation Hypothesis

Associated with the sub culture/ethnicity hypothesis, and leading from the idea that there are culturally based normative frequencies and types of use, is the acculturation hypothesis. This hypothesis proposes that as minority cultures become acculturated to mainstream cultural norms and practices, they take on more leisure practices typical of the majority culture (Gomez 1999, Floyd and Gramann 1995) and park use increases as a result. Further discussion of research supporting this hypothesis can be found in Section 2.9 of this Chapter..

2.8 Racism/Discrimination Hypothesis

The last predominant hypothesis examined in the research literature, is termed the ''discrimination hypothesis'' in the US, (more typically termed racism in the UK), and places importance on discrimination/ racism from interpersonal contact with other visitors, or with park personnel, or through institutional policies. These studies document many instances of ethnic minorities not using parks and other green spaces in predominantly white areas because of the hostile reactions of white people to their presence, and anticipation of unchallenged unfair treatment by staff. (Roberts, 2007; Livengood & Stodolska 2004; Floyd, 1998; Blahna and Black, 1993; Gobster and Delgado, 1992;West 1989). The importance of racism/discrimination as a limiting factor on access to park spaces is looked at in more detail in 2.10.

2.9 Cultural Variation in Normative Behaviour

In the UK, many qualitative studies have found significant differences between cultural/ ethnic groups in park/ open space use, and landscape preferences, usually using focus groups. The small number of participants, the variety of ethnicities, ages , time in the UK, educational background, gender etc , and the limited number of studies of similar conditions means the results are indicative of generalised tendency to culturally based differences, rather than identifying widely generalisable cultural norms, even within any ethnic minority.

Julian Agyeman & Rachel Spooner (1997) exploring reasons why ethnic minorities are less frequent visitors to the countryside than white British people provide several possible explanations, including that in general, many cultures have a folklore or mythology that reveres and respects the countryside, but, unlike the English in particular (MacNaghten & Urry, 1998) do not think of it as a leisure resource. Groundwork Blackburn's 1999 qualitative study, (in IWAC 2001) found mixed attitudes to canals across all groups, but members of the Asian Muslim community they interviewed were especially 'adamant in their dislike of the canal'. Phil MacNaghtan and John Urry's (2000) discussions with 9 focus groups around the UK investigating attitudes to native broad leaved woodlands found most people involved in the study liked them, though there were variations in the ways in which different groups wanted to use woods. Significantly one group, comprising young urban 'Asians' of Kashmiri & Pakistani heritage, had negative associations with broadleaf trees, and positive associations with conifers, in complete contrast to the focus groups of Scottish, Welsh or English heritage people interviewed. They are reported as saying they would avoid broadleaf woodlands completely, unless as some part of organised adventure activity, and thought such spaces would be dirty or unsafe. The researchers attribute these feelings in part to positive experience of coniferous woodlands in Pakistan and Kashmir, and knowledge of primarily urban woodland in their UK environment.

Clare Rishbeth from the University of Sheffield has focussed on ethnic/ cultural difference in landscape design, use and perception in her work over many years. Her primary motivation in research appears to be seeking ways to encourage greater use of British urban landscapes by ethnic minorities, and the potential for landscape to ease processes of migration by creating

links to places of origin. Rishbeth (2001) remarks on how public parks in different countries evidence tastes or fashions in landscape that contrast with UK norms: for example, the popularity of brightly lit fountains in parks in Pakistan, or for electronic music played through speakers in Chinese parks. Though Rishbeth does not look to theoretical or ideological differences between design or interpretation of landscape space in other cultures, this paper is one of very few that points to culturally differentiated landscape 'tastes' and highlights cultural inscription of park spaces. This is in contrast to the more common research portrayal of parks as uniform spaces, where differences between users are the only identified variable, and the possible impacts of spaces themselves are largely ignored - a critique of much research in this area (Byrne 2012, Byrne and Wolch 2009).

In her study 'Ethno-cultural representation in the urban landscape' (2004) Rishbeth found that Asian and African research participants were less likely to be attracted to 'wildness' compared with white British participants – suggesting wildness may be a deterrent to access for some people. The analysis of large data sets that informed CABE's 'Urban Green Nation' report (CABE, 2010) (but was not published in the report itself) also found that BME people valued 'access to nature' less than white British people in determining whether an area was a good place to live (Bramley, et al., 2009).

Rishbeth's 2011 paper given at the OPENSpace conference looked at migrant women's experiences of open space in childhood in their countries of origin, and in adulthood in the UK. In their diverse home countries, everyday play mostly took place in outdoor spaces near home. More formal trips to either large urban parks, or to the countryside, with large groups of extended family for picnics were a common activity at weekend (Rishbeth 2011). While her paper does not quantify use of outdoor space by migrant women in their home countries, it shows outdoor recreation is very much part of their pre migration life experience and cultural background, and that adapting to life in the UK successfully in their terms would include opportunities for similar experiences here, a finding echoing Burgess et al (1988).

In her thesis looking at South Asian migrants in Sweden, Johanna Mantere (Mantere 2008) describes difficulties faced by larger migrant groups seeking to picnic in local park spaces, as in their country of origin, but finding formal seating provision too limited, and inadequate, and the ground too wet for informal seating for much of the year.

Monika Stodolska et al supports Floyd's assertion of the importance of open space in the affirmation of collective identity (Stodolska et al ., 2011; Floyd 1998). The study looks at Mexican migrants and Mexican Americans who are reproducing the function of plazas in Mexican public life in the only open space available to them - the public park -though its design means it is poorly suited to this function.

These studies seem to support a Lefebvrian reading of spatial practices, that ethnic groups, seek to 'appropriate' spaces to meet their needs/customs, creating 'spaces of representation' rather than, as opportunity theory would predict, adapting their behaviours to match the planned use of space provided.

A pattern of park use in extended family groups among some ethnic minority groups has been documented in several studies looking at ethnicity and park use in the UK (CABE Space 2010; Morris 2003; Greenhalgh & Worpole 1995). If this were the preferred spatial practice of a given ethnicity, then as a logistically and spatially demanding, weather dependent form of use, it would be likely to result in less frequent visits to parks, than individual/ small group visits for dog walking, for exercise, or for children's play, typical of white British research participants (Greenhalgh & Worpole 1995).

In the US, the initial advocate for the theory that different ethnicities may in 'ideal conditions' use green space different amounts for cultural reasons was Randel Washburne, in his 1978 paper ''Black Under-Participation in Wildland Recreation: Alternative Explanations'' (Washburne, 1978). The paper proposed that the most important factor influencing the under-representation of black people in 'wildland' recreation was what he termed ''sub cultural leisure norms and value systems'', and not only 'marginality' or deprivation, in impacting leisure choices - the primary theory at that time. Washburne did not empirically investigate this theory himself, but it has been subject to considerable study in the US ever since, with mixed results. Black Americans are not recent migrants to the US, so Washburne's assertion that a 'subculture' exists with different norms of leisure practice represents some challenge to those who attribute such differences to ethnic minorities recent arrival from other countries, and the likelihood of eventual disappearance of differences by 'acculturation'.

In his PhD thesis ''Reconceptualising the Relationship between Ethnicity and Public Recreation: A Proposed Model '' Edwin Gomez (Gomez 1999) took a study of Puerto Rican Americans in Southbridge Massachusetts and quantitatively measured their frequency of park use. The study was later published in 2002, is widely cited, and has been influential in shaping parks policy in the US. Gomez continues to publish in the field.

Gomez created and tested his conceptual 'model' of the relationship between park use and ethnicity using statistical methods, including confirmatory factor analysis and path analysis. He began by looking at five factors that leisure studies theory proposed influence frequency of visit: acculturation, socioeconomic status, subcultural identity, perceived discrimination, public recreation participation, and a further factor, perceived benefits of public recreation, which he ultimately concluded was worthy of more study. The usual comparison between minority groups and 'American white' populations was rejected - he wanted to measure frequency of park visits against a 'Puerto Rican' norm, in an effort to avoid a 'race based' approach where white behaviour is presumed normative.

His research ultimately supported his model and found a causal link showing the more 'acculturated' members of the Puerto Rican community became, the more they would adopt American norms of leisure behaviour, and the more frequently they would visit parks. His research showed a link between increased 'acculturation', reduced perception of discrimination, and reduction in the strength of 'sub cultural identity'. He also demonstrated a link between ethnicity and marginality (which he found to be a spurious not a causal link). Gomez basic starting assumption seems to be that the Puerto Rican norm for frequency of park visits would, in an 'ideal' situation, be below that of the majority American cultural norm, inferred from his

measure of increasing frequency being allied with increasing acculturation. The assumption that a lower frequency of use would be preferred by Puerto Ricans outside the American urban context, or elsewhere in the US is not tested by his study nor theoretically established in his literature review. His thesis concluded (like Rishbeth, 2004 and others) that parks should inculcate a greater sense of belonging by catering to ethnic minorities in terms of their leisure preferences and language needs, in order to increase the frequency of their park visits. While I would tend to agree with this position, I find it hard to connect this conclusion with his empirical research. A recommendation for cultural adaptation of park spaces seems contradictory to his initial stance regarding cultural norms. It indicates an assumption that there is a demand for greater park use amongst the Puerto Rican community, and that the current configuration of park spaces and park management practices in the US is excluding to them. There is little support for any perception of cultural exclusion of Puerto Ricans by Americans in his study (except by the police, a finding he chose to reject from the model as problematic), and no evidence there might be increased park use because of the recommended inclusive approaches.

In general, the level of consistency in establishing a distinctive Puerto Rican identity, compared with American identity in the responses of subjects seems low, and the findings therefore seem questionable. 'Acculturation' , or the adoption of mainstream cultural norms in addition to retention of minority culture is measured only in terms of language preferences, based on prior research. 'Mainstream' cultural preferences in park use or mainstream perceived benefits of park use were not tested, and acculturation to these values not recorded, except in terms of frequency of visit. The contradictory finding of a relatively high preference for Spanish language print media was deemed inconsistent with the theoretical model for acculturation, and the finding excluded. I question this correlation. If park use increases with the amount of spoken English this may be because those speaking English are not perceived as 'other' in shared park spaces, and are then less subject to discrimination. It may have nothing to do with taking on American leisure patterns. Discrimination was recorded in survey results, in particular, hostile attitudes from the police, but this finding was also dismissed as an anomaly for statistical reasons. Language in print media would have less impact on perception of difference in the public realm, but may, in terms of distinctive editorial content, be a stronger indication of identification with a non mainstream ethnic/sub cultural identity, than spoken language. The impact of racism on use of public space is described in greater detail in 2.10.

The most intriguing aspect of this study to my mind is not fully explored, and relates to the parks that are visited by Puerto Ricans in Southbridge. Of the two parks most used by participants one park was very close to the main Puerto Rican neighbourhood, and had been adapted to favour the activity preferences, particularly sport preferences, of the community. The other park, surprisingly the one most frequently visited over all, was on the other side of town, further than any other park in Southbridge from the main Puerto Rican residential area. This park, Westbridge Dam, was reportedly more 'natural' in character, and not reported to have been adapted in any way to remove perceived cultural barriers to use. The park was used for many participants community events such as church picnics, on the grounds of its natural landscape. Uniquely in Southbridge, it offered the possibility of fishing - described as culturally important by Gomez (in contrast to Gobster 2002).

The level of use of this distant park contradicts 'opportunity theory', and is worthy of further consideration. Structured use by many church groups, and for picnics, points to the development or maintenance of a local tradition in the use of this space, and recalls Floyd's recognition of the value of open space in allowing groups to assert and reinforce cultural / ethnic identity (Floyd 1998). There is (as with other studies) no description of park context, surrounding neighbourhoods, or accessibility.

2.10 Territories, Racism and Fear

Unequal power relations in UK society, are sustained, at least in part, through reinforcement in our everyday encounters with those around us (Marne 1996; Bell et al 1994; Butler 1993) . The nature of these informal and formal daily encounters , and reactions to them, help to establish 'territories' . They influence, and can restrict through fear, our freedom of movement in public space, including access to and use of parks (Back 2005, Livengood & Stodolska 2004, Madge 1997, West 1989).

The literature exploring park use by minority groups in the UK provides evidence that racist behaviours towards minorities limits their access to park spaces, to levels below those desired or normative for them. In park spaces, unchallenged hostility creates fear, both of recurrent verbal abuse and of physical attack. The majority of research in this area is qualitative, and tends to involve relatively small numbers of participants, and questions therefore arise about the generalisability of findings from any individual case. However the sheer quantity of these qualitative studies, and commonality of findings, points to widespread experiences of racism towards ethnic minorities, constraining their movement in public space. To further support a claim for generalisability, there is quantitative evidence, for example from the British Crime Survey, that indicates these are typical rather than atypical experiences.

Burgess, Harrison & Limb's focus group discussions and survey based study of Greenwich Parks (South-East London) describes how Asian women they interviewed felt limited in how they could use parks and green spaces nearby. They were bringing up their children in a 'hostile social environment' deprived of opportunity to play safely outside (Burgess, et al., 1988). The study gives voice to participants fears, and shows them to be based on actual incidents

" Neena, for example, has stopped going to the park with her daughter :

Neena. `I wouldn't go there on my own with my little girl unless my husband's there or else somebody else is there with me. Because it has happened sometimes - quite a few times when you go out .... they shout 'Oi Paki!' and they throw stones' .

Maya too fears that in unsupervised parks, Asian women and children are at risk :

`If we are there, we have always to constantly look after the children you know . Sometimes somebody push them from the slide or something like -some bigger boys and all come . Welling is the headquarters of the British Movement . They are always around - something going on . We

have to be always there . I don't let my children go to Danson Park or anywhere. Not alone. They play in the open space [in front of the house] but not in the parks at all .'
(Burgess, et al.,1988: 465)

A qualitative 2010 study of perceived accessibility of public green space in Glasgow found through in depth interviews, group discussions and participant drawn mapping, that even where high quality green space is physically available, fear of antisocial actions by other users of open space, due in the researcher's view to a lack of social cohesion, causes those with financial and transport resources to seek outdoor recreation elsewhere (Seaman et al 2010). Those with few resources to explore alternatives are ultimately highly constrained, and feel unable to use local green spaces to the levels they wish, even where their children's wish to play outside would motivate them, where quality of provision is good, and where distances to travel are small. Racist abuse and graffiti were raised by migrant participants from Somalia as major deterrents to using nearby outdoor space for recreation, and supervised indoor spaces at a nearby community centre were used in preference. This type of fear generated constraint on park use is supported by evidence from studies of other public spaces.

Research in East London (Dench et al 2006) records many interviews with residents of Bangladeshi heritage, who, in the late 1990's, felt safe in their neighbourhoods around Brick Lane and Spitalfields, but were fearful of other parts of the Borough. They would avoid areas they considered dangerous, where racist attitudes and attacks had been known. More than one interviewee cited the Victoria Park area, Bow Common Road, and areas east of Globe Road. PhD research in 2005 investigating the lives and values of young people going to school in East London includes participants maps of similar 'geographies of fear'. In those accounts, Victoria Park was one of the places most feared by Asian young women, which they related to the murder of a female jogger there in 2003 (Gaskell, 2005).

Les Back's study of young people's places of belonging in East and South-East London (Back 2005) uses ethnography and participants photographs of places considered both safe and dangerous, to describe their spaces of sanctuary and danger in the city day to day. Parks and playgrounds, which many people might consider as good places for young people, are among the spaces considered most dangerous, and to be avoided. The young people associated these spaces with verbal abuse and threats, or feared them as unpopulated and unknown, so 'risky'.

The young 'black' boys (a term that includes children of African, Caribbean, and mixed race/ ethnicity parentage) who took part in Back's study felt they were at serious risk of attack if they left 'their area' especially to visit areas they considered 'white'. The impact of Stephen Lawrence's racist murder in Eltham, South-East London in 1993 was often raised as evidence of the seriousness of this threat. Pauline Marne describes:

'people come to associate certain spaces with danger …. These stories and discourses about particular places are passed on ….. Hence research has shown that many ethnic groups avoid particular parts of the city which they see as being other people's space…. particular areas of the city can be territorialised into "white spaces", "Asian spaces" and so on.
(Marne 1996:115)

Although this fear of place by reputation can be seen to operate at group level, this is not to say that everyone in a 'community' has exactly the same mapping or will be subject to identical constraint, or that every space within an area will have the same fear attached to it. Back's study found that personal geographies of safe and unsafe space do vary. Some Islamic girls in his study found safety and a level of freedom outside their 'neighbourhood' in a part of east London more widely described as racist. In the controlled public environment of the library they were generally ignored by the locals and beyond the view/control of people who knew them, in a space that could be approved of by their parents for its educational benefit (Back, 2005).

It is not only ethnic minority groups who are constrained by fear in their use of urban 'green infrastructure', but there is evidence to indicate ethnic minorities are the most constrained. In the British Waterways: Birmingham and Black Country Canals Perception Survey (1995) (Inland Waterways Amenity Council 2001) , the groups identified as least likely to use a nearby canal for recreation are those most likely to be constrained by fear - the least physically or socially powerful - women, young people, older people, and people from ethnic minorities. All reported concerns over personal security as a deterrent to use, however it was the Asians interviewed who expressed greatest concern, and were the most negative (There is no specific reference to racism in IWAC's report of the study).

Feminist literature has extensively explored how women can be deterred from using public spaces (see discussion in Marne 1996 or Pain 2001) through fear of sexual attack, a fear reinforced in everyday life by: family protectionism; disapproval, harassment, or verbal abuse of women in public space; anecdotal stories of female sexual attack; and sensationalised accounts publicised by the media.

"Rape or the fear of rape…is something that impinges far more on the life of women… (it) can have a devastating effect on the ability of women to continue producing valued forms of physical capital.."
(Shilling, 2003:147)

Often women who have been attacked are depicted as having deserved it, or brought it on themselves in some way, by somehow acting irresponsibly, or just being 'unprotected' in public space at certain times. Women therefore also monitor their own movements to avoid censure. Marne's participant observation and ethnographic research in Liverpool's Sefton Park asserts that women's fears are exaggerated, disproportionate to the number of actual incidents (Marne, 1996). Irrespective of actual risk, these fears are sufficient to deter even women with low incomes from using cost free park spaces, in comparison to commercial, security controlled, privatised spaces of leisure, where Marne found they felt safe, and had developed strategies to 'appropriate' spaces within them (Lefebvre, 1991[1974]).

Others report how women's relatively high level of fear of attack in public space are misplaced as they are far more likely to be attacked in a domestic setting, (see discussion in Ware et al 2011) but that this fear is actively sustained by the smaller 'everyday' acts of harassment and disapproval. Feminist research has been accused of minimising the significance of race and class in women's experience of fear in public space, with published feminist literature emphasising a

white middle class female perspective (Day 1999), and largely disregarding the

" consistently higher fear experienced by people of color, though well documented."
(Day 1999:307)

The British Crime Survey 2000 found that people from BME groups were 'far more worried about all types of crime' than white people (Johnston 2001). Far higher levels of fear of racial attack, and of dogs in UK parks have been reported by Afro-Caribbean and Asian research participants (Madge 1997).

The effect of fear of sexually motivated assault typical of women, is compounded by the fear of ethnic/racist attacks (Day 1999) which may mean ethnic minority women & girls are more severely excluded from park use than other groups, by their own, and their families' fears for them. Research findings in the UK on the impact of increasing fear on children's movement in the public realm indicate that while all UK children are now more constrained in their freedom of movement than in the past, it is girls from ethnic minorities, particularly South Asian girls who are the most constrained of all in the distance from home they are allowed to travel unaccompanied (Wheway & Millward 1997). Burgess (1995) focus group discussions about urban fringe woodlands found that while all women feared to go into the woods alone, most women interviewed felt able to manage these constraints by being accompanied in their use of the woods by a male companion. Asian women however felt they needed to be in large groups to enter the woods in safety.

A qualitative investigation of American Muslim people's leisure patterns after the 9/11 attacks in New York and Washington found the Muslim women interviewed were far more often subject to racial abuse in public places than men, partly, the interviewees felt, because their style of dress made them more identifiably Muslim than male family members (Livengood & Stodolska 2004). Their fear of abuse and attack was reflective of the actual threat. The research found their reactions to this type of encounter in parks and public spaces resulted in a reduction in use of 'white dominated' spaces for themselves and for their children, increased activity within their ethno religious group, and increased reliance on in-group based leisure. Researchers stressed the importance of recognising these women had not been culturally constrained to remaining in the home prior to the increase in hostility to Muslims. They report that impacts on spatial constraint were exacerbated because of Islamic practices of gender segregated activity, which meant that women were not always able to use male protection as a strategy to allow them to continue to pursue preferred leisure practices in public space, as white women had done in Burgess 1995 study. As Marne (1996) says

'It is the actuality of sexual and racial attack that warns women and black communities every day of the bodily violence they may experience if in the 'wrong space at the wrong time'; this fear is 'topped up' on a daily basis by ongoing and pervasive harassment, by an awareness of the un-provoked and arbitrary nature of such attacks and by an appreciation of their long-lasting and traumatic nature. Fear of attack thus severely delimits the potential of certain urban social groups to undertake recreational activities within urban parks.'
(Marne 1996:116)

But it is not only perceived victims of crime and abuse whose movements in space are constrained by fear; those 'others' who are constructed as 'dangerous' are also constrained, through wanting to avoid hostile or fearful reactions from others to their presence (Burgess 1995). Suspicion and fear is not only directed at ethnic minorities: all those who are seen as potentially threatening, but are socially less powerful tend to suffer similar reactions. These groups are mainly male, include low income groups, teenagers, (Beunderman et al 2007, Burgess 1995), but especially 'black' men (House of Commons Home Affairs Committee 2009; Qureshi 2007; Day 1999) and increasingly , since Al Qaeda's attacks in New York and London, young Muslim men (Qureshi 2007; Alexander 2005). Day's study describes how white women she interviewed were especially fearful of sexualised and aggressive behaviour from black men (Day 1999), a finding that has been echoed in social research in the UK (see for example discussions in Pain 2001 or Marne 1996).

In addition to racism expressed as fear in everyday encounters, racism of this type has been shown to operate at an institutional level. People who are constructed as posing a 'threat' are subject to general suspicion, including increased police and private security 'interest', elevated levels of 'stop and search' and even exclusion from public spaces . The disproportionate numbers of young men from minority ethnic groups subject to 'stop and search' is presented as evidence of continuing 'institutional racism' of the police (see discussion in Qureshi 2007) .

Police bias along racial lines is also reported in interactions with women from minority ethnic groups as well. One female participant in Day's study describes feeling unprotected by the police, recounting reporting a crime committed against her by a white person that was not investigated at all to her knowledge (Day 1999). This individual case in a US city seems of little value as evidence of wider social perceptions, especially in a UK context, however as previously stated, other quantitative sources provide evidence that this case may be illustrative of wider perceptions of the police in minority groups here in the UK. A follow up to the Macpherson Report into the death of Stephen Lawrence reports that in the UK, in 2007/08, 28% of people from ethnic minority communities felt that they would be treated worse by the police or another criminal justice agency because of race (House of Commons Home Affairs Committee 2009).

Floyd discusses how embedded racial discrimination in US society has led to the 'marginalisation' of racial (and ethnic) minorities, widely proposed as an hypothesis for minority patterns of park use, a process which has led to segregated housing, lessening of employment opportunities and increased poverty amongst 'non- white' populations (Floyd 1998). Floyd has critiqued others investigating 'marginality hypothesis' for failing to operationalise the racial discrimination element of life for marginalised minorities, and by focussing simply on socio-economic factors, thereby recording only class based rather than racially or ethnically based effects. CABE's study 'Urban Green Nation' (CABE 2010) shows that in the UK, as in the US, ethnic minorities are likely to have the least access to quality open space, through the structural disadvantages that result in disproportionate percentages of ethnic minorities in the most deprived areas, with fewer, smaller, 'quality' green spaces close to their homes. With increased distance from park spaces, there is decreased likelihood of frequent visits for all who are time and finance constrained, though as Byrne (2012), and other cited examples demonstrate, proximity to quality green space is not a guarantee that everyone will feel equally able to make use of the space. For people of

ethnic minorities, with increased distance, there is an increased likelihood of everyday racist encounters constraining movement.

As Doreen Massey describes, public spaces are meeting up places, and rights to them are negotiated in more or less socially regulated ways (Massey 2005). In unstaffed parks and playgrounds, the negotiations can be brutal, (Livengood & Stodolska 2004, Marne 1996, Back 1995, Burgess, et al.,1988) and in a context of distrust for regulatory authorities among some sections of society, may seem unchallengeable. Incidents repeatedly illustrated in the literature manifestly reflect unequal social relations along ethnic lines, and the impact of everyday acts of oppression on some people's access to 'public' space.

2.11 Landscape Preference Research.

Landscape preference research developed from explorations of aesthetics in the 1970s in the fields of geography and psychology, with an aim of understanding whether there were common environmental factors, or some kind of biological needs at work when people found particular landscapes beautiful. The relevance of the field to this thesis, which is investigating the role of cultural values in perceived park quality or landscape taste, and so on behaviour, lies not only in reviewing the methods that have been commonly used to investigate landscape preferences, or in the influences on landscape preference that have been uncovered, though both are important. It is necessary too, to critically examine and highlight the importance of attempts to identify 'universal' biological or evolutionary underpinnings for landscape taste, which continue to have influence within the profession of landscape architecture in Anglo-European contexts. Universal taste theories are still discussed with relatively little in the way of critique, and continue to be valorised (see for example Turner & Monro, 2014, Van den Berg & Winsum-Westra, 2010, Jorgensen, 2008).

Frequently cited theorists in the field are geographer Jay Appleton from the UK, and psychologists Stephen and Rachel Kaplan in the US. Appleton proposed the "Habitat Theory" and the better known "Prospect-Refuge Theory" of landscape aesthetics, in his book "The Experience of Landscape " (Appleton, 1975). Appleton's theory was intuitive, with no empirical basis. The Kaplan's published research in Landscape Preference began with an initial study in the 1970's claiming to have identified a 'preference' for natural landscapes in the 1970's, which was followed by many similar investigations. The Kaplans carried out studies in both landscape preference and the 'restorative' effects of plants and green spaces, over at least thirty years, many of which were collected in their book "The Experience of Nature: a Psychological Perspective" (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989). The Kaplan's theories have changed over time, as a result of their own empirical work, and that of others that challenged many of their earliest claims. Both Appleton and the Kaplan's work has been criticised. There are many findings that contradict claims of an innate or evolutionary basis for landscape aesthetic preference , or a universal preference for 'natural' scenes over scenes with signs of human intervention, particularly where studies have included participants with cultural backgrounds not dominated by Anglo-European ideologies and art (Howett, 1997; Penning-Rowsell, 1992; Aitken & Wingate, 1990; Bourassa, 1988; Lyons, 1983;

Clamp & Powell, 1982; Bergman, 1978; Morgan, 1978). However in spite of compelling evidence to the contrary, and moderation of claims by the authors themselves, the early 'universal' formulations still appear to carry weight. Recent studies and 'think pieces' involving Leisure Science and parks experts continue to advance universal arguments, suggesting that an absence of human intervention and perceived aesthetic beauty are strongly correlated for all people (Gobster, et al., 2007). These are subject to similar criticism and contradictory empirical findings (Buijs, et al., 2009).

2.12 Habitat Theory and Prospect Refuge Theory

Appleton's basic idea was that the landscapes people found most beautiful, such as paintings of landscapes produced in Europe in the 17th Century that inspired the English landscape school, or actual landscapes that were valorised from the 18th Century on, were perceived as beautiful (by everyone), because they reflected the best conditions for human survival, buried in our subconscious from our evolutionary past. Relatively open landscapes, with fresh water, edged or dotted with vegetation, as represented in many of these artworks or valorised landscapes, provided optimum conditions for survival, in that they contained opportunities to survey the scene, (prospect) allowing humans both to hunt or avoid attack, and shelter in which to hide defensively (refuge). While others had proposed that the beauty seen in the landscape was related to sexual symbols, Appleton felt this kind of symbolism was a little far-fetched. In the close fitting relationship between animals and their adaptation to their habitat to favour survival he found a more realistic root of pleasurable feelings. This is Appleton's 'Habitat Theory.'

Having started from an idea of a realistic biological habitat based relationship between humans and 'natural' spaces, he then proposed that humans see all spaces, urban and rural, and all representations of space, for example in painting, in terms of the opportunities afforded to see widely, to have a 'prospect', and at the same time, availability of nearby places to hide , a 'refuge'. The ideal condition would be to see, without being seen. He carries the idea beyond real prospects and refuges into things that can be interpreted as symbols of them. He claimed that in images of landscape, in urban scenes, and even in abstract painting, light represented wide open spaces, and to some extent exposure and therefore danger. Darkness, in the landscape, found in caves or in woodland edges, provided safety and feelings of security. A balance of these elements would be received as beautiful, and landscapes seen from darkness looking into light would tend to be the most preferred, as these represented the ideal conditions of view from safety. This is Appleton's 'Prospect Refuge Theory'.

While some of the arguments made in the book appear at least plausible, and Appleton does say he would allow in his thinking for some cultural differences or learned tastes , his enthusiasm for turning almost everything into prospects and refuges leads him to speculations that seem highly subjective. He claimed that the reason people liked the landscapes of the 'sublime', for example scenes that contained environments that would actually be hostile to human life - bleak rocky mountains for instance (countering his earlier habitat theory) was because these landscapes represented a 'hazard' that must also be there for a refuge to have resonance. He theorised people liked looking at sunsets because they imagine what the view would be like if they were

on the sun, representing the ultimate prospect, with a view of everything .

The book has been praised for its ambitious interdisciplinary subject matter, and enjoyable writing style, but has also been, not unreasonably, severely critiqued for its flawed argument, for example: substituting repetition of an unsupported theory as evidence for it; taking a very narrow focus on particular development in European Art, the Picturesque (in which, it is argued, particular ways of seeing, composing pictorial scenes, and representing space were adopted and normalised), without looking at any examples from outside that period or that culture, yet claiming it as a proof of a universal biologically based aesthetics; conflating painting composition and aesthetics of painting with actual landscape experience; and for claiming symbolic meanings as universal when they are arguably not shared at all, even within a narrow European cultural frame of reference. For example dark wooded spaces and caves are arguably sources of stress and fearful responses, rather than likely to evoke feelings of safety and protection, as Appleton's theory claimed. (Howett, 1997; Bourassa, 1988; Bergman, 1978; Morgan, 1978).

Empirical studies, such as those investigating reducing fear of crime in open space, provide some support for Appleton's theory, in that in UK and US studies, people prefer to be able to see ahead in the landscape, to have prospect, but provide less support for a universal valuing of the presence of 'refuges' or places to hide (Braga & Bond, 2008; Fisher & Nasar, 1992; Herzog, 1989; Clamp & Powell, 1982).

A very recent British study investigating universal claims of the restorative effects of natural scenery used a series of tests on a total of 269 students and alumni at a British university, with different participants either in outdoor spaces, with still photographs, or video footage. Landscapes with what were characterised as high amounts of refuge and low prospect (in this example unmanaged native woodland), rather than inducing feelings of security as Appleton predicted, were indeed found to induce stress and fear, increased anger and a reduced ability to complete cognitive tests. Consequently some natural landscapes were found to have had harmful rather than restorative impacts. Environments with higher levels of prospect - i.e. good visibility, and lower refuge, characterised in this study by woodlands with wide paths and cleared under storey, were found to be restorative (Gaterslaben & Andrews, 2013).

William H. Whyte's participant observation in public plazas in New York City (Whyte, 2000 [1980]) found that in urban spaces, most people preferred to gather where there were other people, meeting and talking in the main flow of movement, or near to it. They did not seek out quieter or hidden 'refuges' in general, however they did avoid gathering right in the middle of large spaces, preferring to anchor themselves to some form of landmark, a flagpole or a statue, which Whyte felt might be indicative of some kind of defensive behaviour. While men positioned themselves toward the most active 'front' of plazas, and more in the open, women tended to seek spaces that were slightly removed. The most sought after space of all on the popular Seagram Plaza was a 'rear ledge under the trees' (Whyte, 2000 [1980]: 254) a seating area a little removed from, but still in touch with the action on the street. This could be seen as lending support to Appleton's "prospect-refuge" theory of the most preferred views being those from safety of shade looking towards light, however we need not necessarily associate this with a biological aesthetic of landscape spaces, or to our evolutionary history. Vegetation, shade and

water still provide welcome climate regulation. Good visibility provides a level of security that many people still require to feel safe in outdoor space. The previous section indicates that fear of attack is still an issue for many people, and behaviours that might promote our own protection could well be related more to what is rational now, rather than indicators of primitive drives.

Whyte's study reminds us people are social. Appleton's theory of human habitat seems written from an historical perspective of independent 'man' wandering alone or in small family units in the wilderness, hiding and hunting, rather than of an evolutionary past of social man forming groups, dominating spaces and other species, able to command and adapt the environment to his needs which seems a partial representation. Appleton's focus on aesthetics also prioritises a purely visual understanding of beauty in places and spaces, separating an objectified physical space from its social context, or meaning, and visual from embodied experience. I argue his is a culturally situated view of beauty, space and place, a view I will discuss in the next chapter.

2.13 Rachel and Stephen Kaplan: Psychological Research in Landscape Preference

Rachel and Stephen Kaplan, produced a body of empirical work, and published many papers starting in the 1970s, drawing from their experiments and those of others in the field. They saw Appleton's theory to some extent as a validation of their position in proposing a similar evolutionary and habitat basis for a universal preference for natural landscape (Kaplan, 1987). The Kaplan's argument was that this preference for wild landscape was an innate biological predisposition, however as man is both a social being and one that adapts the environment, evolutionary success based on a preference for landscapes showing no sign of human presence or adaptation seems to my mind highly unlikely. The Kaplan's book published in 1989, and more recent publications by Rachel Kaplan no longer claim universal preferences for landscape scenes without human intervention, and have broadened their definition of a universal preference for nature to include any arrangement of space containing plants, such as highly controlled urban parks .

The Kaplan's earliest studies were carried out to test whether image content had an impact on image preferences. The findings of similar studies using abstract images at the time were that image complexity was crucial in influencing preference (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Kaplan, 1987; Kaplan, 1972). The Kaplans used images of urban and rural scenes and established that irrespective of image complexity, their test subjects significantly preferred scenes of, what they termed, 'natural' contexts, to scenes of urban contexts , (with one exception an urban park which was equal in preference to the lowest of the 'natural' scenes). They then proposed a universal biologically driven preference for nature over buildings based on similar arguments to Appleton's. Though there was significant variation in preference with content, in both built and 'natural' categories, preference increased in accordance with increased visual complexity (Kaplan, 1972; Kaplan, et al., 1972). Their findings led to continued experiments aiming to identify common factors within preferred images.

The Kaplan's landscape preference studies used colour slides or images of landscapes to test

their ideas, rather than taking place in an outdoor setting. Preference was generally defined as how pleasing the participants found the 'setting', which they were asked to rate on a 5-point scale ranging from "not at all " to "very much". Subjects were not provided with any context within which to make judgements. They were not asked explicitly to imagine being in the landscapes, or asked for instance how they might rate their preferences for landscapes as a place to live, to take a walk, if alone or with a group etc. Though the Kaplan's propose that participants would naturally imagine themselves in the pictured scenes, only visual information, primarily composed, photographed scenic information, was subject to assessment for perceived beauty. In my view their studies might be more properly termed landscape image preference research.

They developed a preference prediction matrix, derived by their own assessment of factors in addition to the image complexity, such as the 'coherence' of the image (that is whether it contained identifiable things in some sort of composition), and whether, if one imaginatively entered the pictured space, it appeared to be an easy place to navigate in, or there were implied opportunities for further exploration of the scene beyond the image frame . They related these to 'biological drives' for exploration, and understanding. In my view, the factors identified could as easily be preference factors relevant at least in part to image decoding, or a preference for culturally normative conventions of artistic or photographic composition, rather than indicating any actual experience of, or preference for particular qualities in outdoor places. Although the Kaplans identified that participants would read into the images other associated sensations and meanings, the emphasis of this decontextualised image based research is clearly on visual aspects of place only, critiqued previously, and discussed in the next chapter. Even within an Anglo European framework accustomed to 'consuming' landscape spaces as visual spectacle, (MacNaghten & Urry, 1998) how a place looks is not the only consideration determining its attractiveness, as the discussion of landscapes and fear above describes .

One critique of their earlier empirical work was its claim of a universal preference for 'wild' landscapes over those with clear evidence of human influence, when test subjects were almost entirely white middle class Americans, and many of them university students (Aitken & Wingate, 1990). Stephen Kaplan has argued (Kaplan, 1987) that an evolutionary theory of preferred landscapes is supported by a finding that 'very young' children liked images of a savannah landscape most as a place to live or visit, (8 -11 year olds from urban and suburban Washington DC and Anne Arundel County, United States) in tests that compared preference for images of savannah like landscapes , with images of desert, or of a variety of types of forest (Balling & Falk, 1982). While the older age groups tested in the same area did not like the savannah images significantly more or less than deciduous or pine forest, they did like all three of these landscape types more than either tropical rainforests or deserts. Stephen Kaplan argues many of their studies supported a view that familiar 'home' landscapes were the most preferred (Kaplan, 1987; Penning-Rowsell, 1992). He concludes from Balling and Falk's data that, as savannah was not a familiar landscape type to the younger children who lived in a deciduous forest biome, the best explanation for these children's preferences were that the human species evolved in African savannah, and the preference was instinctive. Balling and Falk also proposed this theory, but conclude that their data does not provide proof of innate landscape preference, or even that familiar landscapes are most preferred (students from Arizona included in their study didn't want to live or visit the desert significantly more than anyone else). Elsewhere in their book the

Kaplan's also conclude that familiarity is no guarantee of preference (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989).

Savannah landscape visually comprises clumps of trees, often with high canopies due to grazing, set in wider expanses of grass. To me this is actually the landscape that, of those included in the test, would appear to resemble suburban or urban children's most familiar landscape ie suburban gardens and urban parks. Even though deciduous forest was the local 'Biome' whether these young urban participants were familiar with or had indeed spent any time in deciduous forest at age 8-11 was not established. A park like space might also reasonably be argued to represent a safer landscape archetype to a child, in comparison to the other test options of forests or deserts, which are widely represented in children's stories, cartoons and other visual media as inhospitable or dangerous. Elizabeth Lyons reaches a similar conclusion to mine in her study which looked at the impact of age and gender on landscape preference. Her study did not support Balling and Falk's findings, but rather found that the young children she tested significantly preferred images of park like landscapes to those of East African savannah (Lyons, 1983). Kaplan's view is that Balling and Falk's finding could mean that a contemporary preference for the English landscape style , as seen in public parks, is linked to their visual similarity to savannah landscapes. In this case, it seems to me more convincing that the argument works the other way around.

The Kaplan's own findings also seem to undermine any basis for claiming an evolutionary foundation for natural landscape preference. They found preferences operate at a subconscious level, and are therefore potentially instinctive. The preference for one image rather than another happens almost immediately and subjects are not able to articulate what they will prefer or why (Kaplan, 1987). However , they found design students favoured coherence in landscape and urban images more than those without design training, architecture students had higher preference rankings for urban scenes than others, landscape students had higher preference rankings for rural scenes with built elements than others, and environmental conservationists disliked scenes with non native plants when others did not, (Herzog, et al., 2000, Kaplan & Herbert, 1987) all of which provide evidence of learned values varying landscape preference, yet with no reported difference in image processing speed or reported change in their subject's ability to articulate preference reasoning.

One of Rachel Kaplan's most striking findings with regard to any claim that landscape preference is instinctive (rather than culturally based) is her paper published in 1988 with Janet Talbot that tested landscape preferences of 116 African American (termed 'black' in their study) and 68 white American residents of Anne Arbor and Detroit and compared their preferences. White and African American preferences in neither area were correlated, but African American preferences in Ann Arbor and in Detroit were correlated. African American participants preferred scenes that were clearly in, or resembled urban parks: purpose made, managed landscapes, with clear evidence of human habitation and intervention; white American participants preferred scenes with limited /no sign of human intervention, and forested scenes. Both groups liked images that would represent pastoral areas of urban parks (Kaplan & Talbot, 1988).

The style of these landscapes, while overlapping on a few images, is in the main hugely different, and it is hard to see from the photographs how an argument is supported for a universal

preference of 'natural' over urban scenes, though clearly a shared liking for green spaces of some kind is evidenced in the participants responses.

The Kaplans have been critiqued for failing to acknowledge the systems of ideas that are associated with 'nature', it's social construction (Aitken & Wingate, 1990), and for failing to adequately explain theoretically the group differences they have found, rather than simply describing them.

Despite the Kaplan's prominence in the field of landscape preference research, and their own findings that there is no universal innate preference for 'wild' or 'natural' landscapes without signs of human intervention, their earlier studies, their pursuit of a universal preference prediction methodology, and their continued claim that there is an innate preference for nature (which they interpret very widely) is still taken as providing empirical evidence of a universal, evolution based pleasure in wilderness or 'untouched' landscapes (Gobster, et al., 2007).

2.14 Empirical Evidence of Ontological / Ideological Variation in Landscape Preference

There is good evidence to support the view that variation in landscape taste is linked to ontological/ideological positions and is influenced by learning rather than simply inherent and universal. As indicated above, the Kaplan's own research provides evidence to support this view, but other studies have been published across a range of disciplines that add weight to the argument.

Surprisingly, despite critiques of the narrow cultural focus of the Kaplan's studies and Appleton's theory, I have found few papers investigating cultural influences/ ethnicity and landscape preference, and those papers I have found also identify a lack of research in this area (Buijs, et al., 2009; Ulrich, 1986).

One paper describes two linked US studies investigating whether landscape preferences were universal irrespective of culture/ethnicity (Zube & Pitt, 1981). The first study sampled 307participants from a variety of backgrounds: Italian American communities in the US, students from Yugoslavia, and urban residents of Hartford Connecticut of varying ethnicity. The study determined preferences for the scenic qualities of landscapes using pictures and field visits. The sample size for some groups were small - only 11 participants were recorded as African American - however the African American group were found to have strongly differing preferences for landscapes using a q sort analysis than the other groups. While most participants gave lower rankings to all images or scenes containing man- made structures, the African American group found landscapes with visible structures still among the most attractive.

The research team linked this to a similar finding in the second study with participants drawn from 743 households in Virgin Islands (Islands with a population that is mainly West Indian and black), 48 staff and graduate students in Connecticut and 26 Yugoslavian students. In general there were close similarities for all test subjects in the ranking of scenes, irrespective of the origin of the participants. However, Virgin Islanders didn't find that hotels visible in some pictures detracted from scenic quality, and ranked these images as highly as those without visible

buildings, where the American and Yugoslavian participants all gave images with visible buildings lower preference rankings. The authors considered whether the economic opportunities offered by hotels had informed positive rankings among Islanders, of less importance to non residents. Evidence was not found to support this view. Ultimately they found that, unlike the Connecticut or Yugoslavian participants, Virgin Islands participants did not believe that scenic beauty is primarily an attribute of seemingly undisturbed and unmodified landscapes, which researchers attribute to cultural differences.

This paper does not link variance in preference to participants supposed urban or agricultural origins, nor attribute any intrinsic conceptual separation between man and nature in construction of participant's ontologies of scenic beauty. Other studies theorise that the relationship between urban and rural values, and of man to nature are crucial. A Dutch group (Buijs, et al., 2009) interviewed 300 immigrants originating from Morocco and Turkey, and 318 'native' Dutch from three urban areas in the Netherlands. They intended to investigate whether there were differences in preference for, and understandings of, images of nature and landscape between these groups.

The study's findings again call into question any general preference for 'natural' landscapes compared to evidently managed landscapes, and in particular the claims of a universal ecological aesthetics made by Gobster et al, who had suggested that ecological quality and perceived aesthetic beauty are strongly correlated for all people (Gobster, et al., 2007) . The study found that both groups of migrants preferred agricultural, managed landscapes to 'natural' or wilderness landscapes. More highly educated 'native' Dutch participants most often displayed a preference for 'naturalness' in landscapes (that is landscapes with very limited management or no apparent management by people) . Researchers proposed that differing preferences related to ontological positions regarding the appropriate relationship between man and nature. They categorise systems of ideas regarding the relationship between man and nature as 'anthropocentric' - more centred around human needs, or 'ecocentric' - where natural systems needs are of greatest importance. The use of these terms, as developed by others, (see discussion in Van den Berg, et al., 1999), entails both a separation, and opposition between man and nature. This is not value neutral, and to my reading, not a view of nature shared by all their participants. They found the participants who were migrants to the Netherlands used a broader definition of nature and conceptualized nature and culture less often as oppositional concepts. Researchers felt this group expressed a more anthropocentric view of the human–nature relationship, autonomy of nature was less important for them, and they tended to prefer a high level of management of nature.

They relate the views of their immigrant participants to their cultural background in what they consider to be agricultural as opposed to urbanized societies, in the participants country of origin, though it is not clear if their participants had migrated from rural areas rather than cities. They theorize that in 'urbanized' cultures, the symbolic meanings of nature have become more important, whereas in agriculturally based cultures, nature is something that needs to be controlled and is sometimes even regarded as threatening. Similar theories have been proposed elsewhere (Agyeman & Spooner 1997, Ulrich 1983). While this may or may not be true of the migrant participants, it does not provide any explanation of the study's finding

that 'native' Dutch participants who had not attended university also tended to prefer more managed landscapes, despite having originated in the same urbanized society as the educated 'ecocentrics'. The finding that highest levels of education are correlated with a preference for landscapes that express the 'greatness and forces ' of nature, and that lower levels of education correlated with preference for landscapes that are man - made or park like has been replicated in other Dutch studies with native Dutch participants (de Groot & van den Born, 2003). Nor would urban / rural culture dichotomy explain the similar preference of the urban African Americans described above (Kaplan & Talbot 1988; Zube & Pitt 1981).

A study from Thailand that sampled a wide range of ethnicities with limited Anglo-European influence (Tips & Savasdisara, 1986) was devised in response to other studies that had found near significant but inconclusive data linking landscape preference and a range of demographic characteristics. It aimed at investigating the impact of varying socioeconomic factors on landscape preference, while controlling to some extent for landscape familiarity that had previously been found to influence taste, (See for example Kaplan, 1987, Dearden, 1984) by choosing to research preferences for images of a landscape from a distant context. They asked 300 participants drawn from Thailand, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore and Saudi Arabia to rank their preferences for black and white landscape photographs of the Rocky Mountains in Appalachia that had been used in previous experiments. The countries of origin themselves are very diverse in terms of terrain and typical vegetation type /climate, so to some participants the landscape type might arguably be much more familiar than for others. Although the researchers recorded participants country of origin, rather than look at this demographic characteristic, they chose to combine data by religion - Buddhist, Christian, Islamic and Hindu - as well as age, income and gender. Every category investigated was internally mixed in terms of country of origin but not consistently. The study's finding that there were no statistically significant group differences seems to me to be undermined by the researchers failure to investigate the impacts of variation in country of origin. While no statistically significant differences were found, the greatest identifiable difference in landscape preferences were seen between people of Islamic faiths and people of other faiths, with the Islamic group having the least reported variation in country of origin. The researchers speculate that religion might influence landscape preference through varying ideologies of human's relationship with nature, and particular symbolic or artistic values, though they do not elaborate on this nor consider the variations in ideology and symbolism between different sects within religious groupings.

A theological difference in attitudes to nature is also discussed as having potential to influence landscape preference in the study by Buijs et al described above (Buijs, et al., 2009). They explain that, in Islamic cultures, nature is understood as a reflection of God's word, represented as well organized without disorder or discord and this might influence those with Islamic faith to prefer images of more managed or ordered landscapes . A modern Western focus on scenic landscapes is not dominant, and landscape paintings are not very popular in Islamic cultures. Arab languages, they say, do not even have a word for the concept of landscape. In the West in contrast, since the Renaissance, and especially since the rise of Romanticism, images of nature in Christian cultures have shifted from working landscapes towards what researchers called an Arcadian image of nature, and at the same time, nature became represented as fragile, with

human influence seen as a threat to the "balance of nature". Such systems of ideas would clearly have potential to influence percieved value or attractiveness of real landscapes as well as imagesof them. The development of Anglo-European landscape preferences, and notions of place, and Britishness are discussed in the next chapter.

Other studies have looked at how particular interest groups, rather than particular cultures, have differentiated preferences for particular landscapes.

Philip Dearden (Dearden, 1984) investigated differences between 30 landscape planners, 30 members of the Sierra Club (an environmental lobbying group), and 30 members of the general public described as urban park users with no affiliation to environmental groups, in Victoria Canada. He looked at the influence of various demographic factors as well as group membership. The respondents were asked to Q-sort 30 colour photographs depicting three land-use types: peri-urban, rural and wilderness. The results indicate no significant influence of gender or income, though Dearden felt this would be worthy of further investigation. He found no bias according to professional training in planning, but a highly significant difference between the environmentalist Sierra Club members and the other groups, especially in the evaluation of wilderness scenes. He claimed familiarity with particular landscape types was linked to a preference for them, which he inferred from the correlation between preferences and area of residence, particularly area of residence in adult life - the participants from more 'natural' less dense housing areas tended to prefer more natural landscape scenes. He also claimed familiarity with wilderness landscapes was linked with a preference for them, as many of those who preferred wilderness scenes spent their leisure time in wilderness areas. Whether participants first acquired the preference, then spent time in these areas, or developed the preference because of time spent is not established.

He cites research by others that found a link between landscape preference and the avoidance of perceived threat, which he then links to preference through familiarity, claiming people are less threatened by the environments which are most familiar. Again while this connection may be true, and people may feel a positive connection with an area similar to one where they live, this is not necessarily the only factor. Fear that is informed by experience may influence some city dwellers to feel threatened or uncomfortable in rural areas, and some rural dwellers may feel threatened in the city, and not because of the scenery. Experiences of racism, territorial behaviours and feelings that a place may not be ''for'' some groups are discussed in the previous sections. That the correlation was strongest with areas of residence in adulthood may also indicate more strongly that preference results in choice of area of residence, rather than taste having resulted from familiarity.

Agnes Van den Berg's PhD study investigated the relationship between self expressed environmental values, (measured using a standardised uni-dimensional scale between ecocentric and anthropecentric views), and landscape image preferences, among groups of Dutch students of different disciplines - biology, psychology and agriculture (Van den Berg, et al., 1999). Sixty students (twenty from each discipline) evaluated the scenic beauty of slides depicting managed and unmanaged natural landscapes with varying degrees of human influence. Landscape beauty ratings of biology and psychology students were negatively related to perceived human influence, while landscape beauty ratings of agriculture students were positively related to perceived human

influence, but in actuality what this meant, though the author did not emphasise the point, was agriculture students equally valued scenes of managed landscapes and of 'wild nature' finding beauty in both. In addition, the study found group differences in what was understood to be 'natural', and differences in environmental values. Students of biology and psychology displayed more "ecocentric" understandings of the concept 'nature', and environmental values, than students of agriculture, and it was found an "ecocentric" outlook was correlated with preference for less managed as compared to managed "natural" landscapes. However, mediational analyses(a statistical technique described in the paper) provided no evidence that the group differences found in the relationship between perceived landscape beauty and perceived human influence were mediated by group differences in understandings of the of the concept of nature or in environmental values. From this, the paper's authors concluded that efforts made to change cognitive understandings of nature may not be effective in influencing affect, or feelings, about landscape beauty or value, which may be important in motivation to act, something policy makers trying to influence land management practice may need to consider.

However while seeming to have been unable to find a statistically supported relationship between beliefs and tastes, the study made use, in all instances of measures which as described above entail an intrinsic conceptual separation and conflict between man and nature. The scale could not then readily capture or describe a different conception without opposition. The students of agriculture do not seem to have perceived the man/ nature relationship as antagonistic nor to have assumed a single position along the man centred to ecologically centred scale. They both valued nature for natures sake, (ecocentric) and at the same time did not appear to find interaction between man and nature as necessarily harmful. The study's failure to find a relationship between ontology and taste, rather than indicating there is no relationship may perhaps have been due to the agriculture students values not being adequately described by the scales used.

2.15 Empirical Evidence of Individual Variation in Landscape Preference

As well as investigating differences at cultural or group level, some studies have been interested to see what impact personality might have on landscape preference.

A Spanish study asked 128 students of the Universidad Autonoma de Madrid to look at 60 pairs of photographs, classified in groups or "strata" according to distance from camera and principal theme, so that those in each pair were comparable, and to identify which of each pair they preferred (Abello, 1986). They also answered some personality question tests based on the most widely used tests in Spain of that type, to assess, on a 'sincerity' scale, if the participants were 'responsible' for example would they pay taxes if they could get away without doing so, or if they had 'emotional control' for example did they often become annoyed.

The majority of participants preferred images of landscapes that appeared fertile, with vigorous, healthy and abundant vegetation, as opposed to images of scenes with eroded, trampled soils and 'altered' vegetation. (This is similar to findings in a paper summarising landscape preference

research in Anglo European contexts that identified a widespread dislike of 'rough' vegetated scenes with dead wood or other signs of disease (Ulrich, 1986). Beyond the broad similarities across the group, personality factors established by a participant questionnaire, were found to be influential. People who were assessed as more "responsible"' tended to reject images that might describe risky, hostile environments; those assessed as having ''low emotional stability'' preferred predictable scenes, that is those which appeared to the authors structurally predictable, or ordered with strong rhythms/ patterning in arrangement of plants or in branching patterns. For example the authors identify some instances where their participants were conflicted in preference between a scene with more ordered tree branching shown by bare winter branches as opposed to a scene with less visible order but more healthy vigorous growth. The patterns were not significantly correlated.

As with the Kaplan's research critiqued above, the findings appear to assess people's feelings about qualities of landscape places, with an emphasis mainly on visual qualities, leaving any contextual or social factors subject only to individual speculation. Consequently, they may say more, or as much about preference for photography and image composition as about any feeling for outdoor spaces.

Agnes Van den Berg with Marijke van Winsum-Westra also looked at personality traits but in relation to designed landscape preference, unusually using both preference rankings for photographic images, and stylistic assessment of the self designed outdoor spaces of their participants allotment gardens (Van den Berg & Van Winsum-Westra, 2010). The personality tests used a questionnaire to identify 'Personal Need for Structure' or PNS values for participants which the authors consider as similar to Kaplan and Kaplan's preference matrix concept of 'understanding'.

PNS is theoretically defined in the study as a' general epistemic motive' that is a motive of acquiring of knowledge. In general, individuals with a strong need for structure desire a quick answer and are averse to ambiguity. They tend to use 'simple cognitive representations' (e.g., schemata, scripts, stereotypes) to structure the world into a simplified, more manageable form (Neuberg and Newsom, 1993 in Van den Berg & Van Winsum-Westra, 2010:181)

150 respondents rated the beauty of 30 photos of what researchers termed "manicured", "romantic", and "wild" allotment gardens. Though the categories are not entirely clearly defined, other than by reference to the images illustrating the paper, manicured gardens differed from romantic gardens mainly in the extent to which shrubs were allowed to assume natural (romantic) as opposed to controlled (manicured) forms, and the greater density of taller plants (romantic) as opposed to use of more low plants and wider spacing of plants (manicured). Both manicured and romantic gardens contained exotic (non native) and horticulturally bred ornamental specimens. Wild gardens tended to be more ecologically/ habitat creation focussed with plants closer to non horticultural forms and varieties.

The study found that respondents identified as having a high PNS, as compared to respondents with a low PNS, rated wild gardens less beautiful, and manicured gardens more beautiful.

The second study investigated allotment gardeners and the actual appearance of their gardens. Out of 123 participants, gardeners which researchers identified as having a high PNS, more often owned a manicured or romantic garden, and less often owned a wild garden.

In both studies controlling for PNS, education level interacted significantly with garden type, so that respondents with an academic education rated manicured gardens as less beautiful, and wild gardens as somewhat more beautiful, than non-academic respondents. Gender was also significant. Men were 2.93 times more likely than women to own a manicured as compared to a wild garden. Women generally gave higher beauty ratings to all garden types than did men. The authors speculate that these findings may reflect a greater male desire to have control over nature but that this desire may be specific for gardens and other land that is privately owned, because prior studies had not identified gender playing an important role in preferences for public parks and landscapes. Age was not correlated to beauty ratings of any of the three garden categories though the chance of having a romantic compared to a manicured type garden decreased by 6% with each increasing year of age, perhaps an influence of fashion in garden design taste, discussed in chapter 3.

Once again a higher education level was found to be related to a lower aesthetic appreciation of more human-influenced (manicured and romantic) gardens (Buijs, et al., 2009; de Groot & van den Born, 2003); however, there were no indications for an influence of education level on actual gardening practices. The authors conclude that taken together these findings suggest that, besides psychological needs, demographic, cultural, and practical factors play an important role in preferences for garden type, and this should be the subject of further research.

2.16 Summarising and Identifying Gaps in the Literature

A review of the literature, and recent statistical information, confirms that ethnic minorities are generally under-represented as users of parks in the UK, when percentages of park users have been compared to percentages in the population living in a park's catchment. In some cases under-representation is extreme. Minorities have also been shown to visit parks less frequently than people who claim white British ethnicity, and their reduced frequency of visits is statistically greater than is predicted by income alone.

Group activities in public space are found to be part of establishing and reinforcing group identity, making parks potentially very important places in people's cultural lives. There is no evidence that the preferences and behaviours of the majority ethnicity in the use of parks are intrinsically normative, and cultural norms even within an ethnic group have been found to vary from place to place, subject to resistance or reinforcement at individual and group level. Some under-representation through cultural variation in normative practices is likely, and perhaps more a result of choice than some form of exclusion. Many studies, particularly from the US, have recorded that while different ethnicities have many common shared pleasures in open space, different groups make different uses of open space, including preferences for making use of different parts of large parks. It is certainly reasonable though to expect from the research

literature reviewed here, that wilder less maintained 'country' parks would appeal less to some groups than others, both ethnically and on lines of educational attainment.

The research indicates however, that under-representation of ethnic minorities is very unlikely to be wholly due to any cultural norms or preferences that are 'internal' to any given ethnicity, and that exclusionary processes are also at work. Most people value access to green spaces irrespective of race or ethnicity, and studies provide evidence that people from minority ethnic groups are inhibited from using parks as much as they would like. Qualitative studies looking at barriers to ethnic minorities use of parks record how people of minority ethnicities have cultural preferences, say for single gender spaces, or for dog free spaces, that conflict with national majority cultural preferences and expectations. People of ethnic minorities also often report wanting to make use of park spaces near where they live, but feeling excluded from them, through fear of abuse, disapproval or suspicion. They are told, or feel, that these spaces are not for them or not safe for them. Parks and play spaces have been reported as among the most intimidating and most avoided spaces in the city.

While there is generally some under-representation of ethnic minority users in UK parks , people of all ethnicities continue to make use of parks, and in some parks there is an overrepresentation of a minority ethnicity, where white British people are significantly under-represented in comparison to their numbers in the park catchment. Studies (mainly from the US) have shown that participants consider some parks 'belong' to particular ethnic groups, and that other ethnicities feel less welcome, echoing findings in UK literature that territories may be established within cities along ethno/racial lines. Studies have not been found investigating the particular contextual or place factors that result in the establishment of ethnically dominated territories in some urban parks, with extremes of under-representation and overrepresentation of particular ethnicities, when compared to the catchment population.

Landscape preference research shows some persistence of theories of a biological basis for perceptions of landscape beauty, despite clear evidence to the contrary, as any theory of universal appeal of wildness, even in images alone, is not supported by empirical studies. There is only limited reflexivity regarding the cultural assumption embedded in separating the visual from the social, and there is a continuing use of ontological assumptions that man's and nature's interests are intrinsically separate and oppositional. Culturally based ontological variation in understandings/meanings of and value for nature has been demonstrated, though few links between preferences and behaviours in space have been found. The potential impact of ethno racial formation of park spaces clearly creates a link between these two fields that is worthy of further exploration. There is good evidence then both that dominant or 'legitimate' western views of nature exist, and that they should not be presumed universal.

A limited number of researchers have explored how minorities can feel less excluded from park spaces, or how cultural differences are best accommodated by elements of open space design. While reference is made in the literature to the cultural programming that is implicit in park making, a research gap exists in assessing the extent to which park making practices are governed by ethnocentric institutions, or how park making itself might be a contributing factor to under-representation by people from ethnic minorities in park spaces. In general, there is a focus on

the people using spaces, their culture and behaviour, disengaged from context in physical or symbolic space. There is also a body of research looking at space devoid of social context There is a lack of engagement in the research with places as concrete cultural and social artefacts with particularities that might be open to different interpretation and influence behaviour. This gap in the literature is the focus of this research.

3.0 Wider Theoretical Framework

3.1 The Importance of Space in Social Science

As individuals, we control and shape only some parts of the physical spaces we exist in. Our freedom to choose our location, and to shape it, is related to our power within the social hierarchies we are part of. While the world around us is a concrete entity, nothing that surrounds us is sensed without our interpreting that sensation and attributing a meaning to it. Our environment will be understood within an ideological framework, 'read', and therefore socially, as well as physically, 'constructed'. Spaces / places will have symbolic as well as concrete characteristics, at an individual and at a cultural / societal level. Our physical surroundings express wider societal structures and values, are understood through them, and in turn, the formation of space influences our social relations and behaviours. This chapter begins to explore the relationships between ideology and space, its formation, and interpretation. It is focussed on theories of space and culture, and on the production of park space as a social act.

The literature review identifies a lack of research linking the social experience and use of urban park spaces, with cultural values for nature and physical landscapes. This seems surprising because landscape taste has been linked to culture and ideology, designing space is clearly a form of cultural production, and parks are designed spaces. Park space is so clearly a constructed space, as both a physical and a social entity. In spite of this, a reading of space distinct from social phenomena seems to underpin much of the research into landscape preferences, parks and ethnicity reviewed in the previous chapter. The work of western theorists who link the social and the spatial, like Henri Lefebvre, and Doreen Massey in my view can bring much of value to investigations of how the shape of space in the UK might influence use, and how socialisation might shape thinking about and production of space. Both theorists are widely cited, assert the centrality of space in understanding societies and social phenomena, and wonder at what they perceive are more general tendencies amongst social scientists to prioritise the temporal, and ignore spatial context. They assert the importance of space in society, and bemoan its absence from the majority of social theory to date, with many social scientists constructing space as an inert backdrop, objective not subjective.

An 'empiricist' view of space, as part of a verifiable 'real world' of knowledge, space as physically experienced, devoid of theoretical, symbolic or social meaning , is claimed to be a view supported in Britain over centuries of cultural and ideological development, both by the European Enlightenment, and before that, by the processes of secularisation that began in the English Reformation of the 16th Century. The British in particular are argued to value knowledge based on physical experience (Chambers, 1993). In her book 'For Space' Massey (Massey, 2005) describes the typically 'Western' view of space as one that imagines just such an objectified world surface, separate and entirely unrelated to any societies living 'on' it. It is a neutral surface to be crossed, potentially conquered, and divided up. To Massey this purely physical reading of space supports and morally accommodates a western history of territorial claims and domination of other peoples. The philosophy of empiricism leading to a drive to verify and possess the world. It is a view of society, of people, and place / space as separate entities, not related and

mutually constructing. In this discourse, all locations are part of one place, all visions of the world and its potential for 'development' will be as ours. Different countries are seen as being at different 'stages' on a timeline, heading towards where we are now, a discourse that Massey argues supports a vision of the world inevitably 'developing' along neo liberal economic lines, where such economic development, globalisation, is represented as an uncontrolled, 'natural' force.

The asserted objectivity of space and its theoretical separateness from society and social practices then can be viewed as part of an ideological construction, and one likely to be found in Western thinking. Massey advocates for an understanding of space as relational, not wholly concrete or fixed. Even in the same place, its future is contested, meaning is contested. Space is where social interactions take place - the location for meeting up of different people with different understandings of themselves and that place, with different histories, different imagined futures. Singular readings of any space are not realistic. Massey encourages us to challenge the 'objectivity of our reading of the physical world, and imagine each space as a simultaneous encounter/ interaction/ negotiation - the product of interrelations, not static or fixed, even in a physical sense.

In describing public space, she strongly disputes the view of policy makers that public spaces are equitably available to all, (Department of Environment, Transport & the Regions, 1999; Urban Task Force, 2005) and describes how rights to such spaces are established either by formal rules, or in their absence, contested, sometimes brutally, along the lines of wider social hierarchies. This is a view that is strongly supported by the social research into park space presented in Chapter 2.

Lefebvre describes the 'spatial practice' of any society as its process of making space and living in it (Lefebvre, 1991[1974]). The spaces we make are a concrete expression of our societies values, and can be 'deciphered' as such. He draws our attention to the limited numbers of people who have the power to shape spaces, particularly in the modern urban world, recognising that every society's spaces are largely created by dominant groups, in directed ways, reinforcing preferred social structures, and approved or legitimate practices. Lefebvre makes a distinction between society's 'lived' spatial practices, and those 'representations of space' - spaces as they are 'conceived' by spatial designers, planners, scientists. He asserts that such institutional interpreters of space imagine and promote a singular vision of space that is in line with the dominant views in a society. He claims that designers and scientists imagine their visions of space when built, will ultimately be experienced and understood precisely as they have intended - echoing theories of Massey, Cosgrove (Cosgrove, 1984) and others that there is a dominant normative Western ideology of space as universally objective.

Lefebvre also identifies what he terms ' representational spaces' which are physical spaces socially constructed; containing symbolic meanings, memories and interpretations associated with places; the imaginative filters through which the physical world is encountered. These filters might be shared across a society, for example culturally shared discourses of nature, mass media representations, or they may be the perceptions of only some groups or even highly personal associations. While spaces can be read, and conversely, created with an intended meaning,

Lefebvre warns against trying to decode or produce a single meaning from any space. Like Massey, he emphasises that the same places, or spaces, can mean different things to different people - we bring our own interpretation, and our own ways of occupying spaces.

Urban parks are socially determined spaces, planned by municipalities and institutions with moral, and social purposes, (Marne 1996, Byrne & Wolch 2009, Byrne 2012), intended to raise land and property values in poor areas, and improve public health, by providing opportunity for participation in approved activities, and contact with greenery (Checker 2011, CABE Space 2005, Dunnett, et al., 2002). Park spaces will clearly express dominant cultural norms and ideological values.

Lefebvre reminds us that space is created through both intentional efforts and unintended consequences of the activities of a society. It is a slow process, societies 'secrete' their spaces. At the same time he argues, while they are slowly being created, spaces are also a constituent in the formation of a society, containing directing , and constraining bodies, reinforcing values. Space is therefore a component of any social behaviour, and is ignored by sociologists to their detriment. He discusses significant differences in interpretation of place / meaning / space between different cultures, and significantly different city forms. In Western urban societies, he describes how there is extreme separation and ordering of space by function with separate spaces for work, for living, for leisure, and spaces describing available routes between them. His description brings into focus the extent to which our activities in modern urban spaces are systematically proscribed and controlled, not least by market forces. While the qualities of particular spaces are largely absent from the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, as previously stated, CABE Space's national scale spatial analysis, (CABE 2010) reveals how concretely in spatial arrangements, inequities in the power relations between ethnic groups in British society are manifested. The study identifies a correlation between areas which have high indices of deprivation, the highest percentages of ethnic minorities, and lowest provision of what they assessed to be good quality park spaces, a valued social asset. Lefebvre suggests

'The analysis of any space brings us up against the dialectical relationship between demand and command' ...'Who? For whom? By whose agency? Why and how?.... the production of space might proceed, but solely according to the dictates of Power...'
(Lefebvre, 1991[1974]:116)

In considering public parks, then, and their appeal to, and use by different groups in a multi cultural context, issues of meaning, and of power, in the production of these spaces, will be key. .

3.2 Britain's Cultural Landscapes: Aesthetics and Ideology

The first purpose built public parks in the UK emerged in industrial urban England in the 1840s. Paxton's park at Birkenhead, considered Britain's first purpose built public park, was created following an Act of Parliament in 1843, and financed by the sale of houses developed on the surrounding land (Whitaker & Browne, 1971). The landscape 'style' of the original UK public parks - large areas of mown grass, glades and avenues of ornamental trees, sinuous paths to

walk along, and possibly a lake or ponds to enjoy scenically in a predominantly pastoral 'English Landscape' style - remains broadly normative in a UK context. There have been local variations, and styles are periodically modified by fashion, for example many parks included late Victorian 'gardenesque' floral bedding displays, fashionable into the post war period, and latterly ecological areas are being introduced, and borders of flowering perennials are replacing shrubs and roses. The UK park style was also exported to other countries globally, both through British colonialism, and through design influence. The major public parks in many cities in the United States for example, including Central Park New York, were designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, and were influenced both by his visits to Birkenhead Park in 1850 (Whitaker & Browne, 1971) and by his admiration for the ideas of the English Picturesque landscape movement, (Smithson, 1973). There continues to be significant influence in landscape architectural education, exchange of ideas, and movement of professionals and educators between the US and UK.

The normative park design style in many countries, then, is arguably still strongly influenced by the 'English Landscape School', an approach to landscape design first developed here in the 18th Century. Designers arranged the reshaping of the existing landscape, removing unfashionable formal gardens, enclosed farmland and even villages, to set up contrived 'natural' landscape scenes, as settings for country homes, for the leisure of the cultured; scenes to enjoy while strolling or driving . The 18th Century fashion for landscaped grounds imitating 'nature', was political and expressive of a particular ideological position. The 'English' landscape style was devised in direct stylistic opposition to Catholic France's powerful monarchy, and its highly controlled landscapes of geometric formalism (McGuigan 2010, Weiss 1995). The new vision of landscape was allied to Protestant discourses of the 'natural order' of individual liberty and mercantile capitalism. (Bermingham, 1987), informing both the 'beautiful' rolling pastoral parklands, sinuous lakes and wooded glades of 'Capability' Brown and Repton, and the more dramatic visions of the 'Picturesque' movement, whose ideals of beauty and the 'sublime', as propounded by Burke, Uvedale-Price, Payne Knight, and later Gilpin and others, saw follies, and elements of wildness and danger adding a thrilling pleasure to the calmer pastoral ideal.

While both styles represent visions of nature, there is an underlying tension between them, highlighted in 'Contested Natures' (MacNaghten & Urry, 1998) and still present in contemporary discourses

"On the one hand, there is the classical or enlightenment mentality where .... savage wilderness had to be tamed, subdued and cultivated to human reason; while, on the other hand there is the more Romantic sense of reverence towards untouched and unmanaged wilderness."
(MacNaghten & Urry, 1998:34)

Advocates of the English landscape school mocked formally arranged landscapes, and made truth claims that their designs were intrinsically 'correct', derived from both the 'genius of the place'- working with attributes of the natural landscape like topography - and beautiful at a deep biological level, albeit only to those of sufficient refinement to be aware of these feelings. Uvedale Price and Payne Knight in particular considered a taste for the sublime and the picturesque as exclusive to the wealthy, the lower classes being too coarse and vulgar to understand, representing as Bermingham claims

"the imaginative appropriation of the countryside by a class already responsible for its territorial appropriation"
(Bermingham 1987: 68)

The designs of the English landscape school were patronised and promoted by English landowners. Extensive landscaped grounds removed from view, both symbolically and physically, productive landscapes of enclosure, and the lives of those who worked (or no longer worked) in them creating a setting for the homes of the most powerful, in an un-peopled landscape of leisure and spectacle (Bermingham, 1987; Williams, 1975). The upper classes constructed 'natural' backdrops for life, as a symbol of their 'natural' right to dominance (Bermingham 1987).

The normative predominantly pastoral style of parks in most UK cities can be seen then, as a referent for an aspirational landscape, within a specific class based discourse, and as part of a particular economic, cultural and ideological context. While widespread and influential globally, familiar to many and open to multiple interpretations, it is a vision of beauty, a 'cultural arbitrary', (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990[1977]) that will clearly speak more to some. Further, and importantly in terms of the ideologies underpinning contemporary ' legitimate' British landscape designs, the meaning of 'place', within the Picturesque movement's ideal of 'genius of the place', was perceived to draw authenticity from non-human physical 'place' features alone, and without irony could include the total destruction of established settlements and spatial practices, or introduction of entirely fake ancient ruins, asserting the separation of the natural from the social, and the primacy of physical 'truth' over any inconvenient symbolic, social or cultural meaning .

After the storming of the Bastille in 1789, the wild landscapes of the picturesque were used to signify and became symbolic of freedom (Appleton, 1975). Rugged and remote landscape was no longer simply an aesthetic preference. Independent individuality was considered the highest moral state of man, forms of dependency aberrent. In the untamed landscape, the individual could prove himself, distinguish and test himself, away from the 'ant-like masses' of the city (Mazzoleni, 1993). The sublime, an aesthetic sensation that derives pleasure from feelings of danger (Hunter, 1985) , allowed less immediately pleasant aspects of nature - vast, terrifying, ugly or bleak landscapes, symbols of death and decay for example - to be re interpreted as part of a 'meaningful', spiritually valuable, aesthetic experience. Aspects of the sublime were incorporated into English Romanticism, and there was growing identification of the 'free soul' with the solitude of 'wild 'places. (Williams 1975). Travelling to enjoy British and European picturesque landscape spectacle was promoted in books, increasingly emphasising a relationship to landscape as visual scenes, commodities for enjoyment. (MacNaghten & Urry, 1998)

Recent designs in contemporary US and Northern European landscape and garden design illustrate the continuing resonance of landscapes of the sublime within the contemporary built environment professions. Huge scale and symbolic alienation/dehumanisation in built form are combined with a romantic ideal of natural beauty - flower meadows in the heart of US towering downtown, or rusting industrial structures 'taken over' by planting. The multi- award winning and highly influential Emscher Park in Duisburg North by landscape architects Latz and Partners illustrates this recent 'industrial picturesque' style. A redundant and decaying former steel

Fig 3.1. Emscher Park (Danish Architecture 2014)

works and cooling towers have been re invented as a centre for landscape tourism, spectacle and recreation (Fig 3.1).

British society's highly ambiguous relationship with the city, urban life and industrial growth, was accompanied into the nineteenth century, both by romantic interpretations of the rural landscape, and by the construction of an inward looking history, by academics and writers who created an ''acceptable national mythology'' of cultural continuity, rituals and tradition, since pre industrial times, including an ''insistence on the earlier harmonies of rural life and artisan production'' (Chambers, 1993). The emphasis on 'traditions' served to create the impression of stability and continuity in the face of huge physical and social changes (Rogers & Vertovec, 1995(b)). Critique of the city by Ruskin and others helped to generate a rapid widespread absorption of the new urban industrialist class into the conservative values and practices of the rural elites. As British cities grew, and fewer people actually lived and worked in the countryside, the landscape in general came to be understood as scenery and views, a kind of 'visual refreshment', and emblematic of historic British values. Towns were (and still are) conceived as threatening to engulf the 'unspoilt' and 'true' England (MacNaghten & Urry, 1998). The continued importance of the countryside as the aspirational home of the English, in preference to the perceived grime and depravity of the city, must be contrasted with other European cultures (and those further afield) who more typically associate the countryside with backwardness, and imagine the city as the centre of culture, power and sophistication (Williams, 1975; MacNaghten & Urry, 1998).

The sense of nostalgia and loss that seems to suffuse the UK's ideological relationship between city and country has been highly influential in the development of urban planning in the UK. The rational empiricist approach of architectural modernism (despite the efforts of the Prince of Wales) is still the main ideology in education for building design, but has been widely agreed to

be a failure in urban planning terms in the UK and US. Its larger scale urban visions, for example for post war deck access and high rise housing, or mall like town centres, have been criticised for being too alienating, and insufficiently differentiated, breaking with the continuity of the past: an architecture responsible for social failure (Robins, 1993) . In this new urban age, universalism & uniformity, hallmarks of modernism, blamed for the 'crisis' of the inner city, would be replaced by recovering a 'lost' sense of territorial 'place' identity, urban 'community', and public space - a kind of 'return' to (mythical) origins. Modernisms 'corporate society' would be re-imagined into urban villages (Robins, 1993). Under the last Labour government, visions for just such an 'Urban Rennaissance' were devised, led by Lord Rogers, (Department of Environment Transport & the Regions, 1999; Urban Task Force, 2005). Lord Richard Rogers, an internationally acclaimed British Architect was also instigator in the same period of London's Mayoral design advice team, (called Design for London at the time of the Olympics) . Such visions of urban development have been hailed as a new approach, linked both with post modernism, an aesthetic that celebrates difference, ephemerality, spectacle, fashion and the commodification of cultural forms, including the commodification of place identity (Harvey, 1989). How new this approach really is, and who's interest it serves has been called into question . Robins argues it represents recycling of the old ideas, trying to integrate modern urban life with an imagined romanticised past, filled with intensely 'local places' each with its own unique character.

Built environment designers are now required to invest in the idea of continuity, and avoid totally erasing links with the past as part of 'place- making', in ways that can be claimed authentic, even where new development is intended to entirely obliterate the previous land uses (as at the Olympic park). The UK's cultural relationship with an idealised countryside, I argue, means that 'natural' landscape offers a means of symbolic connection with other times. If landscape design can provide the required continuity and place identity, as with picturesque claims to work with nature and genius loci, then architecture doesn't have to.

In some instances, these land/planting based place claims of validity seem highly contestable. For example 2009 saw the publication of English Nature's 'London's Natural Signatures' (Alan Baxter Associates, Shiels Flynn, 2011) . It was published to address what English Nature see as

" a lack of widespread awareness of the underlying nature of London (that) has been a major cause of the gradual erosion of London's natural character."
(Alan Baxter Associates, Shiels Flynn, 2011:4)

and is intended to provide guidance on what would/ should be the 'natural' plant and landscape characteristics across all of London, if somehow London itself and perhaps Londoners did not exist, and plants and animals from elsewhere in the world were not present.

The aesthetic and romantic appeal of 'natural' landscapes in North American, British and Northern European culture, as well as offering opportunities to 'authentically' differentiate place, has since the 1990s been linked to ideas of 'sustainable urban development', the rise of an ecological aesthetic, promoting wilder spaces in the city, and celebrating biodiverse marginal land -

"a new aesthetic appreciation of the ecological complexity of conserved nature made visible through scientific inquiry"
(MacNaghten & Urry, 1998:42)

This ecological aesthetic (similar to that illustrated at Emscher Park) has been promoted by scientists, policy-makers and landscape designers, who, supported by the relative power in environmental legislation of nature conservation in the UK, have pushed a less manicured, ecologically rich landscape style to the fore (McNaghten & Urry 1998). Since the 1980s, parks revenue budgets in the UK have fallen substantially (Worpole, 2003) . The ecological aesthetic is a less intensive and seemingly 'self sustaining' landscape style, and has the dual appeal of 'moral' environmental justification, and relatively low long term maintenance cost, compared with other more labour demanding landscape management regimes (Hitchmough & Dunnett, 2008).

Ecological landscapes combine 'genius of the place' (genius loci) based truth claims of the picturesque, with scientific truth claims, giving certain landscape features, plant combinations, land management techniques, and habitats greater value than others. David Lowenthal for instance describes how, while some native plants are valorised, "briar and bramble, seedlings and suckers'', are viewed as unnatural, or at least unwelcome, in the idealised rural aesthetic. Though represented as nature it is highly managed, and not natural (MacNaghten & Urry, 1998). The critique of subjective arbitrary value being placed on some landscape features, and not on others, while being represented as objectivity, has been made of amongst others, Ian McHarg, who's book 'Design with Nature' (1969) is still a highly influential standard text for landscape architects in the UK and US (Turner & Monro, 2014) , and has also been levelled at the designers of the Olympic Park (Davis, 2011). The scientific and moral nature of claims supporting design decisions, is intended to imply designers choices are not arbitrary (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990 [1977]) and at some level, deviation from the preferred solution would be immoral / wrong. Massey's critique of this approach to nature and place is the tendency towards fixed, singular conceptions of a place, where a multifaceted evolving view, subject to change from human and non-human intervention, could be argued more rationally (Massey, 2005). It seems worth noting here, that many contemporary techniques for establishing ecological style landscapes with native planting, linked to ideas of national cultural identity and heritage, and excluding 'exotic' non-native plants, were developed in Nazi Germany (Woudstra, 2008).

Alongside the growing taste for urban ecological landscapes, with wildflower meadows now widespread in parks, schools and social housing, has been the recent rise in popularity of herbaceous perennial planting in public landscapes, a style reminiscent of the English Romantic 'cottage garden' or a wilder version of the herbaceous borders of the British stately home. This 'naturalistic', rather than ecological aesthetic, makes use of non-native and ornamental flowering plants and grasses, planted in drifts resembling natural plant relationships, and allowed to assume their natural shapes, so simulating, but improving on wild nature. It has been inspired and popularised to a great extent by now world renowned Dutch planting designer and nursery man Piet Oudolf, who worked together with James Corner on designs for the South Park at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, and on the highly influential 'High Line' linear park in New York. Speaking at a lecture at The University of Sheffield to mark his appointment as Visiting Professor

Fig 3.2. Pensthorpe, Norfolk. Piet Oudolf (Ashley Cooper, Alamy Stock Photo)

of Planting Design to the School of Landscape Architecture, he remarks that in the early 1990s, after his first book 'Dream Plants' was published, people looking at images of his planting designs would ask him what had gone wrong. They thought the garden was dying. Why were the plants flopping everywhere, why weren't they staked? Now, he says, after more than twenty years,

"..people see, recognise, something deeper than just the decorative side of gardening"
(University of Sheffield, 2013)

Like early advocates of the Picturesque movement then, contemporary designers of naturalistic and ecological landscapes, (arguably sharing similar ontologies of nature and countryside), understand their tastes are not always shared, or perhaps 'understood' by everyone. Appreciation has to be learned.

3.3 Maintaining And Defending Cultural Capital, and the Reproduction of Legitimate Taste

In the introduction to "Dynamic Landscapes" James Hitchmough and Nigel Dunnett, (specialist design advisors at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park), recognise that many people do not appreciate landscapes with an ecological aesthetic, and discuss the perception of beauty in ecological and naturalistic landscapes as truths that are relative rather than absolute, based on individual, peer group or cultural values. They note how intellectual content, relating to perceptions of a landscape's value for wildlife for instance, can change how dull, or initially unattractive landscapes are viewed. The tastes of the producers of open space, are not necessarily those of their intended consumers, but does this matter? They conclude that, though not universal, tastes are fluid, and can be learned, as is seen when they are transmitted through education,

" it is interesting how readily some aesthetic preferences change. These values are not fixed, and this process can be readily observed, for example, as landscape students progress from the first to the final year."
(Hitchmough & Dunnett, 2008:6)

Reassuring though this seems, the representation of a simple process of taste transformation, available to everyone, fails to articulate some key aspects of this process.

In the first instance, taking students of landscape architecture as a case, does not adequately recognise the motivated, instrumental nature of student behaviour, which may not be (as easily) recreated outside the educational environment. Any students' decision to study landscape architecture shows they are likely to have some intrinsic interest in the subject as an intellectual pursuit, and as a possible career, making them perhaps more open to embracing new ideas and values, than many other potential users of open space. Secondly in order to succeed, students know they will need to align their preferences with those who can determine their success or failure, with the 'legitimate' tastes, that are defined by those in power. Again, outside the university institution, allegiances supported by different tastes may hold more sway, particularly if we consider Floyd's assertion that performance of spatial practices in public are part of the process of creating and sustaining of ethnic identity, and that collective use of space assists in the establishment of sense of a collectivity, with shared values and customs (Floyd 1998).

According to Bourdieu and Passeron (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990 [1977]) , the interests of those who hold power in any field, by dint of their cultural capital (knowledge that is both actively learned, and passively 'inherited'), lie in ensuring that the exchange value of the expertise they hold (economic and symbolic value), is maintained, and represented as legitimate in wider society. Recognition of legitimacy of any field, through establishment of educational qualifications, is a means of reproducing the legitimate values in subsequent generations of producers and consumers, and of constituting, defining and validating a distinctive field. Educational practice, led by those who hold, and also define, legitimate knowledge and taste, therefore allows groups to reproduce their power in the field. The process also tends to support and reproduce the wider social formation, that has recognised the value of a particular form cultural capital, and sanctions its reproduction. Education can in this framing be seen as tending towards conservative processes that reproduce and valorise values of the powerful in society, even where it may appear to produce challenge. For example, the discourse of sustainable development which underpins much current thinking in landscape architecture can be viewed as part of a modernist ideology, where faith in science's ability to unproblematically define, and so manage the limits of natural processes, arguably supports the idea of progress, and rather than challenging modern living, accommodates a neoliberal agenda of continuing economic growth against the critique of environmentalists (MacNaghten & Urry, 1998).

The values transmitted and 'truths' valorised by any dominant group are a cultural arbitrary (which does not mean they are necessarily without merit) Other tastes or ideals are often denigrated, by association with characteristics that are deemed less valuable, less legitimate - frivolity, irresponsibility, irrationality, lack of realism (Bourdieu 1999 [1979]: 93). Despite the overall tendency to conservation of power and social relations, at any time in a given field, there will be struggles between fractions of the powerful groups to determine the legitimate tastes, and establish relative power in the field, resulting for example in changes of fashion, though as Bourdieu theorises, these struggles rarely operate outside the structuring values of the field (Bourdieu, 1999 [1979]).

Pierre Bourdieu uses the term 'habitus' to describe how individual's minds, ideas and even bodies are socially structured in and by social context, in ways which are actively responding to that context. For instance, when we are dressing for work or speaking on the telephone with people we don't know, we may consciously adopt a different manner than when we are socialising with friends. Our thoughts and behaviour are also socially structured in ways we cannot be entirely aware of, simply because we think within the framework we have learned to think through. Reflecting on our social situation, being mindful of learned values and seemingly instinctive ideals, allows us to be critical of our thinking, and to be aware of some structuring principles of our thought, but we cannot ever really escape our habitus to true objectivity. We are individuals, but we are always socialised and situated. Bourdieu is clearly not the only theorist who has identified the importance to each of us of the social structures that frame our thinking and behaviour. For example, Stuart Hall, writing on identity, remarks

"Precisely because identities are constructed within, not outside, discourse, we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites, within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies. Moreover they emerge within the play of specific modalities of power and thus are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion, than they are the sign of an identical naturally constituted unity.'
(Hall, 2000:117)

Hall raises an important point here, in that social construction is not just active in our own formation, part of belonging to a group as determined by the group, but also we are as others outside the group see us, as we are constructed by them, a point I will return to later in this chapter. When we are in the social context or 'field' that we are a product of, and most accustomed to, Bourdieu asserts we are least aware of our cultural assumptions and the structuring constraints on our thinking, our speech, or our behaviour, in comparison to when we are in unfamiliar social contexts. Bourdieu describes the relationship between the individual's internalised habitus and the external field of which it is a product (and a structuring element) as being like a ''fish in water'' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:127) taking the world around itself for granted. In this circumstance, cultural constructs can be taken for some kind of biologically 'natural' taste, rather than being understood as a cultural arbitrary, a learned system of beliefs and practice (Bourdieu, 1999[1979]).

Despite the 'promise' of education being open to all cultural backgrounds or social classes, in part because of habitus, success in any field is not equally available to everyone. Those with less 'legitimate' cultural capital at the start of the educational process are less likely to succeed than those who have 'inherited' cultural capital ; that is those, who by dint of their upbringing, are already fluent in the language, preferences and values of the elite, the "fish in water" will find it less of a struggle to conform to and reflect the legitimate tastes in speech, manner forms of expression and so on. Bourdieu was not able to ask about ethnic origin of participants in his research (Bennett et al., 2009) however, he strongly links his concept of habitus with culture in the sense of systems of ideas and practices, that are group generated and maintained (Bourdieu, 1999[1979]). He also identifies that the relative influence of the home background on taste formation is diminished for cultural practices that are recognised and taught by the education system. While music, literature and fine art are to some extent taught in the UK from age five,

architecture, urban design and landscape architecture are taught only at university, in specialist programmes. One might expect therefore if Bourdieu's theory is correct, that the influence of home, and cultural background on landscape taste would be strong.

Returning to the example of student taste given by Hitchmough and Dunnett, even for motivated students, the process of transformation to 'right thinking' at many landscape architecture schools is not always an easy or painless one. Weeks of work to produce drawings that have been invested in emotionally, physically and intellectually, can be rendered worthless in minutes, through a process of sometimes brutal critique. Students are required to defend their design ideas in front of teachers and their peers. What is liked is praised, but faults are exposed and criticised publicly. Students are sometimes reduced to tears. It is no wonder they soon learn what to like. Bourdieu uses the term 'symbolic violence' to represent such negative processes of taste / culture 'correction', meted out in educational institutions, in the media, and in our daily interactions with parents, friends and others whom we would hope to bond with, be supported by, or impress. Combined with processes of valorisation and reward at institutional, and interpersonal everyday level , symbolic violence teaches us what to think (Bourdieu, 1999[1979]; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990 [1977]).

It is clear then, that within the field of landscape architecture, and spatial production more widely, processes exist that can establish and reproduce legitimate tastes, ways of thinking, that become the 'rules of the game' for those engaged in struggles to exchange their cultural capital for economic and symbolic capital in a UK context (Bourdieu, 1999[1979]). The determining power of legitimate taste lies with the spatial designers themselves, to some extent, but also those others who are consumers of landscape architecture and spatial production, that is those who provide the exchange value for the designers' cultural capital.

In some cultural fields in the UK - music for instance - although some historic or 'classical' forms are associated with elites, educationally sanctioned, and institutionally funded, many more forms are considered culturally valid, and have recognised artistic merits. There are many cultural origins for artists and consumers, and many different tastes. Institutional / educational approval is not required to gain cultural capital, or receive economic and symbolic capital from the recording industry (who actively promote new and differentiated products), or to obtain access to consumers. It is both acceptable and possible for consumers with any level of cultural or economic capital to be a "cultural omnivore" (Warde, 2007) exhibiting multiple cultural influences and varied tastes. I would argue variation in what is acceptable, what is legitimate, is possible because the cultural producers are able to operate outside formal institutional processes, and can directly access the audience, the 'end user'.

For landscape architecture and most spatial production, (aside from that provided for private homes), this value exchange relationship between producer, and 'non-institutional' end user is absent. The consumer exchanging economic value for cultural capital in the form of design services is itself institutional, represented by officers in local authorities, and government bodies. These institutional consumers are trained in the same educational establishments, and in the same values as the cultural producers. Where spatial development is funded by private sector property developers, who might be outside the institutional circle, they are nevertheless required

to conform to institutionally recognised values, in order to gain permission to build. Symbolic capital is gained in institutionalised forms as professional awards and media recognition.

The preferences of those outside the institutionalised processes of taste formation or value exchange, the 'ordinary' people who will be making use of the spaces designed for them, have little scope to impact directly or meaningfully through exchange value on the spaces they are provided with or use in the current system. If, as the literature on landscape preference and park use to date indicates, there are differing practices or preferences in park use and design that are ethnically based, then, such well intentioned processes of landscape taste transformation enacted as a matter of course at educational institutions across the UK could be experienced (by the students themselves, and in the wider community who will use space designed by them), as a form of invalidation and disempowerment.

3.4 Absence at the Centre - Power, Whiteness and Normativity

The previous discussion proposes that Anglo European park design experts are likely to have a culturally situated understanding that space is an objective reality, rather than a subjective, culturally based construct, and explores, in contrast to presumed objectivity, the specific development of legitimate British landscape tastes. Pierre Bourdieu's theories of taste, cultural, and social reproduction, in part described above provide a further theoretical explanation for a potential failure of UK park designers to recognise that production of space is a cultural act, with the potential to exclude. Bourdieu identifies a danger inherent in being surrounded by people from our own cultural group, as dominant elites in many fields in the UK arguably are. That is, without exposure to others views, there is a tendency to overlook our own cultural 'situated - ness', and to assume normativity or truth to our beliefs, values and preferences. As Bourdieu says

"Every established order tends..... to produce the naturalization of its own arbitrariness."
(Bourdieu, 1977:164)

We may feel ourselves open to new ideas, we may believe ourselves inclusive in our outlook, but we may still not be aware of ourselves as socialised subjects. We proceed in accordance with our world view. A failure by those in power to recognise that ideals and truths are seldom universal, but partial and situated is a denial, and has been a critique of the West and modernity in general, and of the powerful white male in particular. It is experienced by those others who are not dominant culturally as part of the process of domination. There is a tendency on the part of powerful Anglo and European 'white' cultures, to overlook (or justify narcissistically), any uncomfortable aspects of the social reality or history that result in greater/ more valuable cultural, economic and social capital than others (Mills, 1997; Pajaczkowska & Young, 1992), and instead focus only on the more appealing "triumphs of the mind" (Fanon, 1967). Through failing to look critically, the powerful deny the power relations embedded in particular discourses, or perhaps the existence of power relations at all. Failure to interrogate the given and partial construction of culture and history, a tendency to universalise views on the part of dominant,

formerly colonising Anglo and European white cultures, and to believe them 'natural' rather than culturally based, has been described as an ideology based on 'absence at the centre'

"The identity of white culture is absent in a number of senses, both political and subjective…. An identity based on power never has to develop a consciousness of itself as responsible, it has no sense of its limits except as these are perceived in opposition to others…. "
(Pajaczkowska & Young, 1992)

So, being aware that many truths claimed to be universal may be in actuality culturally situated norms of the dominant Anglo European groups, we should perhaps be suspicious then, of any universal claims, for example for the universal values of beauty, or restorative effects of wild nature. These claims are very often made in specific cultural contexts, and without any knowledge as to whether universal application could possibly be so or not (Pajaczkowska & Young, 1992). Important in the context of this thesis are universalist claims or assumptions made by spatial production experts in the production of park space. I am not saying there is no material world, but it is important to recognise that different people and groups will understand or represent the same event or same object differently. For example, there are parents in all societies, but the ways in which parenting is practiced and understood varies greatly. Where do the boundaries of different understandings lie?

"the term ethnicity acknowledges the place of history, language and culture in the construction of subjectivity and identity, as well as the fact that all discourse is placed, positioned, situated and all knowledge is contextual. …a position within the discursive formations of a particular space and time. The displacement of the 'centred' discourses of the West entails putting into question its universalist character and its transcendental claims to speak for everyone, while being itself everywhere and nowhere."
(Hall, 1992:257)

3.5 Ethnicity, Race, the Group, and the Other

If modernism is characterised by a (now rejected) belief in universal truths that can be perceived by, and apply equally to all, and post modernism by a belief in total individualism and relativism, is there a still a possible place for culture and ethnicity in understanding use of space? Why should designers anticipate or look for group 'tastes' or ontologies, that if revealed, might be accommodated to encourage more representative use of park spaces by the surrounding population?

Bourdieu's theory of habitus and field, seems to me to provide a theoretical framework that can allow for both individual agency, and for social structure. In the notion of habitus can be found structuring influences of social /spatial origin and early formation of ideas, and in the idea of field, structures as pre existing hierarchies of capital and power. Individual agency through the life course allows for awareness of and modification of the habitus, for learning the rules of the game, for the acquisition of capital and so for influencing the field. Bourdieu's world is one

that is always already populated, and is relational. We do not exist alone, we are born into a pre-existing social context, and our world is not entirely determined by our own effort. To some extent we can choose to compete in any field, at any level, but without support from others, some 'social capital', we cannot challenge pre existing structures easily, if at all. Many people have the ability to limit, or to amplify our power in the field, not least by the use of symbolic violence, as discussed in 3.3. We need to belong to groups, and our 'identity' internalised and externalised through habitus and cultural practice is a marker of our belonging, our rejection and acceptance of certain values. Viewed in this way, I argue that there is good reason to look for meaningful cultural (or sub cultural) group norms, though these will not be temporally or spatially fixed, or individually defining. As Paul Gilroy says,

"I think we need to be theoretically and politically clear that no single culture is hermetically sealed off from others. There can be no neat and tidy separation of racial groups in this country....It is time to dispute with those positions which...say 'there is no possibility of shared history and no human empathy'....Culture....is never fixed, finished or final. It is fluid, it is actively made and remade."
(Gilroy, 1992:57)

Having defined culture as '' a learned complex of knowledge, belief, art, morals, law and custom'' can this be mapped on to ethnicity, and be expected to influence spatial practices in the UK? The British census allows some ethnic origin data to be gathered, however the categories available arguably show an intention to categorise by heritage nationality, and race, rather than coherent cultural groups. The categories of the census are inconsistently detailed, and in some instances only racially identified. For instance, the classifications 'Other White' and 'Black African' are not measures of ethnicity in any sense of a single culture. Is ethnicity then a valid marker of difference, or just a more socially acceptable way of expressing the power relations unacceptably defined by race?

Again, with reference to Bourdieu, a culture, as expressed in our home background, will influence the formation of habitus, how we think, speak, act. The pre existing social 'fields' we are born or move into will determine how well our habitus can fit with dominant groups, and will assign value the forms of capital we have to offer. This is a situation we will have some opportunity to manipulate, but because of power relations , and because not all aspects of habitus are conscious, the process is at least in part outside our control. Reproduction takes place in the home, and in the neighbourhood, as well as institutionally. Our social grounding is not just determined by our parents, but also by those around us, who we meet (or read) and mix with, who challenge or support our ideas and actions, provide frames for information we gather, or provide answers to our questions. If we are exposed to culturally and ideologically homogenous environments, we may be exposed only to hegemonic discourse and practice, from which we will doubtless find significant influence. Even if we live or work in a very mixed environment, with access to many cultures, and many social classes, to global media and so on, we may not be exposed to, or open to, all available influences. As children, our parents are likely to seek to ensure the reproduction of their values, speaking in a given language, controlling our access to space, sending us to particular schools, religious and cultural institutions or ensuring our participation in particular approved social events and activities. We may also be shaped by exclusion by others, and we may feel most comfortable with or find more emotional support from friends who share

our experiences and values, or endure similar exclusion. In these ways, sub cultures can be protected, reinforced and reproduced, even in multicultural and highly mobile societies.

Our relationship to space and location is a part of the process of 'identity' formation - where you feel you are from, just like your name, is a part of who you are (de Certeau, et al., 1998), and also part of how others see you. It is possible to feel excluded from your home neighbourhood, and be given identity by others as belonging somewhere else, just as it is possible to feel both local belonging, and a connection to other places distant from your actual location. Pierre Mayol describes processes in the (almost private) public spaces of the home neighbourhood that help shape, and at the same time are a tacit assertion of, individual and collective identity and approved spatial practice. Social norms in body, behaviour and dress are represented in the space of the neighbourhood. There are codes of acceptable language and behaviour, identified by 'miniscule repressions', acknowledgement and disapproval. Like Bourdieu's symbolic violence, the everyday encounter with others helps shape what and how we are allowed to think. We conform to the codes, and belong, or are outside and excluded. The evidence of the impact of everyday encounters on generating fear, and modifying behaviour in public space in Chapter 2, based on, for example race or gender, shows the power of such daily encounters in the neighbourhood and how 'the group' can force identity on 'others', and encourage social segregation (Brar, 1992; Gilroy, 1992). Being labelled by others, or claiming a group identity of your own can be mutually reinforcing processes, and have been critiqued as such.

"... affirmation of a particular collective experience becomes an essentialist assertion of difference... In their struggle against the hegemonic, universalizing imperatives of the (dominant ethnicities) the (dominated ethnicities) may also take recourse to constructing essentialist differences. "
(Brar, 1992:143-144)

Processes of formation of individual and collective identity as described by Mayol, or Bourdieu are relational and dynamic. It is possible, by considering these processes of identity formation to conceive of meaningful cultural difference that is sustained but not unchanging through time and space, by internal and external influence, by our own agency and by external structure; of an identity of the group we choose or are forced to belong to, that is fluid, contextual, and negotiated, and variable, from place to place, from person to person.

Returning to the census classifications, any geographically based national cultural identity seems extremely unlikely to be able to influence all people irrespective of gender, social class, caste, language or education, or mean the same thing to all groups living there, let alone living elsewhere. Bourdieu's detailed examinations of culture in France as it related to class and class fractions shows the complexity of cultural expression, habitus and field, we can expect in any society in any location (Bourdieu, 1999 [1979]; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990 [1977]). Some ethnic groups as described in the census then, may 'map' onto cultural differences in some ways, and for some individuals but not for all. At the same time, the hegemonic discourse of the powerful in any society or group will have influence. Cultural effects on behaviour, will not be universal, but this does not mean that there are no meaningful collectivities, no ways of thinking that are shared, that influence many who claim a particular ethnic identity, nor does it preclude the existence of any widespread practices or understandings of space across many collectivities, for

example those allied with a particular religion.

In relation to power, and therefore in claiming rights to be in space as described in Chapter 2, race is definitely an issue. An identifier without intrinsic content, it is the product of the marking of difference, of 'othering', and exclusion. It is a form of identification and grouping whose meaning in the field has been already determined within specific historical and institutional contexts (Hall, 2000).

Being not 'white', visibly different to the most powerful 'race' in many countries, including the UK, some people of very different cultural heritage or class backgrounds may choose to identify as 'Black' at certain times, in order to address race based inequality, and gain collective power in a given field. This, like gender, is not a likely determinant of uniform ideology. Race shouldn't be considered an indicator of taste, or of spatial practices, it is an indicator of power, of symbolic rather than cultural capital.

Could there be any relationship between structural racial inequality in UK society (Barnard, 2014; Wood & Cracknell, 2013; Centre for Ethnic Minority Studies, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2005) and the construction of 'place'? Massey would argue it is only Western ideology that separates society from space, that society and space are all part of the same thing (Massey, 2005). In Lefebvre's terms, a structurally racist society would, then, be likely to 'exude' structurally racist spaces (Lefebvre, 1991[1974]).

There is certainly evidence of widespread difficulty in accepting the 'Britishness' of people who are not white (Gilroy 1987), and as discussed in 3.2, Britain is a place with a particular cultural construction of landscape that is, perhaps through the pervasive notion of the 'genius of the place', seen as 'truly', 'naturally' emblematic of Britishness. Chambers asserts the Victorian myths that constructed the 'roots' of Britishness beyond the machines and commercialism of industrial society in an idealised countryside, did not include in any positive sense, the efforts or indeed existence of anyone else (Chambers, 1993):

"In fact, it seemed, and many Britons in their 'splendid isolation' would have concurred, as though Britain was the world. Everything else was simply 'foreign' and 'strange'."
(Chambers, 1993:149)

Being British culturally then, is based, in this reading, on a particular racialised historical narrative, that has frequently been constructed against foreign tastes or cultures. It is possible to imagine among UK designers, situated in a way of thinking about the landscape in particular configurations as constituitive of nation, of 'place', where if differences in taste along ethnic dimensions were known, there might be resistance to considering any approach to spatial design to suit other ideals outside the existing 'legitimate taste' .

4.0 The Case Study Area

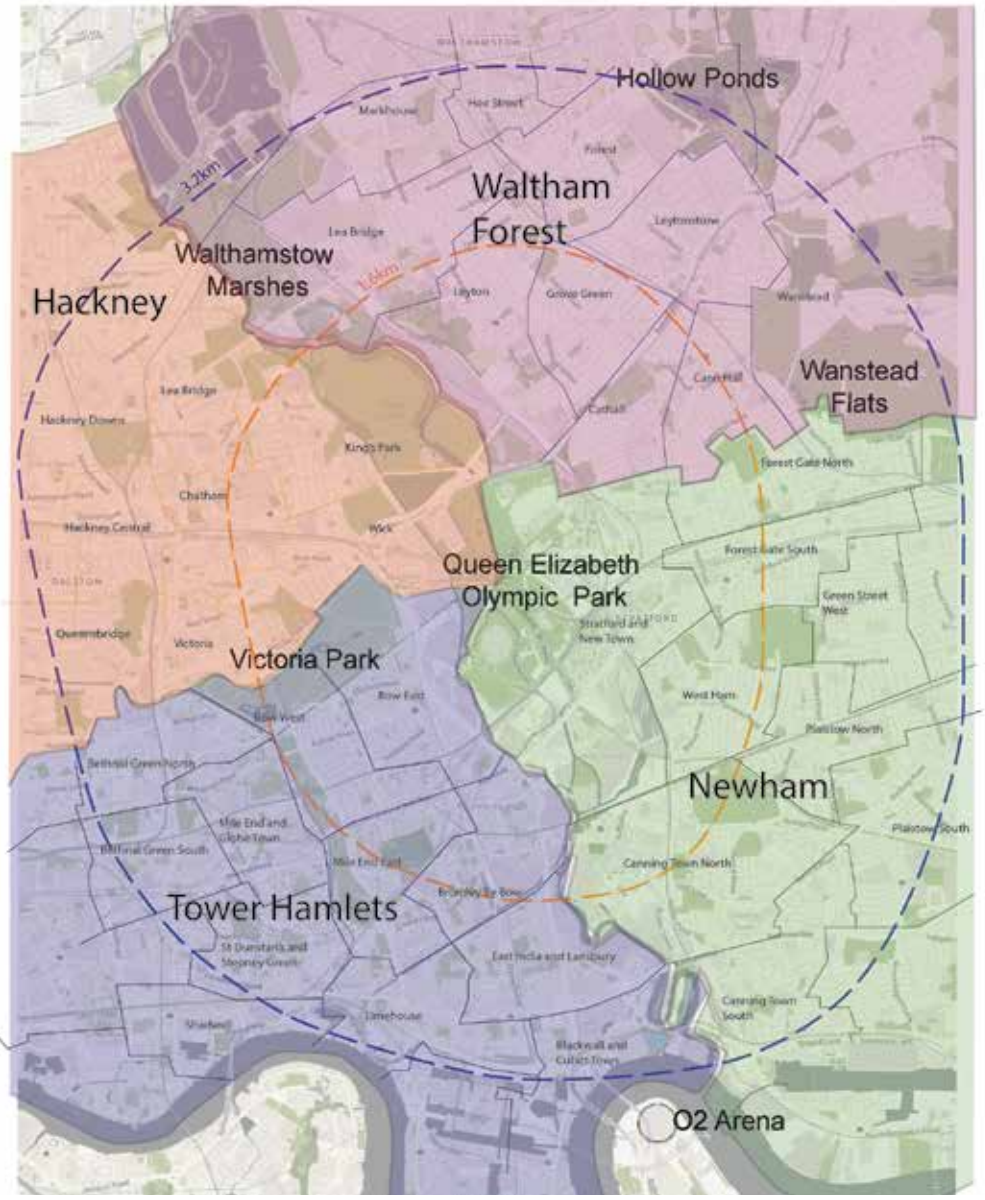


Fig 4.1. Inner (1.6 Km) and Outer (3.2Km) Park Catchment, Borough and Ward Boundaries (map © OpenStreetMap contributors)

4.1 The Social Context

To understand the likely park user population, and the urban context of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, it is necessary first to establish the catchment area, and so the distribution and demography of the existing 'community' or 'communities' who might be able to benefit most from the newly created open space at the heart of the Olympic development. I argue it is this group most of all who's needs might reasonably be expected to have influenced the work of the designers of the park in its configuration post Games, and who might reasonably be represented in early user counts, being the most frequent users of the park, if it has met their needs.

Designers would have been aware that the London Plan identifies the ideal distribution of parks to provide adequately for population needs, using London's 'Public Open Space Hierarchy' (Greater London Authority, 2014). This hierarchy also forms the model for defining catchment

areas for most other local authority parks in the UK (Department of Transport, Local Government & the Regions, 2002.), including the catchment populations measured as part of the HLF visitor statistics cited in the introduction. In using the hierarchy, parks, and some other open spaces, are categorised by their size, and the facilities offered. A distance is then proposed as an appropriate catchment area for a park of that type (Greater London Authority, 2014).

The catchment area for the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, defined by the current London Plan as a 'metropolitan park' is deemed to be 3.2km. A metropolitan park is identified as a ''visitor attraction'', and is therefore seen as having a far wider catchment than a smaller park with less facilities (Department of Transport Local Government & the Regions, 2002.). This method of defining a park's catchment area and its relative importance or accessibility to people within that area, compared with other spaces, has been called into question as a tool for planning or evaluating provision of open space (Burgess et al 1988b). Any park beyond reasonable walking distance will have a more limited impact on the quality of life, and feature less in leisure activities of people who are restricted by time, mobility or access to transport, than those for whom the park is on the doorstep.

The Community Green study, discussed in the literature review, found that 78% of their interviewees most frequently visited the park by walking (CABE Space 2010). Distances travelled did increase for journeys to parks of a higher standard, with more facilities. Transport for London's report 'Walking in London' provides an estimated walking time of nearly 40-50 minutes for a 3.2km journey (Duckenfield 2008). Their statistics indicate very few journeys of this distance are ever taken on foot - one in twenty or five per cent- compared with the finding that four in five or eighty per cent of journeys less than 0.5km in London are walked. The same study shows that four in five trips to London primary schools of less than a mile (1.6 km) are taken on foot, rising to nine in ten of secondary school trips for the same distance. Walking as the favoured mode of transport drops off steeply from this point as distance increases.

A distance of 1.6km, taking about 20 minutes on foot, might then be the catchment area from which the most regular or frequent users of an attractive public park might travel. On this basis, 1.6km from the boundary will be used to define the electoral wards within the primary catchment of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, from which the most frequent visitors might be reasonably drawn, with the 3.2km catchment defined in the London Plan being used as a secondary area of study. Figure 4.1 on the previous page shows both catchments taken from the park's possible boundary on all sides, and the Borough wards falling within each.

Ward profile information for the wards within the smaller and larger catchment areas has been collated from the National Office for Statistics census data for 2011. Ethnicity information gathered in the census, used to understand the largest cultural groups in the catchment, is compiled as two tables (Table 4.1, 4.2)

Ward with over 50% developed area in1.6km radius of site boundary **Ward with over 50% developed area in 1.6km radius of park as built**	**Bow East**	Bow West	Bromley By Bow	**Cathall**	Grove Green	**King's Park**	**Leyton**	Mile End East	**Stratford & New Town**	**Wick**	West Ham	**TOTALS 1.6m**	more than 10% in any ward
All Usual Residents (Persons)[1]	14,781	12,939	14,480	12,700	14,604	11,098	14,184	13,354	17,768	11,734	15,551	**153,193**	
%White; English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish /British (Persons)[1]	47.7	47.7	21.5	20.3	22.6	23.5	18.8	24.1	20.9	34.8	19.1	**27%**	X
%White; Irish (Persons)[1]	1.9	2	0.9	1.3	1.7	1.8	1.3	1.1	1.3	2	0.8	**1%**	
%White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller (Persons)[1]	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.7	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.4	0	**0%**	
%White; Other White (Persons)[1]	10.4	9.5	7.1	17.3	22.2	11.9	16.2	8.6	18.2	11.1	14.6	**13%**	X
%Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; White and Black Caribbean (Persons)[1]	2	1.6	1.3	1.9	1.1	2.4	1.7	1.4	1.5	2.9	2.2	**2%**	
%Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; White and Black African (Persons)[1]	0.7	0.6	0.6	1.2	1	1.3	1.1	0.3	1.4	1.2	1.1	**1%**	
%Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; White and Asian (Persons)[1]	1.2	1.3	0.9	0.8	1	0.9	0.8	0.8	1	0.9	1.1	**1%**	
%Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; Other Mixed (Persons)[1]	1.5	1.4	1.1	1.6	2.2	2.1	1.5	1	1.6	1.8	2.2	**2%**	
%Asian/Asian British; Indian (Persons)[1]	2	1.7	1.5	4.6	5	2.9	3.7	1.9	8	1.4	6.4	**4%**	
%Asian/Asian British; Pakistani (Persons)[1]	0.6	0.5	1	11	11.9	1.3	13.7	1	4.2	0.6	3.6	**4%**	X
%Asian/Asian British; Bangladeshi (Persons)[1]	17.1	21.2	44.9	4.3	3.3	2.8	2.8	43.2	8.1	2.6	11.3	**15%**	X
%Asian/Asian British; Chinese (Persons)[1]	1.5	1.8	2.5	1.2	1.5	1.1	1.3	1.9	3.1	1.3	1.5	**2%**	
%Asian/Asian British; Other Asian (Persons)[1]	1.6	1.7	2.2	4.3	5.2	2.4	4.8	2.1	4.8	2.8	6.5	**3%**	
%Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; African (Persons)[1]	3.9	2.9	5.7	12.4	6.3	20.1	12.2	5.4	12.8	16.2	15.5	**10%**	X
%Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; Caribbean (Persons)[1]	3.9	2.8	3.5	9.2	7.2	13.2	10.5	3.3	6	10.4	6.9	**7%**	X
%Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; Other Black (Persons)[1]	1.8	1.5	2.8	3.6	2.3	6.6	4.5	1.6	2.5	5.2	3.5	**3%**	
%Other Ethnic Group; Arab (Persons)[1]	0.8	0.6	1.1	2.2	1.9	0.9	1.8	0.9	1.9	0.9	1.5	**1%**	
%Other Ethnic Group; Any Other Ethnic Group (Persons)[1]	1.2	1.1	1.4	2.7	3.2	4	3.1	1.1	2.1	3.4	2.2	**2%**	
	99.9	100	100.1	100	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.7	99.9	100	**100%**	

Table 4.1 Ward Level Population Statistics by Ethnicity, Inner Catchment (1.6km) (source ONS 2011)

4.1.1 Ethnic Diversity

Table 4.1 on the previous page shows the ethnicity claimed by a total population of over one hundred and fifty thousand in the inner area. Table 4.2 opposite provides data on almost five hundred thousand people in the wider catchment. In most of the 11 wards within the inner study area, the most frequently claimed ethnicity recorded in the 2011 Census is white British with an average of 27% of the population. The majority population, the other 73%, is therefore of people who do not consider themselves ethnically white British. Ward by ward, the percentages of those claiming white British ethnicity vary significantly from 48% to 19%. In two wards, Bromley by Bow and Mile End East, the most frequently claimed ethnicity is British Bangladeshi/ Bangladeshi, though again at under 45% this is not a majority, and these wards still house a very culturally mixed population.

The national average percentage of households that do not have English as the main language at home is 9.2% (Office for National Statistics, 2012). In Hackney 30% of households speak another language in the home. In Newham this rises to 47% (London Borough of Hackney, 2012).

The 'ethnicities' offered for choice in the census are not all culturally coherent groupings. They are a mixture of terms describing race, and terms describing concieved 'heritage' nationality. Options include categorisation by skin colour, by a whole continent of background origin, and even just by not having originated historically in the UK. The possible choices do not properly reflect the cultural diversity of the populations of the Olympic 'host' Boroughs.. For example, a study by Tower Hamlets in 2008 reported a total of 106 languages being spoken within its school population. The top 10 community languages were: Bengali - 20,765 (59.28%), English – 9,914 (28.30%), Somali – 846 (2.42%), Arabic – 368 (1.05%), Turkish – 326 (0.93%), Cantonese – 252 (0.72%), Yoruba – 243 (0.69%), Urdu – 218 (0.62%), Portuguese – 169 (0.48%) and French 142 (0.41%) (Tower Hamlets, 2008). In Hackney, the top ten languages spoken at home differ, being English (76%) Turkish (4.5%) Polish, Spanish, French, Yiddish, Bengali, and Portuguese (Less than 2%) Gujerati and German

However, while there is great diversity, there are also very large numbers of people claiming to belong to some ethnic groups that are arguably culturally coherent, and longstanding in their neighbourhoods. These groups are worthy of consideration in the design of the Olympic Park if it is to be locally responsive. A 10% population in any typical ward represents roughly between 1100 and 1700 people, in an area which would take less than 20 minutes to walk across. People claiming white British, British Bangladeshi, British Pakistani, and British Caribbean ethnicity, all form more than 10% of the population in some wards within the inner catchment area and British Indian residents form more than 10% of the population in 4 wards in the outer catchment (Office for National Statistics, 2012).

4.1.2 Economy and Deprivation

The cultural diversity of London's East End is not due only to patterns of globalisation over the last fifty years. It reflects a long history, at least three centuries of migrants locating there for its cheap housing, industrial employment, and proximity to the port of London and the docks.

Ward with over 50% developed area inside 3.2km radius	% TOTALS in 1.6km	Bethnal Green North	Bethnal Green South	Cann Hall	Canning Town North	Canning Town South	Chatham	East India and Lansbury	Forest	Forest Gate North	Forest Gate South	Green Street West	Hackney Central	Hoe Street	Leabridge Hackney	Lea Bridge WalthamForest	Leytonstone	Limehouse	Markhouse	Mile End & Globe Town	Plaistow North	Plaistow South	St Dunstan's and Stepney Green	Victoria	% TOTALS in 3.2km
All Usual Residents (Persons)[1]	**153,193**	13,683	14,166	13,799	14,810	15,996	13,232	14,859	12,609	16,257	17,362	15,113	12,548	13,912	14,039	15,671	12,879	15,986	13,636	15,190	15,470	16,404	16,238	13,231	**490,283**
%White; English/Welsh/Scottish/ Northern Irish /British (Persons)[1]	**27%**	36	23.8	22	26.1	29.7	30	28	24.8	20.7	16	4.8	32	32	29.7	18	33.9	29.6	24	34.8	16	19	25.9	40.3	**26%**
%White; Irish (Persons)[1]	**1%**	2.1	1.5	1.3	0.7	0.8	1.7	0.8	1.9	1.2	1.2	0.4	2.1	1.4	2	1.1	2	1.4	1.2	1.6	0.5	0.7	1.1	2.4	**1%**
%White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller (Persons)[1]	**0%**	0.1	0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0	0	0.1	0	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.1	0	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0	0.2	**0%**
%White; Other White (Persons)[1]	**13%**	12	10.3	20	13.8	14.9	14	7.9	14.6	14	14.6	5.5	13	17	15.2	15.8	16.5	12.1	16.5	11	10	12.9	7.8	12.9	**13%**
%Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; White and Black Caribbean (Persons)[1]	**2%**	1.1	0.7	2	1.8	1.5	2.6	2	1.3	2.1	1.4	0.4	2.3	1.7	2.4	1.7	1.6	1.1	1.7	0.9	1.6	1.5	1.1	2.7	**2%**
%Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; White and Black African (Persons)[1]	**1%**	0.6	0.6	1.3	1.6	1.6	1.8	0.7	0.6	1.1	1	0.6	1.3	2	1.4	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.8	0.7	1.2	1	0.5	1.2	**1%**
%Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; White and Asian (Persons)[1]	**1%**	1.3	1.1	0.8	0.7	0.9	1.1	0.6	1	1.1	0.8	0.7	1.4	1	1.4	0.9	1.3	1	1	1.4	0.8	0.9	1.1	1	**1%**
%Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; Other Mixed (Persons)[1]	**2%**	1.6	1.2	2.1	1.6	1.6	2.5	0.8	1.1	1.2	1.3	0.9	2.1	1.8	2.1	1.8	1.7	1.1	1.6	1.2	1.6	1.3	1.1	1.9	**2%**
%Asian/Asian British; Indian (Persons)[1]	**4%**	1.3	1.7	3.9	3.3	4.9	2.2	1.3	6.1	6.8	12.1	32.1	2.4	2.7	7.8	5.3	9.4	2.2	4.8	1.9	10	6.3	1.7	1.5	**5%**
%Asian/Asian British; Pakistani (Persons)[1]	**4%**	0.5	0.9	7.8	3.1	2.4	1.1	0.9	19.3	7.4	8.2	19.5	0.6	13	1.9	17.5	7.6	0.8	18.1	1.2	7.4	7.8	1	0.6	**6%**
%Asian/Asian British; Bangladeshi (Persons)[1]	**15%**	31	44.9	4.2	8.9	6.2	2.7	39	2.3	11.3	14.5	16.4	3.2	1.2	3.5	1.5	2.7	33.6	1.3	31.1	17	12.3	46.9	3.3	**15%**
%Asian/Asian British; Chinese (Persons)[1]	**2%**	1.1	2.4	1.7	1.5	3.2	1.8	2.3	1.5	0.8	1.2	0.5	1.4	1.2	0.9	1.1	1	3.5	1.1	2.8	1.1	0.7	1.3	1.4	**2%**
%Asian/Asian British; Other Asian (Persons)[1]	**3%**	1.5	2	3.2	4	3.7	2.8	2.1	5.7	3.5	4.1	4.8	3.7	5.1	2.7	5	4	2.6	5.9	2.5	6.4	8.5	1.8	2.6	**4%**
%Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; African (Persons)[1]	**10%**	3.5	3.3	12	20.8	18.5	16	6	5.3	13.5	11	6.4	15	7.7	10.5	9.8	5.4	4.3	7.3	3.6	14	14.8	2.9	11.4	**10%**
%Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; Caribbean (Persons)[1]	**7%**	1.7	1.7	11	6.1	3.4	9.7	3.2	7.7	8.1	6.2	3.2	9.8	6.4	9.9	10.3	5.8	2.2	6.9	1.4	5.8	5.5	2	8.1	**6%**
%Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; Other Black (Persons)[1]	**3%**	1.5	1.7	3.2	3.1	2.5	5.9	2.5	2.3	3.4	2.4	1.4	4.6	2.3	3.9	4	2.1	1.5	2.9	1.6	3.2	3	1.5	4.6	**3%**
%Other Ethnic Group; Arab (Persons)[1]	**1%**	0.9	0.8	1.3	0.9	1.6	0.6	0.8	1.4	1.4	1.3	0.7	0.7	1.7	0.3	1.9	2.3	0.9	1.7	1	1	1	1.2	0.6	**1%**
%Other Ethnic Group; Any Other Ethnic Group (Persons)[1]	**2%**	1.7	1.1	2.5	1.8	2.5	3.4	1.3	3	2.5	2.7	1.8	3.9	2.5	3.9	3.3	1.8	1.1	3.2	1.4	2.6	2.8	1	3.2	**2%**
	100&	100	99.7	100	99.9	100.1	100	100	99.9	100.1	100.1	100.1	100	100	99.9	100.2	100.1	99.7	100.2	100.2	100	100.1	99.9	99.9	**100%**

Table 4.2 Ward Level Population Statistics by Ethnicity, Outer Catchment (3.2km) (source ONS 2011)

The area has been greatly impacted by the decline of docking and manufacturing industries in London since the 1960s. A continuing decline in manufacturing has left higher than average levels of unemployment, large supplies of derelict former industrial land, and unsurprisingly, high levels of deprivation (MacRury & Poynter, 2009).

Since 2004 all the UK's wards have been measured on a relative deprivation ranking, the index of multiple deprivation (IMD), covering seven main topic areas- income, employment, health, education and skills, housing, crime and living environment,. These are weighted by their importance in contributing to deprivation - income, employment and health are rated the highest. The IMD reflects a composite measure of deprivation across these dimensions. While Waltham Forest tends towards London averages, Hackney, Newham and Tower Hamlets have remained in the list of the most deprived English boroughs since the IMD was first published. Within these boroughs, the wards along the Lea Valley are among the most deprived. There are more people living in council housing or in properties owned by registered social landlords in Tower Hamlets, Newham and Hackney than in other London boroughs or nationally, and there are significantly higher levels of overcrowding - the highest in the country. There is a higher than average percentage of young people in the population, and more children living in poverty. Violent crime is reported as 21% higher than the London average, and antisocial behaviour reported as 11 % higher than the London average. Many people are fearful of crime where they live (MacRury & Poynter 2009). In these strained and difficult living conditions, extremist politics have had impact too. There have historically been issues of racist political organisations, racist violence , including deaths, in the East End (Miah 1998). There are ongoing concerns over gang membership and violence, (Alexander 2005) and growing concerns over Islamic fundamentalism (Fussey, et al., 2012).

Deprivation, and available land has made the east of London a focus of major regeneration initiatives for many years, including in the 1980's the Docklands Development Corporation, and more recently the Thames Gateway Development Corporation's initiatives, aiming to boost economic fortunes and latterly, increase housing supply . Most jobs in these Boroughs are now in service industries, including public sector employment, and, in Tower Hamlets, in financial services, though many financial services sector employees are not resident in the area. The Docklands development is seen as having contributed to greater extremes of inequality locally, rather than improving quality of life (MacRury & Poynter 2009), something the Olympic Legacy has been aiming to avoid. It will not be successful within its own terms if alongside resolving spatial issues and creating a 'new city quarter' it fails to improve lives for existing residents, however the danger is with the type of area based, rather than person based, measures of deprivation represented by Indices of Multiple Deprivation, life for residents will be measured as improved, but actually, gentrification processes will simply have displaced people, who remain deprived, but are relocated in new areas, and less deprived people will have moved in.

4.2 Typical Aspects of Park Formation

While the Olympic Games makes this park atypical, the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park is in other ways quite typical of how contemporary urban park spaces are produced in the UK. The project

is delivering pre existing strategic visions of development for this part of London that had been put forward at various times previously, both for Stratford's extension and regeneration (Geoghan 2012) and for the creation of a 'park' in this part of the Lea Valley. In Legacy, the new park spaces, are planned to be central to and surrounded by the new housing and mixed use developments (ODA 2007). The new park aims to provide this previously industrial area with an enhanced environmental setting, increasing its attractiveness and therefore land sale and future unit sale/rental value of new flats and businesses planned around its periphery. Using park creation as a means to foster investment and bring new communities to previous industrial or otherwise unattractive locations is a model of urban regeneration and park building that has been employed throughout the UK since the first purpose built public park opened in Birkenhead in 1847. It continues to be advocated in state publications like CABE's 'Start with the Park' (CABE 2005) and in this reading, the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park would be typical of many other park spaces in the UK, albeit with some atypical international quality sports facilities included in the mix.

The 2012 Olympics has to a large extent been a mechanism for addressing the perceived barrier of the Lea (interchangeably spelled Lee) river valley to expanding population growth and housing development eastward, seen by policy makers as necessary to meet London's forecast population growth (MacRury & Poynter. 2009). The Lee Valley Regional Park was first envisaged as a continuous recreational green space stretching from Hertfordshire to the Thames in the Abercrombie Plan for London of 1945, and was established in large part in 1967. The area chosen for the London 2012 Olympics had been a 'break' in the virtually continuous 26 mile green waterside space of the Regional Park , since its establishment in 1967. Reference was made in the Olympic Design Authority design briefs for the 'South Park' to an urban pleasure gardens and people's 'Fun Palace' first proposed in 1960-61 by Cedric Price for this part of the Lea Valley. The vision for the southern area of the park site was for a spectacular landscape, similar in conception to the 1951 Festival Gardens and public realm of London's Southbank.

Before the London Olympic bid was formulated, the planned arrival of the channel rail link at Stratford, and the availability of former railway lands with excellent connections to central London's overground and underground transport networks were recognised as an opportunity by developers Stanhope. Stratford City plans for the Westfield shopping centre and Stratford East pre-date and had to be integrated with the Olympic masterplan, resulting in the Westfield shopping centre ultimately providing the main public route into the Olympic site from Stratford train and bus station. The prominence of 'Legacy' from the outset of the representation of the London Olympics makes it clear that this 'Mega Event' was seen not (just) as a two week spectacle of sport, but as an opportunity for financing large scale urban regeneration and attracting external investment. Politically it remains essential that private sector funds are attracted, and any public investment if not recovered fully will at least be able to be represented as leading to long term public benefit. One of the primary ways of recouping public investment envisaged is the elevated resale value of land purchased before remediation and environmental improvement. As Sherer says, it is obvious that

... despite popular rhetoric that equates the presence of the Olympic Games with community-wide benefits, there are significant public interests, as well as major corporate interests, at stake..
Scherer 2011: 794

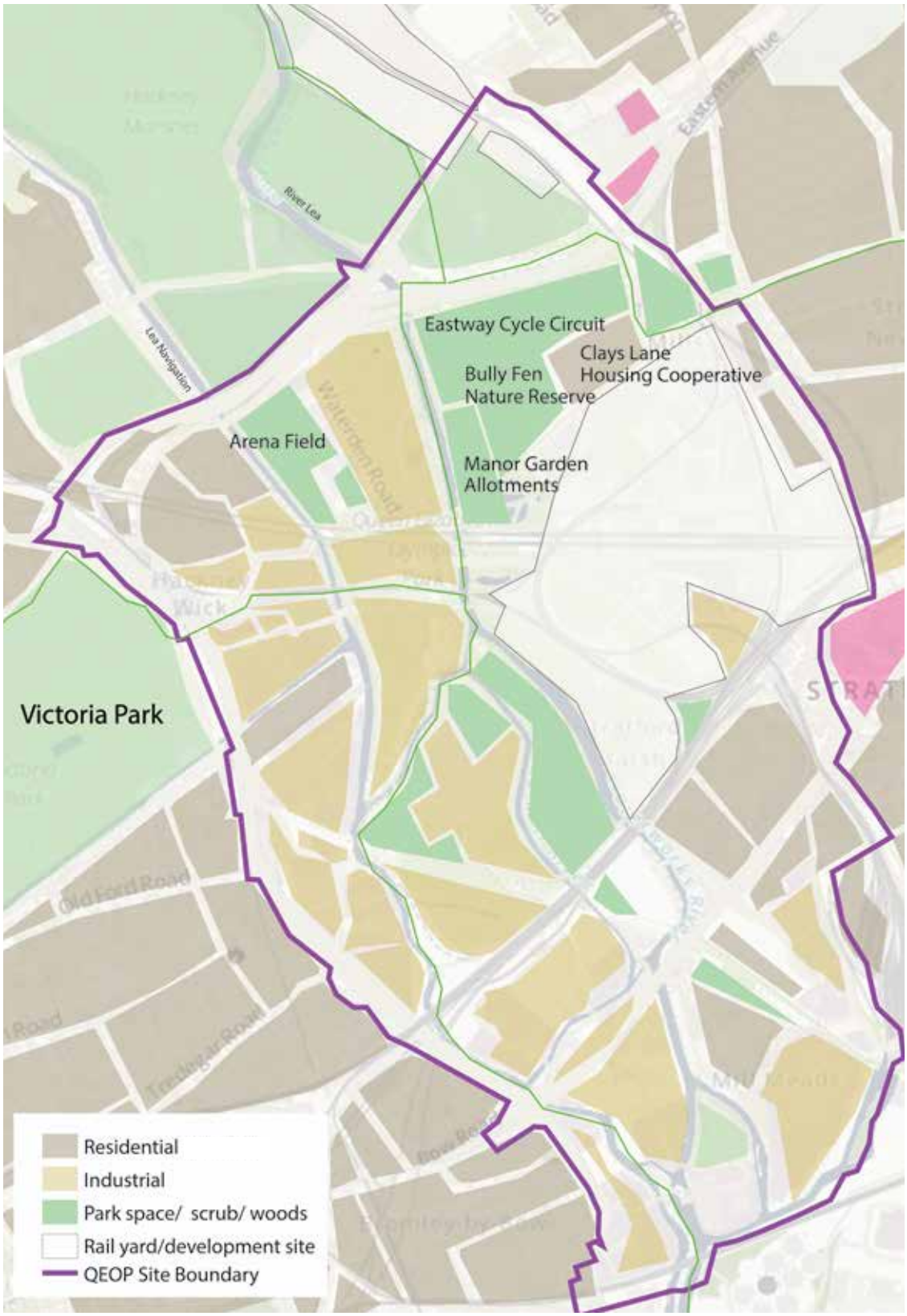


Fig 4.2 The Olympic Site 2000, based on Hartman 2012 (map © OpenStreetMap contributors)

4.3 Olympic Aspects of Park Formation

Since London's bid to host the Olympic Games was first imagined, the site has been intended to result in a lasting 'legacy' of parkland, and to that end, landscape areas have been designed from the outset to be adapted post-Games for long term use by far fewer people than the design accommodated during the Olympics each day. The park's initial function as a 'Mega-Event' landscape (Roche 2000) required it to cater to 300,000 daily visitors during the 2012 Olympic Games (Olympic Delivery Authority 2009). This compares with only 18,000 approx daily visitors to the nearby Victoria Park per day (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2011). The design was devised to minimise the number of required changes in the parkland landscape pre and post Games, however, some characteristics which are required of an Olympics site will of course be influential in the long term.

The sport and access/ infrastructure facilities required from the Olympic host city are determined by the IOC, and include international sports venues with significant spectator capacity, sufficient athlete accommodation nearby, and good transport links. In other representations, Legacy was not the spatial driver, and ultimately, the technical requirements of hosting the 17 day event had to be put above everything else, with the long term fitting around this short lived need (Evans, 2011). Olympic developments (where new facilities are planned), need a large supply of available land, easily accessed by vast movements of people. To be economically viable, the land must be relatively cheap (Roche 1990). The Lower Lea Valley area had long been identified as an opportunity for some kind of development intervention, but the area was resistant to wholesale regeneration because of huge infrastructure challenges, and complex land ownership patterns (Geoghan 2012.) The bid for the London Games was seen as an opportunity to regenerate this challenging space, through land assembly, investment in infrastructure, and through securing private sector investment in development of new homes and business space. The 1992 Barcelona Olympics had demonstrated the potential of the Olympic Games in delivering strategic urban regeneration, including investment in infrastructure, and recouping the costs of creating new venues through subsequent economic development, and property development. The 2000 Sydney Olympics had set a precedent for reclaiming brownfield land and recouping costs through post-Games development for housing. Sydney's model was intended to be emulated in London, and the London Games organisers set up deals with the same developer, Lendlease for the development of the athletes village (MacRury & Poynter 2009).

Since the terrorist killings in the athletes village in 1972 Munich Olympics, the Games site(s) must also be capable of being secured on the perimeter, and have tightly controlled entry (Roche 1990). The terrorist bombings in the USA in 2001, increased the emphasis on security further, and the London bombings in 2005 the day after the Olympics were awarded to London ensured security would be a key issue in the run up to the Games (Evans, 2011). One of the great attractions for security management of the London Olympics was that the main Olympic site in the Lea Valley (Fig 4.2) was cut off from the rest of the urban fabric by waterways, railway viaducts and multilane roads, and that the whole perimeter can be further secured by an electric fence, with minimal impact on the surrounding population (Fussey, et al., 2012). The need to maintain a secure perimeter, and the preferred disconnection of the site from surrounding urban fabric is not a factor that would usually determine the siting or design of a significant new public

park, and indeed, this 'island site' rhetoric is at odds with the development vision and legacy aspirations for the site long term.

Speaking at the London School of Economics Urban Age Conference in 2005, Jason Prior, then Regional Vice President of EDAW, London, representing the lead master planner of the Olympic development legacy presented the vision for urban regeneration:

Existing conditions on both sides of the Lea Valley reflect a geography of separation ..... When talking to the boroughs and the community groups, it became obvious that we should be growing inwards from the edges, not creating new communities in the middle. The project should be about repairing the rift in the city fabric and promoting the greater integration of community with what we can bring forward as an improved environment. So what we are doing is extending existing frameworks and networks into the valley, whatever we put in the valley centre will be something that is accessible to a much broader group of people.
(Urban Age 2005)

Prior's discussion of integration of networks, and repairing the rift in the city clearly contradicts the vision of design put forward in the security specification, where the site's island location and disconnection from the surrounding fabric is seen as an advantage to be maintained, and reinforced at Games time. Other than limited, controlled access points that will connect to the main transport routes for road and public transit access, any significant integration with the surroundings if it were to happen at all could not happen until the post-Games transformation of the site in 'Legacy'. Whereas funding was guaranteed for delivering the secure isolated site required for the 2012 Games, post-Games, successful integration would be dependent on development plans coming forward, and public spending priorities in the future. The proposal to locate the park centrally north south within the new development site increases its potential distance from surrounding communities (see fig 4.3) but provides maximum park frontage for new properties to overlook and thereby gain value. This is perhaps a more convincing argument for the proposed approach of a central park space surrounded by new developments, than that of knitting or 'stitching' any new development into existing peripheral communities, which are largely still separated from them by major urban roads, canals and railways.

Another major difference with an Olympic development, not typical of other urban regeneration initiatives is the elevated time pressure and delivery certainty required, as well as their significance as a national 'shop window'. This results in a unique planning context. Roche (2000) describes how

'urban mega-events are typically conceived & produced by powerful elite groups with little democratic input into the policy-making process by local citizens. On the contrary, local citizens are typically expected to act as if they welcomed the event that is imposed upon them along with the visitors it may attract... (Roche 2000:126)

Designers, and 'client side' design advisers to the politicians required to approve plans arguably have greater control than otherwise might be the case, as there is a huge impetus to complete, and support for the project from almost all quarters. What is required is an exemplar project, led by the experts. This context then, arguably gives a greater insight into designers and

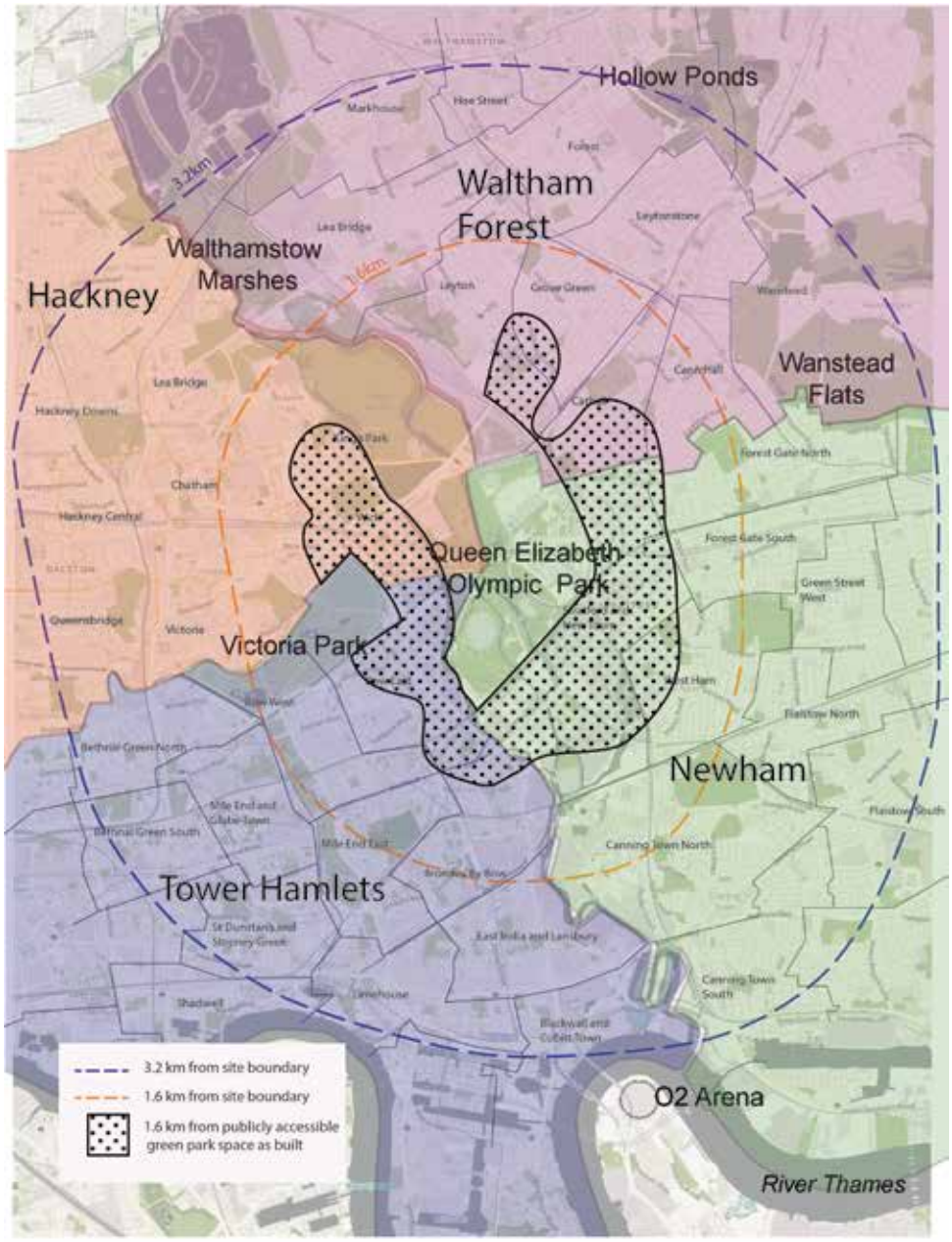


Fig 4.3 The 1.6 km Catchment as Built (map © OpenStreetMap contributors)

decision makers values, than might be discerned in projects where there has been more time for, and more acceptance of, critique from surrounding communities, stakeholders, politicians or planning authorities (Davis 2011, Hayes and Horne 2011)

'it is noticeable that although the ODA has been active in outreach, public meetings have evidently had little impact in project design and decision-making..; and that even where there have been concerted (if belated and reluctant) attempts by the ODA to resolve planning conflicts through dialogue, the imbalance in resources has been such that civic participation has been highly circumscribed.'
(Hayes & Horne 2011 :759)

Consultation processes are discussed in greater detail later in section 4.6 of this chapter.

4.4 Producing the New Space of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park

The British bid for a London Olympics in 2012 began in 1995, when the British Olympic Association decided London was the only viable British Olympic Games contender, as bids from the smaller cities of Birmingham and Manchester had previously failed. In 1997 the target date of 2012 was set, with the Government giving formal backing to the London bid in May 2003. The site in the Lower Lea Valley was identified at least by 2002. It could offer rail links to central London, to airports and to the channel tunnel (completed in 2003 though not operational), and there was a large supply of affordable land (Hartman 2012) meeting the basic requirements for Olympic developments (Roche 2000) .

The typical representation of the Lower Lea Valley as it existed prior to its regeneration as the Olympic Park, is of a blighted piece of city, an inaccessible area of contaminated land, polluted water and dirty industry, a 'void' (Davis, 2011). The arrangements of river, canal, road and rail infrastructure did isolate this part of London from its surroundings, much of it was landfill, and a history of industrial uses in the Lower Lea associated with the once thriving Docks had left some land heavily contaminated. As a consequence of contamination, relative isolation , visible industrial structures and electricity pylons, economic land values were not high.

However, this view is contested, and other representations of this part of the Lower Lea Valley have been made by those who did value it, for its particular mixture of isolation, industry and nature, or as a place to live, work and enjoy leisure facilities already on the site prior to its transformation (Fig 4.2). During the construction of the Olympic Park, London's only off road cycle facility 'Eastway', incorporating the Bully Fen Nature Reserve, a designated Site of Importance for Nature Conservation, was demolished; around 2,000 protected newts had to be relocated from their wetland habitats; other areas of Common Land were subsumed, like the Arena Fields opposite the Wick Village housing area; the historic Hennikers Ditch, a Medieval waterway was culverted and buried to create the North Park; the one hundred year old, 80 plot Manor Garden Allotments was destroyed, with much protest; more than four hundred people who had homes on the cooperatively managed Clays Lane estate were required to move, a travellers site was closed down, and 206 business all had to be relocated, with many objections and challenges (Corporate Watch, 2012; The Guardian, 2012). All were moved elsewhere or simply removed, through processes of negotiation and compulsory purchase, led by the London Development

Fig 4.4 Bully Fen Nature Reserve 2006
(© Homer Sykes, in The Guardian, 2012)

Fig 4.5 Eastway Cycle Circuit 2006
(© Homer Sykes, in The Guardian, 2012)

Agency, to create a clean slate for the Olympics, and post games, for the 'new city quarter' property developments envisaged (Keogh 2009).

4.4.1 Timeline of Spatial Production for the 2012 Olympics

The first visualisations of plans for the Olympic Park in the Lower Lea Valley, prepared by a consortium of companies led by landscape architects AECOM (then EDAW) with Foreign Office Architects (FOA), were made public in November 2004. In the same year, outline planning permission for the 'Olympic Park and Venues Masterplan' was secured from a joint Planning Committee established from the four affected boroughs. The Masterplan set out the main locations for the various venues and the boundaries of the park, what was proposed if the bid was unsuccessful, and what was proposed for the post Games Legacy. On July 6 2005, London won the bid to host the 2012 Olympic Games , beating Paris in a final round of votes, winning by 54 votes to 50. The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) held its first meeting on 3 October 2005. The Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) was subsequently established by an act of Parliament in March 2006. They served a dual role as the delivery agency and planning authority for the development of the Games site. The ODA Board consisted of representatives from the public and private sectors and worked with the London Development Agency, Transport for London, Thames Gateway Development Corporation and the five designated Olympic local authorities – Greenwich, Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest (MacRury, I. & Poynter, G. 2009). A revised masterplan was published in summer 2006, reduced in scale, and integrated with Stratford City, with more temporary buildings, and a greater emphasis on Legacy , prepared by the same AECOM/ EDAW team but without Foreign Office Architects who had resigned. A 'hybrid' Olympic & Legacy outline planning application, and detailed application for preparation of the site was made in May 2007 and permission granted in September of the same year.

Site work began on the Olympic Park in December 2006. Before commencing major construction, between 2006 and 2008, 52 electricity pylons up to 65 metres high, were removed, at a cost of £250 million pounds. In September 2006, the ODA became the single planning authority for the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site, including control of development in Stratford City and the Athlete's Village. They were both the 'promoter' of development plans, making planning applications, (typically the role of developers in the planning system for England & Wales), and the planning authority, in the decision making role. These two separate strands were delivered by different teams under separate leadership.

In 2008 the Olympic Park design team were joined by new landscape architects - UK based LDA Design, with George Hargreaves (an American landscape practice, parks expert, and designer of the Sydney Olympic Park) supported by four smaller practices and consultancies, adding further expertise for example in floral meadow design. Subsequently a range of detailed applications were made and additional technical studies were submitted as required to the ODA. (DCLG 2012, Independent 2012, Wainwright 2012, Geoghan 2012).

4.4.2 Creating and Controlling Legacy

The Olympic Park Legacy Company (OPLC) was not established until May 2009, as a public sector, not-for-profit company. The Department of Communities and Local Government describe the task of developing plans for the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park post the Olympic Games as being

" to transform the Park into world-class, sustainable, thriving neighbourhoods, which integrate well with their surroundings."
(Department of Communities & Local Government 2012)

The company consisted of private sector representatives, two public sector representatives (the Mayors of Newham and Hackney), board appointees made by Government and GLA, and a political advisory group that represented wider public sector interests. (MacRury, I. & Poynter, G. 2009). OPLC was responsible for the long-term planning, development, delivery, management and maintenance of the Olympic Park, tasked with meeting the strategic planning aims of the legacy area. (London Legacy Development Corporation, 2012)

Strategic decision making for the future was handed to the Mayor of London, and legislation allowing the creation of a Mayoral Development Corporation, the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) to take over from the OPLC was put in place through the Localism Act in 2011. The LLDC took over responsibility for the whole of the Olympic site from the ODA , with many officers from the ODA transferring over to the new organisation. The planning role was taken over by LLDC on 1st October 2012, using a very similar model for the development of strategies, and determination of planning applications. LLDC's ongoing strategic work is the completion of a Local Plan to guide the development of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park for the next 30 years, and the development of a list of approved projects for the Community Infrastructure Levy, a source of funding for shared infrastructure for the new communities - such as public realm spaces, schools etc. These will be funded through contributions from developers who are successful in making applications to develop buildings in the LLDC Area.

The Legacy Masterplan Framework Area Plans focus on proposals for the development of new communities over the next 20 -30 years in six locations surrounding the open spaces of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. The Area Plans aspire to provide a significant increase in housing (10,000-12,000 new homes) but are dependent on private sector investment to deliver this vision. MacRury & Poynter (2009) point to the difficulty of creating socially and economically sustainable communities and spatially integrated new city spaces where the financial strategy for delivery is to recoup initial public sector investment through increased value land sales and property development by the private sector. The risk as previously discussed is that rather than improving the lives of existing disadvantaged communities, processes of gentrification would simply displace disadvantaged groups to other locations (MacRury & Poynter 2009).

4.4.3 Stitching the Fringe

In parallel with the Olympic and Legacy masterplanning exercise, since 2006, six 'fringe' masterplans have been developed with the surrounding Boroughs through Design for London, led

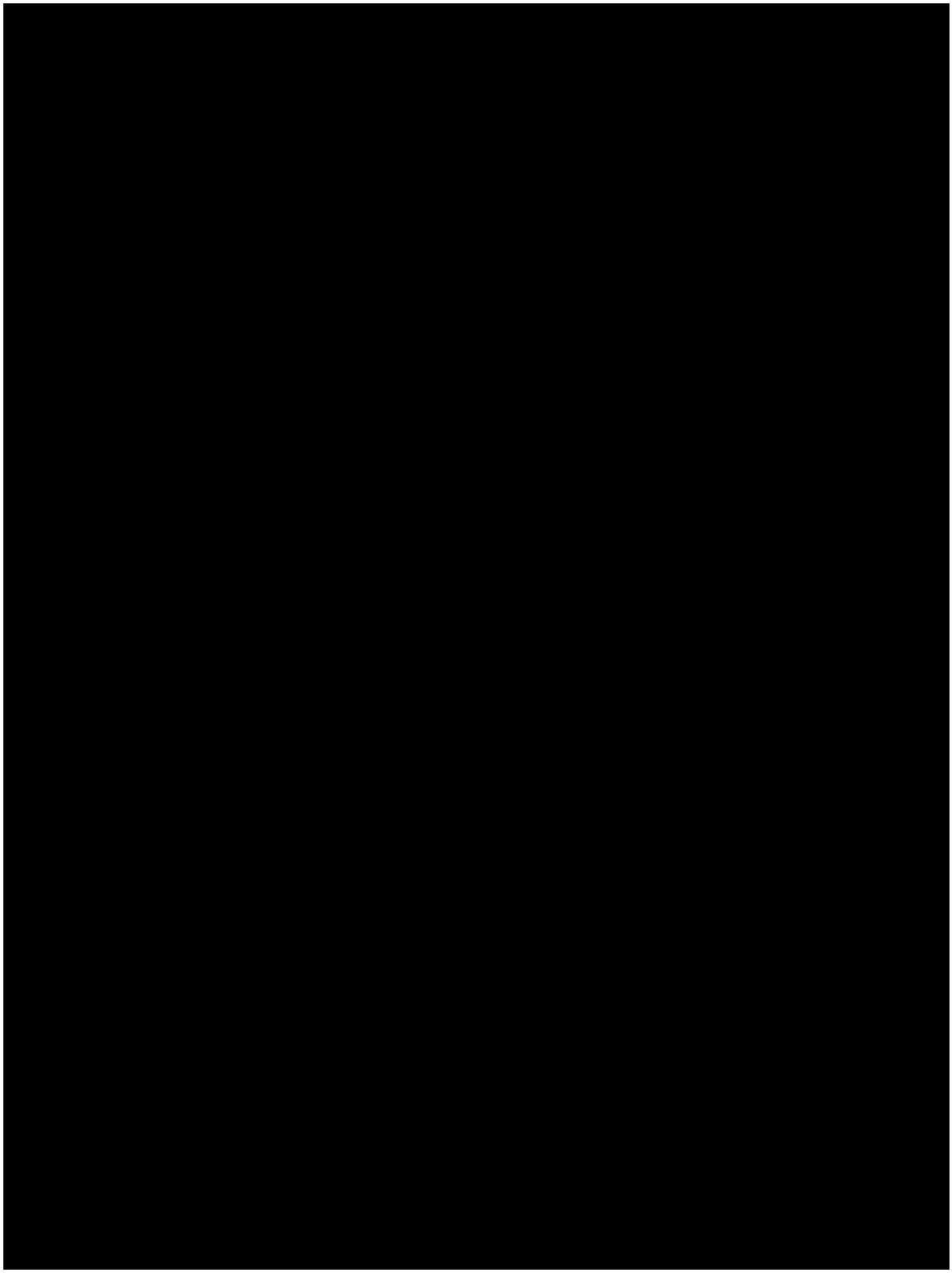


Fig 4.6 The Olympic Legacy and Fringe Masterplan (Hartman 2012) (Labels added))

by Eleanor Fawcett (now with the London Legacy Development Corporation), and supported by approximately £80 million investment in 'public realm' and open space projects. The masterplans aimed to physically link the Games site post Olympics with surrounding communities, and accommodate the new growth / development pressure anticipated to be generated by the works to the main Games site (Tomlinson 2012).

4.4.4 Overseeing and Guiding Spatial Production

In summary, the ODA / OPLC / LLDC have acted as the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park's project developers, appointing design teams to put forward designs, then acting as the planning authority, making decisions on those designs. All three organisations have used or are using expert design and planning advisors, both as consultants and staff members, who's role has been: to advise the planning committee members, and the Mayor, on the quality of plans as they are developed; to develop briefs for the commission of spatial design consultancies; and to advise or form part of judging panels on design competition entries. Many of those acting in these advisory roles have acted for all three organisations in succession, (ODA /OPLC / LLDC), and have longstanding connections with either the GLA's Design for London, or with development and regeneration in London's east end. They are also involved in spatial design education in London for example at the London School of Economics 'Cities' programme, or London Metropolitan University's Architecture School. Many of the design advisers and spatial design decision makers for the Olympics and Legacy are, arguably then, part of an established elite group, who have been involved in shaping spatial practices, shaping spaces, shaping thinking, and devising best practice guidance for urban design in London, and the Lower Lea Valley for some time.

All of the 'objective' description of bureaucratic organisations and processes masks less formal networks between key 'players', and the decision making processes that result from them, which were brought to life in interviews for this thesis by the individuals involved. Powerful individuals, in particular David Higgins, Chief Executive of the Olympic Delivery Authority, seem to have had the ability to completely change and direct the project, irrespective of the official channels and programmed times for such matters to be resolved. It seems that those wanting change who reached Higgins directly might see real impact (see Chapter 9). Juliet Davis reports how the leader of the Eastway Users Group felt he gained significant ground only when, through his intervention, David Higgins got a 'right roasting' at a public meeting in Bethnal Green in 2007 (Davis, 2011).

4.5 The Design Teams

The designers for the 2012 Olympics and Legacy park spaces were predominantly British, but with strong relationships to, and key players from the US. They were a led by interdisciplinary firms with global reach, supplemented by international design 'stars', smaller 'cutting edge' boutique practices and academic technical experts. The Olympic Park and Legacy masterplans were designed by the EDAW Consortium (including EDAW, Allies & Morrison, and Buro Happold), working with Arup and WS Atkins. All are major international firms. EDAW /AECOM is North American in origin, but has a large office based in London. The other two named firms originated in the UK. The detailed landscape design for green spaces, including Legacy, was taken over in 2008, by LDA Design, a major UK based landscape architecture company formerly led by John Hopkins, who had left the firm to act as the parklands 'client' for the ODA. LDA design also recently completed works in nearby Victoria Park in Tower Hamlets. LDA were appointed in conjunction with Hargreaves Associates, an American 'name' landscape practice led by George

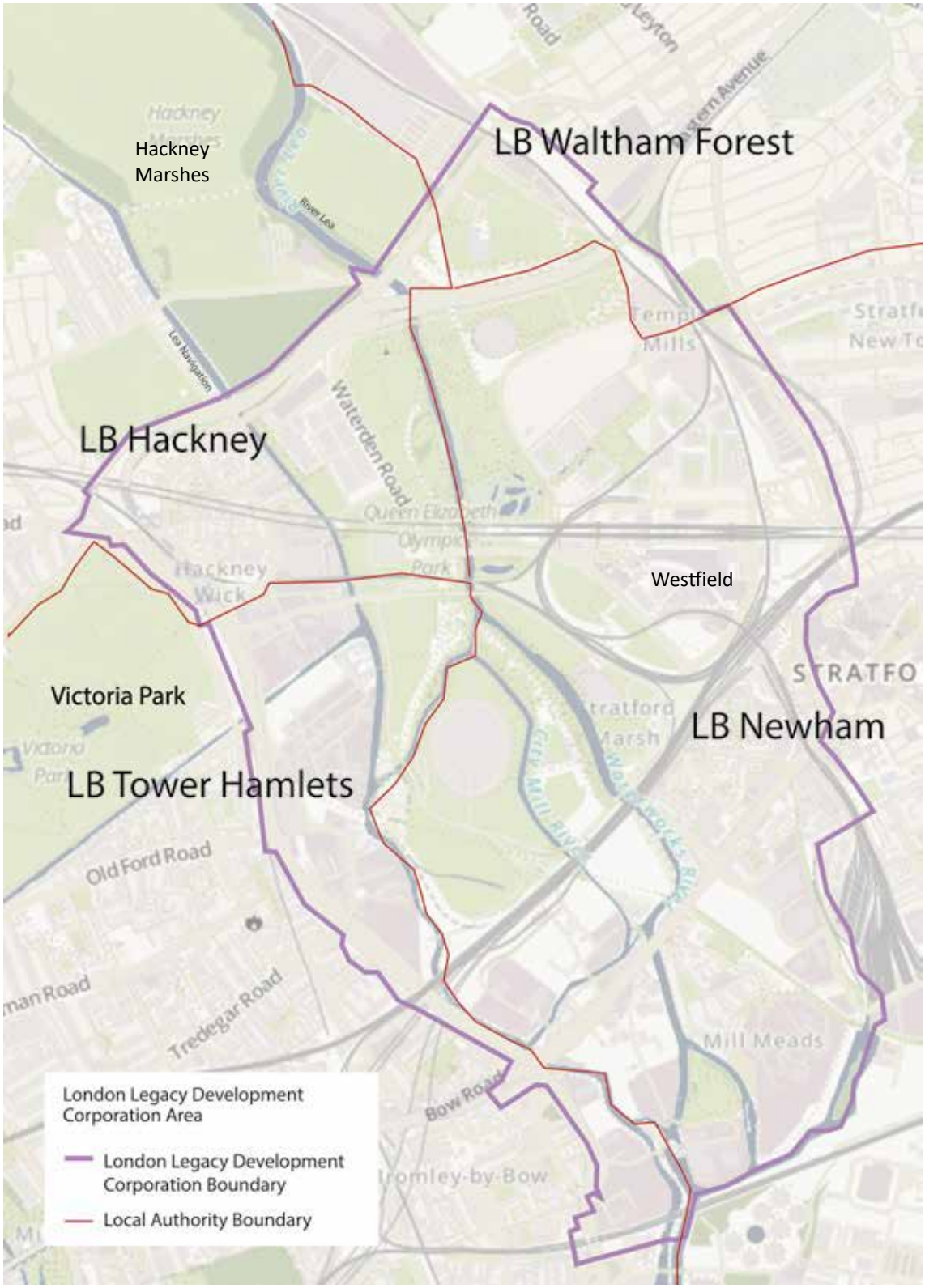


Fig 4.7 The LLDC Area Boundary (redrawn from London Legacy Development Corporation, 2012 map © OpenStreetMap contributors)

Hargreaves, designer of the Sydney Olympic Park.

The team was supplemented by specialists and small practices identified as innovative by ODA/ LLDC for example Nigel Dunnett and James Hitchmough, authors of 'The Dynamic Landscape', a

key text in promoting use of naturalistic planting in the UK referred to in Chapter 3. Two design competitions developed by the OPLC brought additional designers into the Legacy design team.

The playground and community hub building for the north park was won by Erect Architecture, a small British practice. The competition for South Park was won by James Corner Field Operations working with Piet Oudolf. Internationally famous New York-based but British born and educated designer James Corner is probably best known for his role in the design of the High Line park, on a disused railway viaduct, also with planting design by Piet Oudolf, and for his competition winning designs for Freshkills Park on a major landfill site, both major recent projects in New York City.

4.6 Processes of Consultation

The 2008 Government, in 'Before, During and After: Making the Most of the London 2012 Games' claimed to be building enthusiasm for its proposals from 'the grassroots', that local people would have a genuine say in what they wanted from their neighbourhoods through investment associated with the games, and that local people, businesses and third sector organisations would have real input into the plans for the physical regeneration of the Lea Valley and Stratford ''at every step'' (Department of Culture Media & Sport, 2008:37).

To deliver this aspiration, the Legacy Masterplan was the subject of a 'programme of engagement and consultation with local communities and other stakeholders', including 'roadshows ' at community based events and a small number of specialist workshops (London Development Agency, 2009). This representation of real opportunity for local people to influence spatial design sits at odds with academic representations of typical community engagement with mega events, (Roche 2000) and with the actuality of consultation as represented by researchers who investigated the consultation processes in the run up to the 2012 Games (Hayes & Horne 2011, Davis 2011).

Davis represents a somewhat 'infantilising' approach to public participation events, which were managed by specialist consultants and the London Development Agency (LDA). Controlled information already agreed between the masterplanning team, the LDA, and other 'partners', was presented using methods which emphasised the public's lack of spatial planning expertise, for example as games, rather than an approach that put effort into developing the capacity of local participants to share in meaningful decision making. For example consultants prepared a jigsaw which purportedly offered opportunities to plan space, but its pieces would only fit together in the one 'correct' configuration.

There were found to be few opportunities for people to provide any useful information on their needs or preferences . Design consultants were presented with feedback from these events, but there were no requirements regarding use of information or opinions gathered. Consequently, consultants were found to identify items that fitted their tastes, or supported their preconceived ideas. Designers were therefore able to ascribe their own values, at the same time claiming some

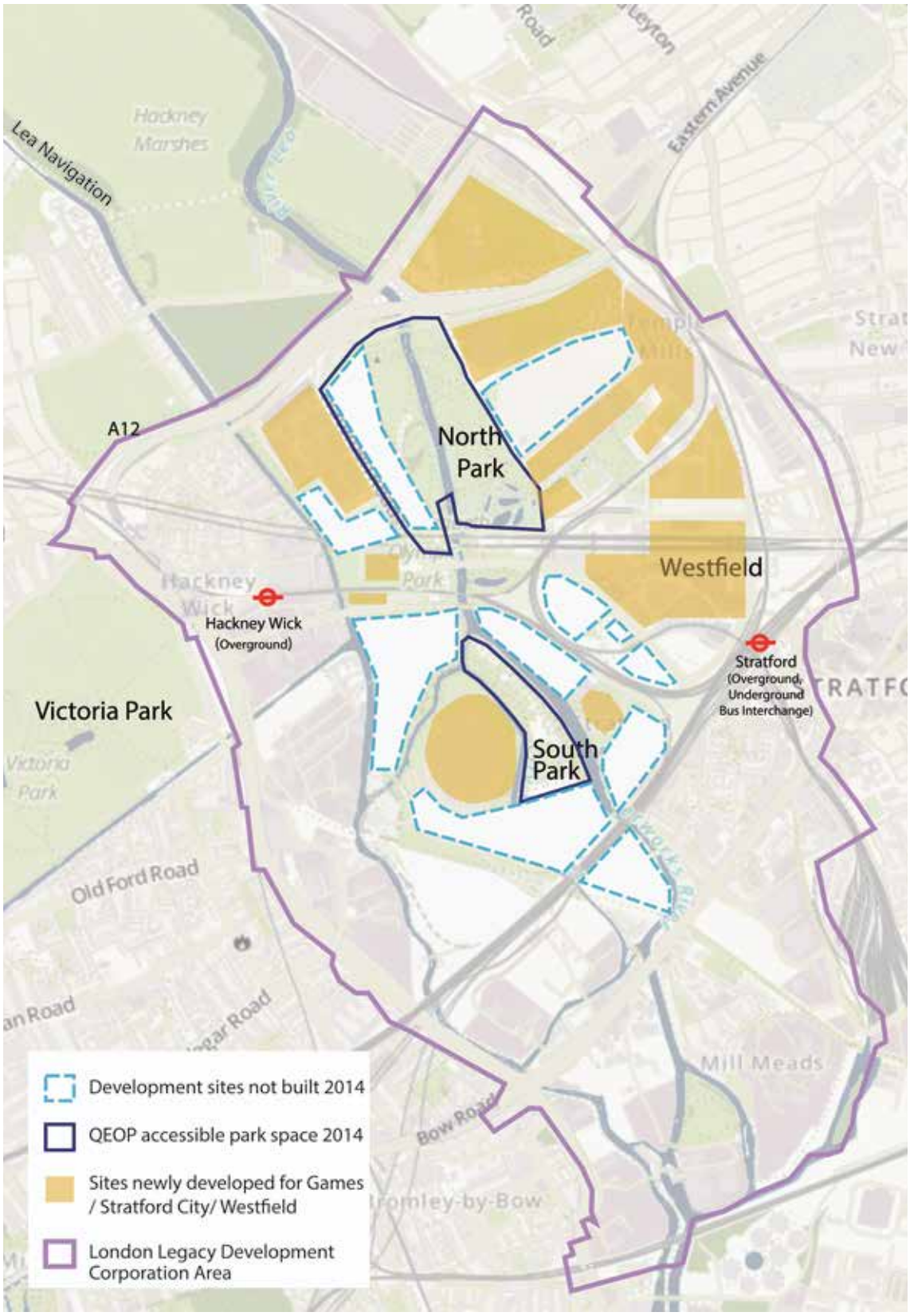


Fig 4.8 The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and Legacy Vision for 2030 (planned development sites and retained buildings from Hartman 2012, map © OpenStreetMap contributors)

‘responsiveness’ to local wishes. In meetings intended to review proposals for the Masterplan in advance of planning, time was heavily weighted towards official presentations of the latest iteration of the designs. With only limited opportunity for comment or discussion this was more a process of education than consultation, intended only to convey knowledge, inform people about what they would be allowed to do in the new spaces of the park. This was represented by the LDA and subsequent lead agencies as a way to ‘build ownership’. In these meetings, Davis heard local people express views that they could not imagine themselves in those spaces, that the spaces were not of a type ‘for them’, however this kind of reaction was not investigated further.

Attendance at meetings varied, some were poorly attended and council employees were mixed in with non affiliated local residents. Views were recorded by the consultants or LDA in ways that removed identifying information that could situate the views of participants, making it difficult to form any sense of who was speaking, or to identify across more than one consultation if there were any common ‘group’ or demographic needs or views. The notes that formed the official record were found to neutralise language, minimise conflict or simply did not record it. Points that were considered important by officials were highlighted, creating representations of meetings that Davis found difficult recognise or interpret, at variance with her own meeting notes and experience .

The consultation meetings were split, separating experts and interest groups from meetings of the general public. In addition to formal meetings, networks of contacts were built up with separate local organisations and schools, and presentations were made for these specific interests. A great deal of time was invested, but Davis identifies that prioritising face to face contact with small groups which seems on the surface open and accessible, can also be represented as divisive and individualising. Common interests or shared views could not be seen by anyone other than those controlling the process of consultation.

Although having power to influence decision making was a stated goal for consultation within the LDA /ODA ‘s internal ‘Code for Consultation’, Davis found no mechanism for processes of consultation and information gathering that would accommodate or allow influence, particularly from the general public. The spatial designers she spoke with generally were cynical about the value of consultations, felt they were box ticking exercises and largely a waste of time. In interviews she found that despite the suggested ‘influence’ proposed in the Code, even those leading consultation and engagement didn’t really think it would be appropriate for the community to influence design, and represented the process as one mainly intended to ‘instil’ ownership, by constant contact and availability (Davis, 2011).

There has beencriticism of the management of ‘diversity’ and ‘inclusion’ through the consultation process. Researchers found that the population was conceived by designers and officials as ethnically entirely heterogeneous, rather than, as the ward level census information shows, having longstanding and substantial representation of four or perhaps five cultural groups around the periphery of the Olympic Park (see Chapter 4). The residential churn typical of some areas of the Boroughs was represented as ‘universal’. In this way, the local population was able to be represented as ‘unknowable’, rather than having any definable characteristics.

The preferred official vision for this diverse mix of people was one of total integration, everyone sharing the same public spaces, facilities accessible equally to all. It is an ideal discussed in Chapter 3, inspired by Lord Rogers and the Urban Task Force (Urban Task Force, 2005; DETR, 1999) and critiqued by Massey (2005). This dogma of integration was incompatible with creating distinctive facilities to meet specific needs of any identifiable groups. The latter approach was imagined as one of allocating public space unfairly to some, taking away equal rights of access and thereby excluding others.

This was true for requests for incorporation or retention of facilities made by those groups displaced by the Olympics - the cyclists of the Eastway Users Group, or the Manor Farm Allotment holders. Although both were open membership organisations, they felt they were to some extent seen as wanting to exclusively appropriate commonly held space.

Another example is the significant work put into trying to achieve a functioning 'multi faith space' that was imagined as a new type of church, being used by multiple religious organisations within a single building. Davis found that even highly articulate knowledgeable consultees from faith groups who tried to explain the inherent difficulty of timetabling shared use of the same building, and the idea's practical incompatibility with the working methods of the established religions, were dismissed as at fault by consultants, for failure of imagination. They did not conform to preconceived notions of how diversity should/could be accommodated in shared space. The consultees for their part felt consultants were partial, ill informed about religion and the day to day practices of sustaining religious identities in community spaces, and not interested in hearing anything other than supportive views (Davis, 2011).

4.7 Funding Strategy

In projects dependent on private sector investment and property development, property investors perceptions, needs and values must be considered, even if this is not overtly stated (Scherer 2012) Interviewees from the design consortium reportedly identified that the 'projected' views of developers were among the most influential (Davis, 2011).

The park funding strategy has been to recoup public investment, by selling improved areas of the Olympic site to property developers for housing and commercial uses, and by securing planning contributions to fund infrastructure in compliance with long term plans. Land resale value must be increased well above the purchase price in order to recoup the development costs of the Olympics, and the creation of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, on the way to delivering the sustainable communities envisaged by government. The need to provide facilities and landscape desirable to private sector developers is therefore a key driver in the design process, that must at least sit alongside any intended community benefit (Scherer 2011). The funding model was devised in relation to other Olympic and sporting mega events that have been seen as successful in generating long term benefits for their host cities, however no model was available indicating likely impact of economic change due to the financial crisis of 2009. The costs of purchasing the land were significantly underestimated. The capital costs of construction rose during the

early stages of the London Games from £4 Billion to £9.75 Billion pounds, a figure that does not include the cost of staging the Games, the land acquisition or wider regeneration project costs (Evans, 2011) . Original plans for Lendlease to fund the athletes village development had to be amended as a result of the 'credit crunch', and the development was effectively 'nationalised' (Hayes & Horner 2011) . The athletes village, was partly bought for less than was spent, by a joint venture between Delancey and Qatari Diar who will provide the long-term management of the private sector homes, and public spaces in the former Athletes Village, working alongside Triathlon Homes, who manage the affordable housing (MacRury & Poynter 2009).

Westfield Stratford City provides the major access route to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park from local bus, overground and underground stations. It is envisaged by planners to support the South Park's development, as a kind of 'Festival Gardens' like that on London's Southbank of the Thames.

Aside from any need to please developers perceived tastes, access to park spaces from the east, and as more development is brought forward from west and south will pass through private developments. There may be limits imposed by the private sector owners and their agents on access to park spaces for some non residents (MacRury & Poynter 2009). This funding and development strategy, and the resultant ownership of property bounding park access routes may be key parameters in defining the values and long term community benefits of park space.

5.0 . Methodology

5.1 Introduction

In seeking for connections between the ethnic/cultural practices that produce park space and the impact of park making on park use by ethnicity, this study aims to address the research gap identified through the literature review. Using mixed methods, and an interdisciplinary approach, the study will seek to establish answers to the following research question:

"Could people of minority ethnicities be under-represented as users of British parks because of a failure by those producing and regulating park space to recognise that their own spatial practices and preferences are culturally based, and not universally shared, particularly on ethnic dimensions?''

The following sub-questions were devised to assist in operationalising the primary question:

- What values and tastes for parks are expressed by people of different ethnicities within the catchment of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park?
- What values and tastes are represented in the park spaces as built, and by spatial producers?
- Who has been responsible for the spatial configuration of the new park spaces?
- What influences are represented, beyond the control of designers?
- Are spatial designers aware of their own culturally situated or partial thinking?
- Who benefits most from the spaces created?

5.2 Situating the Researcher

To situate myself, my chosen subject of research reflects my professional background, both as a practitioner of landscape design, a member of the UK Landscape Institute, and a British landscape design educator in universities in Manchester and London. I am a product of postgraduate education at the LSE Cities Programme, taught by people who held senior positions in the Olympic Delivery Authority, and I have worked as an adviser ('Enabler') with the Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment, the national spatial design advice agency created under the last Labour Government. I am a contributor to and product of major institutions within a London and UK spatial design context.

As a member of this 'elite' group, I am aware of how design orthodoxies, and fashions are promoted by 'pedagogic action' in landscape and architecture schools (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990 [1977]), and supported in professional practice through institutional recognition of' best practice' in design, by awards and patronage, and valorisation in the landscape media. In teaching students increasingly drawn from across the world, and in working for more than a decade with some of London's most ethnically diverse and deprived communities, my professional experience

has both highlighted and challenged my cultural assumptions regarding landscape values and perception of beauty.

I have found, through practice and experience, that the design of the spaces we inhabit has an impact on our behaviour, on our interactions with others, and on our own wellbeing. There is to my mind a possibility that what is understood to be 'good' landscape design practice in the UK gives insufficient consideration to the cultural and ideological underpinnings of spatial practice, and that relative inequalities of freedom to use public spaces can result. The literature review has identified a gap in our understanding of how ethno racial formations influence park making, and in turn how these culturally based spatial practices might influence use of parks by people from ethnic minorities. I approached this research with preconceived ideas, but no certainty. The case study I have chosen provided an opportunity not to just analyse a new park's design, and its fit with a surrounding community's needs, but also to speak with the designers and decision makers involved, and to hear from them their motivations and design intentions, and the extent to which they were able to influence outcomes.

The research methods have been chosen to allow me to explore whether hegemonic spatial discourses identified in theory are manifest in the built / planned forms of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, and how ideological and culturally based values are expressed by its creators. I have been seeking to identify ways in which these practices conflict with or support the preferences and practices of the parks potential users, drawn from its existing urban setting. I have found no other studies that have taken this approach.

I proposed a mix of qualitative and quantitative techniques, each chosen because I believed it the most likely to provide a valid insight into an aspect of the broader research question set out above, and, to explore as far as possible within the resources available, what Layder (1993) has termed 'macro to micro linkages' between wider societal structures and individual lives. The methods used include questionnaire survey, elite interviews, community focus groups, spatial design analysis and observation.

I have applied a Bourdieusian framework to qualitative data analysis, informing thematic coding in identifying forms of capital, fields of influence, use of symbolic violence, and reference to 'rules of the game' , evidenced in both elite interviews and focus groups. I have set out in chapter 3 my belief that this theoretical framework allows for dynamic social processes, fluidity and in group variation, for agency and structure. I am seeking to establish whose values in terms of cultural and ideological preferences, are expressed in the designs for the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park , in its accessibility, layout, appearance and programme, its fit with the represented values and preferences of surrounding communities, and to identify as a consequence who is most likely to benefit from it.

I hope to reveal more clearly why people from ethnic minorities are typically under-represented as park users in the UK, and the extent to which the spatial practices that generate park space are part of the process.

5.3 Empirical Research: Methods

The case study is typically a mixed methods approach, and this case study is no exception. There is no single method that could identify culturally based preferences for landscape style , spatial practices and underlying values of residents and designers at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, or whether there is any relationship between its landscape style and use. To identify patterns of behaviour, quantitative methods, namely questionnaire survey and user counts have been undertaken, and to understand the possible reasons for observed practices, qualitative methods have been deemed most applicable, in the form of focus groups and interviews (Bryman, 2008). A basic spatial analysis of the built spaces has been undertaken with reference to empirical spatial research, and landscape design history.

5.4 Park Preference Survey

5.4.1 The Questionnaire

In investigating attitudes to parks, Madge (1997) advocates the use of questionnaire surveys, ideally alongside qualitative interviews with small groups. A combination of questionnaire surveys, and focus groups were used to collect data from the residential community within the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park catchment.

The survey used photographic images of parks chosen as representations of particular stylistic archetypes, containing characteristics thought to influence preference based on the literature review. Photography credits are included in the list of illustrations. All images are of publicly accessible landscapes in the UK, to ensure appropriateness in terms of plant growth and weather conditions. Three of the parks were in London, but photographic editing was used, (notably at Thames Barrier Park) to remove all easily recognised landmarks, and allow the parks to be somewhat generic.

Photographic representation of landscape is a technique that has been used within the literature particularly in establishing landscape preference (see Chapter 2), however in order to address my own critique of landscape image preference research, where decontextualised landscapes are presented, prioritising only the visual, the survey presents a very clear social context within which to make judgements. Images were selected to assess general preferences for landscape composition and aesthetic/style.

- pastoral vs picturesque (anthropocentric / ecocentric)
- ecological vs ornamental / gardenesque planting style
- formal /geometric park layout vs naturalistic / romantic arrangements
- modified trimmed plant forms vs natural plant forms (controlled versus romantic)
- buildings vs no buildings
- enclosed vs expansive views

- colour/ flowers vs greens / browns
- paths /seating vs no clear paths or seats

The intended content of the images stylistically was verified independently by two landscape architects who did not participate otherwise in the research. The survey was intended to be visually attractive, straightforward, enjoyable, and quick to complete. It gathered preferences in ways that did not require participants to spend time understanding rankings or in choosing a single preference. This decision was taken to minimise participant confusion or differing interpretations of complex instructions. Professional experience in surveying views on landscape preference as part of community consultation informed this decision. The images sheet of the questionnaire is illustrated in Fig 5.1.

The question posed was carefully phrased: ''If all these parks were within a 10 minute walk of your home, which would you want to visit most?''

Participants could mark as many of the images as they wished. The questionnaire placed the images in the context of parks for use, rather than as images for establishing aesthetic preference. Perception of beauty in pictorial representation may not motivate use, and park use is the topic of study. The question also brought together the idea of a 'most' favourite park space, with the notion of likelihood of frequent visits.

Data gathered alongside park preferences included age, gender, educational background, languages spoken at home, employment status, home responsibilities and claimed ethnicity / cultural heritage. The demographic factors recorded replicate factors found to be influential in previous studies discussed in Chapter 2, and would provide an indication of forms of capital available to individuals. The demographic information sheet accompanying the image sheet is included in the appendix.

It was planned that survey activities would take place away from the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park or other large parks in the catchment to gain views from residents who might be considered 'ethnically' representative of the surrounding population, people who lived and or worked nearby, but had no known disposition towards or against the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, and no already identified preferences towards parks and green spaces. Additionally, it was intended that the survey should be completed by participants across a range of ethnic backgrounds, but with similar educational levels, similar gender balance, and similar age range in each group, (as described in the literature review, and in 3.3 and 3.5, it might reasonably be expected that these demographic factors might impact preferences). The effects observed must reasonably be attributable to claimed ethnic/cultural background.

5.4.2 Sampling

Initially, questionnaire surveying was undertaken in three locations: in Stratford at a busy town square, and on the University of East London campus; and at a well used community centre in Bromley By Bow. The huge variation in ethnic background from the samples in Stratford meant

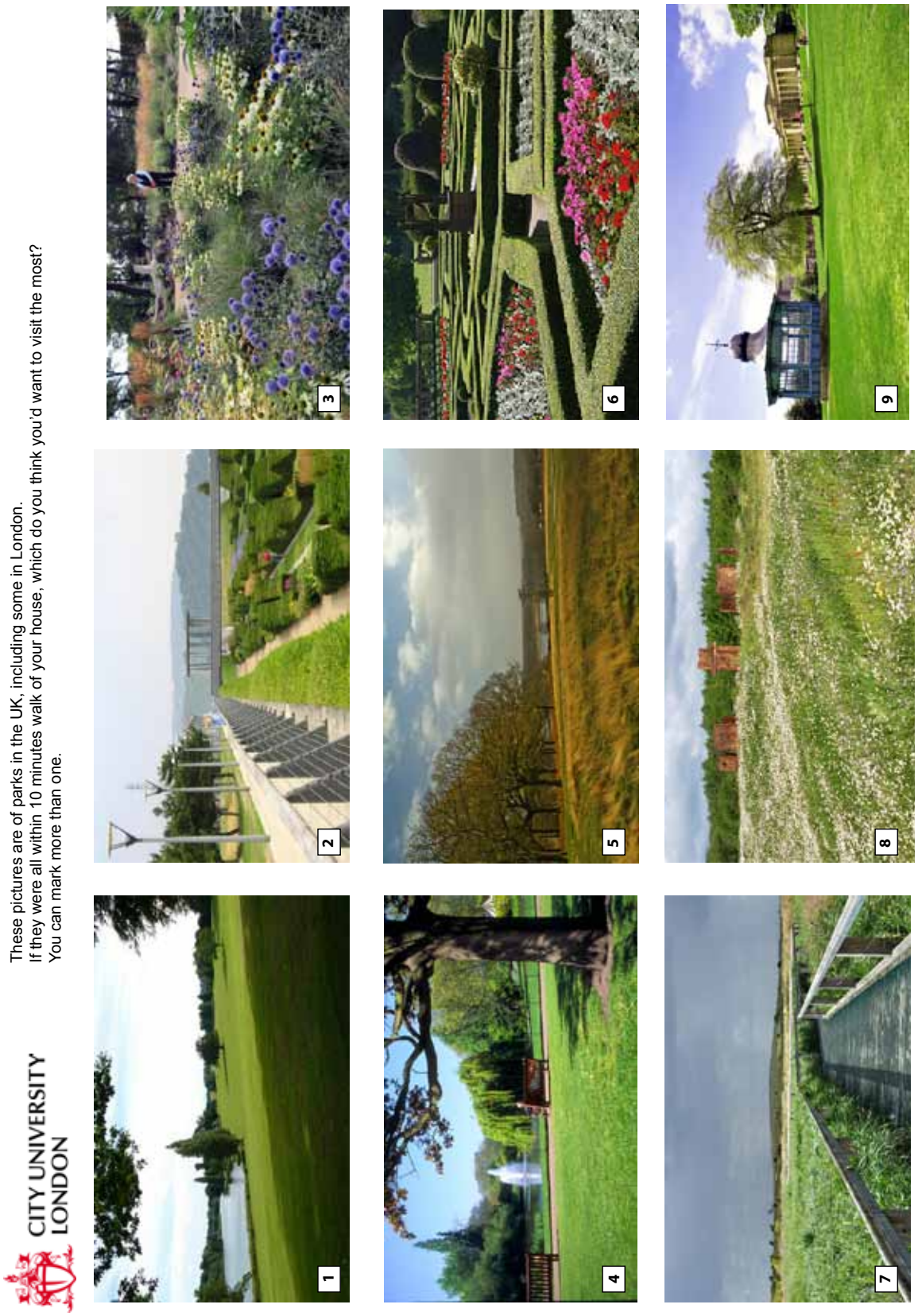


Fig 5.1 Park Preference Survey Image Sheet

it would require very large numbers of surveys to gain representative data suitable for statistical analysis. It was important to avoid having to use amalgamated categories, as these are unlikely to display any meaningful cultural similarity, or to represent the values of ethnicities identified in the survey as being significant within the catchment population. The sample from the Bromley By Bow community/health centre provided a larger sample across a smaller range of ethnicities/ claimed cultural backgrounds, and access to people with high, as well as lower levels of cultural capital in the form of University level education, used as an indicator of likely income , and social class.

As the Bromley by Bow sample had provided more focussed results, further surveys were then carried out at or with the support of 'gatekeeper' community organisations operating in the park catchment, but avoiding any environmentally based or land based groups that might reasonably be subject to bias (Dearden, 1984). To achieve the profile of respondents required, a 'quota' sampling approach was then adopted. The aim was to collect data from circa 250-300 respondents, with between 30- 50 people from each of the main arguably cultural coherent 'ethnic' groups, represented by 10% or more of the population in any catchment ward according to the 2011 UK census ward level statistics (See tables 4.1 and 4.2). Quota sampling is an acceptable method of sampling when trying to obtain information concerning general attitudes which exist in a given population, and in situations where cheapness, speed, broad cover and a large sample are important (Ackroyd & Hughes 1981) Although the sample was not based on probability sampling techniques, steps were taken to ensure that the achieved sample represented diversity within the main ethnic groups. In order to do this multiple 'gatekeeper' organisations located geographically around the park perimeter, and in all the Boroughs were used as contact points to ensure a diverse sample. Using multiple gatekeeper organisations helps to ensure more diversity (Bloch, 2004).

5.5 Observation

Once the park was fully opened in April 2014, a number of user counts were carried out, at different times and on different days to assess whether ethnic minority underrepresentation was typical of any spaces in the newly opened park. Visitor numbers were recorded using photographic techniques across larger spaces where people gather, partly to provide visual evidence of recorded information, and tally counting was carried out on significant through routes. Field notes were taken, for example to support numeric data in terms of activities in evidence. Where possible, assumptions regarding ethnicity based on visual indicators alone, such as clothing and racial attributes were supplemented through notes of direct or overheard conversation with counted individuals, however assumptions regarding likely claimed ethnicity were made, due to limited resources for data collection, and these limitations are recorded in the data represented.

5.6 Resident Focus Groups

Focus groups were planned, to try to establish whether differences in normative culturally based values and practices in the use of parks could arguably be found in British people of different ethnic backgrounds living within the catchment area of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Values for, or attitudes toward parks represented in discussion might explain or inform understanding of any variation in landscape tastes established through the questionnaire survey. The resources available for room hire and participant expenses were small, and recruiting from survey participation proved difficult. Only one group was ultimately formed in this way. It was decided to approach further third sector gatekeeper organisations who brought groups together for other reasons, and offer them room hire fees in exchange for finding willing participants. All participants completed a participation form, included in the appendix, prior to the start of the focus group, to ensure they understood the topic and purpose of research, and they were willing to participate. While research has shown that focus groups formed of relative strangers may result in the best data, as acquaintance can upset group dynamics, (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990) the rapport evident between these participants who were already acquainted, but were largely not good friends, was excellent. The topic was not sensitive, one that the groups had never really discussed previously, and all the groups were lively and animated.

The intention was to assemble groups that had a majority of one ethnicity/cultural group from those most frequently claimed in the park catchment. Research indicates that the most open and effective communication in focus group settings occurs when the group is similar across demographic variables that are also shared with the moderator (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). To this end, all the groups were planned to be single gender, of working age, and the majority of the groups were formed of women with children (or grandchildren) who might still benefit from supervised park use. The sizes of the focus groups that were formed (of between four and ten participants) mean the views of participants might not represent wider culturally based views and practices in the locality. Triangulation between the groups, with survey and observation data, and even with other qualitative research is used to support claims for culturally normative ideologies and behaviours represented within focus group discussions. As with any norm, while the view represented as normative will be widely known, and typically supported, it is anticipated there will be individual variation and contestation around it, and there is no presumption in looking for group norms that these ideas would be fixed for all time or in all places.

The meetings were around an hour in length, and were semi structured, with primary topic questions to foster discussion of cultural landscapes, childhood experiences in outside space, memories of being in beautiful places, the purposes of parks, preferences in sport and leisure, self reported freedom of movement in the city, and perceived freedom to use park space. Depending on how the discussion progressed, secondary more directed prompts were used to tease out particular issues. The main topic questions are recorded in the appendix. At the end of the discussion photographic images of parks were discussed, including those used in the survey and some further images selected to try to understand more about possible motivations behind choices in the survey.

The target sample of community participants was chosen based on statistical information on

ethnicity within the park catchment from the 2011 census and from schools language data. The actual focus group participant choice was limited by: response to email requests following up from survey responses; presence of gatekeeper organisations representing the interest of a particular ethnic group and their willingness to support participation; and costs of room hire, participant expenses and other resources required to support formation of the focus groups. Focus groups were formed of participants claiming mainly British Bangladeshi heritage, mainly white British heritage, mainly British Caribbean heritage, mainly British Somali heritage, and one group of mixed British Asian heritage.

The discussions were transcribed, and analysed thematically (Bryman 2008) using NVIVO software. The coding frame is included in the appendices. Thematic analysis was undertaken using a theoretical framework drawn from Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1999 [1979]; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990 [1977]), which identified forms of capital, cultural, economic and social, and identified use of symbolic violence or approval within the group to identify arguably culturally normative ontologies of nature and landscape referred to by members of the group.

5.7 Elite interviews

The purpose of elite interviews was to gain an insight into

- how much and in what way individual built environment professionals in relatively senior positions had been able to influence the location, accessibility, content and style of the park; and what external constraints have limited options available

- what strategies they took to achieve their goals, (in order to understand how they perceived the 'rules of the game' , and the relative importance of different fields or different forms of capital at their disposal)

- how much , consciously or otherwise, their ideologies and 'cultural capital' reflect 'legitimate' tastes within the field of UK landscape design identified in Chapter 3,

- whether that might be at odds with the tastes identified in the wider community through the survey;

All participants were aware of the topic of my PhD and had received some biographical information and summary information. The participants were generally time limited ,and topics of discussion were to some extent led by them but as far as possible, interviews were semi-structured., and prompts were used to provide insight into the areas described above.

In the case of Jason Prior, a series of questions were sent in advance of meeting, and are included in the appendix, though not all were answered as his available time was limited to one hour. In general the following topics were raised with all interviewees.

- general background to interviewee involvement with the project

- how the park spaces now built had been arrived at, narrative of the process from earliest conception to built space including how why, and by whom key decisions were taken resulting in north south orientation, central valley location, wider severance by major urban infrastructure, general stylistic approach

- how the Olympic context made the project different to 'ideal' or typical process - impacts of time pressure, financial constraint

- reaction to some culturally specific preferences found in survey and focus groups

Chapter 4 describes the companies acting as designers, design decision makers, and the role of design advisers for the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Participants in elite interviews were selected to include people in these roles, who had been involved in the early stages of the process, and those still engaged in delivering Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park space in Legacy.

Two individual interviews and one group interview were held. The interviewees were

Jason Prior, was at the time of the Olympic bid competition the Director of international built environment design company EDAW's 50 person office in London. He is now Chief Executive of Buildings + Places for AECOM, EDAW's name since 2009. AECOM is a major global consultancy company, with 45,000 employees. Jason Prior personally led the design consortium for London's Olympic bid, and subsequently led EDAW/ AECOM 's London Olympic site's masterplanning team;

Ralph Ward was planning advisor to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for the Olympics and Olympic Legacy. He has worked over many years in strategic planning for London, and particularly East London on the Thames Gateway.

The group interview was held at the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) offices and attended by:

Paul Brickell, Executive Director of Regeneration and Community Partnerships for LLDC who has led on 'transformation' from the park's Games design to its 'Legacy' configuration since October 2011. Before joining LLDC, he was a Labour Councillor in the London Borough of Newham, Chief Executive of Leaside Regeneration, a 'stakeholder' community regeneration organisation, Chief Executive at the Bromley By Bow centre, and prior to that a Professor of Molecular Biology in the cancer research department at Great Ormond Street Hospital.

Phil Askew, LLDC lead 'client' for the park in 'transformation' since 2011 . From 2008 he was the ODA's assistant 'client' for the park landscape, supporting John Hopkins lead client for the ODA, in the run up to the 2012 games. (Hopkins left the project after the games landscape was completed in 2011, and died in 2013).

Eleanor Fawcett, Head of Design and Physical Regeneration, for LLDC, formerly Head of Design for the Lower Lea Valley, and then Olympic Legacy with the Greater London Authority's 'Design

for London' team, the Mayor's built environment design advisors; and

Vicky Austin, Head of Paralympic Legacy, Equality and Inclusion, formerly with the London Development Agency .

The research interviews were supplemented by material from an online interview (Landscape Institute, 2012) with

John Hopkins, the 'project sponsor' for landscape and public realm at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park with the Olympic Delivery Authority appointed in 2007. Previously Hopkins was a partner in LDA Design, sat on Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment Special Design Review Panel for the London Olympics, and was part of David Higgins special advisory group, referred to in his interview as the 'Kitchen Cabinet'

John Hopkins interview was recorded while the Olympics were underway. All the others were held in the period after the North Park had been opened, and while the South Park was undergoing 'transformation' prior to its opening in April 2014.

The interviews were transcribed and analysed by thematic analysis using NVIVO software. The coding frame was drawn from Bourdieu's forms of capital, fields, rules of the game and processes of reproduction, and is included in the appendices.

5.8 Park Spatial Analysis

Spatial analysis has been undertaken primarily by field visits to open publicly accessible areas of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, supplemented with reference to plans /design drawings to explore potential values and benefits evident in the arrangement of park space. The analysis used to explore values reflects on the cultural values expressed in the design and the park's programme of accommodated activities, and make comparison with those expressed by the surrounding community and articulated by the parks designers. Stylistic content and functional content claims have been verified by independent Landscape Architects.

The assessment of likely benefits employs techniques used to assess open space accessibility, and likely use levels, derived from the evidence based theoretical work of Space Syntax on ease of movement (Hillier 2007), from Kevin Lynch on mental mapping of neighbourhood structure(Lynch 1960), from William H Whyte on designing spaces to encourage use based on participant observation in the US (Whyte 1980), and from other research in design that builds confidence in the use of space/ reduces fear of crime (Snaith, 2006, CABE 2004, DTLR 2002).

The outputs of this research are evidenced through diagrams and photographs.

6.0. Park Preference Survey

Claimed Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
white British	40	17.2	17.3	17.3
British Asian/ Bangladeshi/Bangladeshi	37	15.9	16.0	33.3
British Asian Pakistani/Pakistani	22	9.5	9.5	42.9
British Asian Indian/ Indian	13	5.6	5.6	48.5
British Asian (south Asian)	11	4.7	4.8	53.2
British black African/African	22	9.5	9.5	62.8
British black Caribbean/Caribbean	34	14.7	14.7	77.5
British mixed heritage	16	6.9	6.9	84.4
Other European	14	6.0	6.1	90.5
Other Australasian	1	.4	.4	90.9
Other North American	1	.4	.4	91.3
Other South American	1	.4	.4	91.8
Other Middle Eastern	4	1.7	1.7	93.5
Other Asian (Pacific Rim)	2	.9	.9	94.4
Other	4	1.7	1.7	96.1
British English black	9	3.9	3.9	100.0
Total	231	99.6	100.0	
Missing	1	.4		
Total	232	100.0		

Table 6.1 Respondents Claimed Ethnicity

6.1. Describing the Population Sample.

Two hundred and thirty two valid questionnaire surveys were included in the analysis, completed by people living and/or working in the catchment area of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park between May 2012 and October 2013. The participants ethnic /cultural backgrounds were grouped based on their claimed ethnicity, and are set out in table 6.1. Most participants had been educated entirely in the UK (72%), a further 7% had been partly educated here. Therefore the majority of respondents have spent most of their childhood years here, and consequently have had opportunity to experience the parks, wider landscape, vegetation, customs and climate of the UK over many years.

70% of surveys included in the sample were completed by female participants. This gender balance was fairly consistent across all ethnic groups, though there were exceptions. Those claiming Bangladeshi ethnicity were almost equally men and women; those who claimed British Asian (south Asian) ethnicity were 90% women. The implications of gender balance will be discussed later in this chapter, and explored in the analysis. Over 80% of the respondents were aged between 18 and 50, with the remainder fairly equally split between under 18s, and over 50s. Only two participants included in the analysis were aged over 65.

A little over half the participants speak only English at home, and despite living in an area with high indices of deprivation and low educational attainment, through purposive sampling 45% of respondents had attended (and a small number were attending) university. This compares with reported national levels of between 26% and 35% (Ball, 2013).

The results were entered into SPSS software, and Chi-square tests were carried out, to assess whether there were any significant relationships between variables, for example age of participants, and their landscape preferences, or whether the pattern of results was due to chance alone. Where a Chi-square value of less than 0.05 showed there was a greater than 95% chance that the relationships between the variables observed in the sample would be seen in the sampled population generally, these were further tested to assess the strength of the association. (Cramers V value between 0 and 1, where 0 is no association, 1 is a total association. Values in between signify weak, moderate or strong associations between variables). In order to establish that effects on park preference can reasonably be attributed to ethnicity not other factors, it was important that the impact of educational attainment, like gender, could be to some extent 'controlled' across the sample. Languages spoken, and claimed ethnicity, were used as indicators of distinctive cultural background. Of those who speak additional languages at home, 40% had attended university, while figures were closer to half for those speaking only English. Only 43% of those claiming alternate cultural backgrounds to white British had attended university, compared with 60% of participants claiming a white British cultural background. There is therefore some skewing of the sample in terms of years in education, which will be considered in this chapter and in the analysis.

The tests, Pearson's chi-square, and Cramers V would ideally be applied to a random probability sample of the population surrounding the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, however purposive quota sampling was used, and for reasons set out in the methodology.

6.2 Overall Sample Park Image Preferences

Respondents were allowed to select any number of the nine images, and to indicate, if all were within a 10 minute walk of their house, which of the parks represented by the images they thought they would want to visit most (see page 97). The average respondent across the sample selected 3 images, rejecting 6. If all landscape styles were equally popular, one might expect then that 33% of respondents or 77 people would choose any individual image. St James's Park (Fig 6.1) and the 'Geometric Garden' (Fig 6.2) were the most popular selections, chosen by more than 50% of respondents. Table 6.2 summarises the overall preferences of the sample.

Fig 6.1 St James's Park (Victorian Gardenesque)

Fig 6.2 Geometric Garden (Baroque Formal)

Image reference	Frequency ranking	selected by %	not selected by %	frequency selected	frequency not selected
St James's Park	1	58	42	134	98
Geometric garden	2	51	49	118	114
Brownian	3	44	56	103	129
Thames Barrier Park	4	38	62	89	143
Neoclassical	5	25	75	59	173
Richmond Park	6	23	77	54	178
Perennial flower garden	7	22	78	51	181
Marsh	8	20	80	47	185
Wildflower/Wasteland	9	15	85	35	197

Table 6.2 Overall Image Preferences

6. 3 The Impact of Age on Park Image Preference

The sample only included two participants over 65, so these were excluded from the age group analysis. Overall, there is little in the data to indicate that age is major factor in landscape taste. The preliminary analysis indicated only one park image - the perennial flower garden (Fig 6.4)- was chosen (or not chosen) with greater than 95% certainty that the choice correlated with the age of the respondent (Pearson's Chi Square 0.007). Participants over 30 were significantly more likely to select the perennial flower garden as the image of a park they would want to visit most, though the strength of the association between the variables was weak (Cramers V 0.231).

The age bands in the sample have no clear patterns of difference by education or ethnicity, but are skewed in terms of gender balance, with significantly more females in the older age groups. Consequently, a secondary single gender analysis was carried out by age group. This showed the correlation between age and preference for the perennial flower garden was significant only for female participants (Pearsons Chi-Square 0.013). For men there was no correlation between age

Fig 6.3 Meadow /Wasteland (Ecological Picturesque)

Fig 6.4 Perennial Flower Garden (Naturalistic Romantic)

and a preference for the image of perennial flowers. This secondary analysis showed however, there was a greater than 99% certainty that men's age was correlated with selecting/not selecting the image of the 'meadow/wasteland' park type (Fig 6.3). The association between the variables was moderate (Cramers V 0.42) with no participants under 18 or over 50 having indicated they would choose to visit a park of this type most, only one in five of those between 18 and 30, (in line with overall preferences) but almost half of the sampled men aged between 30 and 50 indicated the image represented a style of park they would want to visit most.

6.4 The Impact of Gender on Park Image Preference

Image reference	Frequency ranking women	selected by % women	Image reference	Frequency ranking men	selected by % men
St James's Park	1 *(1)*	63	St James's Park	1 *(1)*	51
Geometric garden	2 *(2)*	59	Thames Barrier Park	2 *(4)*	42
Brownian	3 *(3)*	52	Geometric garden	3 *(2)*	35
Thames Barrier Park	4 *(4)*	38	Brownian	4 *(3)*	33
Neoclassical	5 *(5)*	31	Marsh	5 *(8)*	25
Perennial flower garden	6 *(7)*	28	Richmond Park	6 *(6)*	23
Richmond Park	7 *(6)*	24	Meadow/Wasteland	7 *(9)*	17
Marsh	8 *(8)*	20	Neoclassical	8 *(5)*	14
Meadow/Wasteland	9 *(9)*	14	Perennial flower garden	9 *(7)*	9

Table 6.3 Park Image Preferences by Gender

Fig 6.5Neoclassical (Urban Pastoral)

Fig 6.6 Brownian (Pastoral)

There is evidence from the sample that landscape tastes or preferences are more widely influenced by gender than age, with a more than 99% certainty that four of the nine images were selected or rejected in choices associated with the gender respondents. Of the four, the images representing Brownian (Fig 6.6) Perennial Flower Garden (Fig 6.4), Geometric (Fig 6.2) and Neoclassical (Fig 6.5) park styles were all much more likely to be selected by women than by men, as representing a park they would want to visit most. Though the correlation was significant, the association between variables (represented by Cramer's V values between 0.170 and 0.222) was again weak.

More than a quarter of women in the sample, but less than one in ten men selected the perennial flower garden. Just over half of the women in the sample indicated they would wish to visit a Brownian park most, compared with one third of men, while almost 60% of women felt they would want to visit a park represented by the Geometric park image most often, compared with 35% of men.

The frequency rankings and percentages for women and men are set out below, (Table 6.3) with the overall sample's frequency ranking alongside in brackets for comparison. The whole sample rankings are more similar to those of women than of men, reflecting the higher numbers of women overall.

Fig 6.7 Marsh (Nature Reserve)

Fig 6.8 Thames Barrier Park (contemporary Formal)

6.5 The Impact of University Education on Park Image Preference

Evidence from the sample suggests that University attendance is also more widely correlated with selection or rejection of particular images than age. Five of the nine images chosen show an association with a greater than 95% chance that this finding would be generalised in the wider population. The strongest likelihood that the finding is not due to chance alone is shown in the increased frequency of university attendees/graduates selecting images of Meadow/ Wasteland (Fig 6.3) , and Richmond Park (Fig 6.9), with a 99.9% certainty that this relationship can be generalised to the wider population. Selecting the image of Brownian (Fig 6.6) or Marsh (Fig 6.7) style parks is also more likely for those who have attended university. The only park image more likely to be rejected by those who have attended university is that of the Thames Barrier Park (Fig 6.8). The strength of the association in all cases is weak, with Cramer's V values between 0.137 for the Thames Barrier Park, to 0.219 for the Meadow (Table 6.4)

Image reference	Frequency ranking university attendees	selected by % university attendees	Image reference	Frequency ranking non university attendees	selected by % non university attendees
St James's Park	1 *(1)*	63	St James's Park	1 *(1)*	70
Brownian	2 *(3)*	53	Geometric garden	2 *(2)*	64
Geometric garden	3 *(2)*	52	Thames Barrier Park	3 *(4)*	56
Richmond Park	4 *(6)*	33	Brownian	4 *(3)*	37
Thames Barrier Park	5 *(4)*	33	Neoclassical	5 *(5)*	36
Marsh	6 *(8)*	29	Perennial flower garden	6 *(7)*	19
Perennial flower garden	7 *(7)*	26	Richmond Park	7 *(6)*	15
Meadow/ Wasteland	8 *(9)*	24	Marsh	8 *(8)*	14
Neoclassical	9 *(5)*	23	Meadow/Wasteland	9 *(9)*	8

Table 6.4 Park Image Preferences by Level of Education

6..6 The Impact of Ethnicity on Park Image Preference

With an initial grouping of 16 ethnic/ cultural backgrounds, and some groupings very small, statistical tests would be compromised. The ideal number of categories for comparison using Chi-square tests being less than 8 (de Vaus 1996), the options were to exclude some groups, or amalgamate categories to form a smaller number of more mixed ethnicities. The decision was to investigate both options, to look at variation by ethnicity against the whole sample using amalgamated categories, and also to investigate the results with less likelihood of distortion, but with a smaller sample. The smaller sample size could potentially offer a decreased chance of finding statistically significant relationships (de Vaus 1996).

Using the whole sample, the decision was taken to retain the 6 largest groupings, but form amalgamated groups from the remainder. The data (Table 6.5) shows the likelihood of a significant relationship between ethnicity of respondents and image selection in the wider population to greater than 95% certainty for 7 out of 9 park images - all except Thames Barrier Park which was within 94.6%, and St James's Park, the most popular park for almost all groups.

Image reference	*Overall Rank (r) & % selecting*		White British		British Bangladeshi		British Pakistani		British Indian		British African		British Caribbean		British Other		Other		Ranking Range
	r	*%*	r	%	r	%	r	%	r	%	r	%	r	%	r	%	r	%	
St James's Park	*1*	*58*	1	60	1	60	3	59	1	46	2	59	1	65	2	46	1	63	1-3
Geometric garden	*2*	*51*	7	28	3	43	2	64	2	43	1	64	1	65	1	60	3	48	1-7
Brownian	*3*	*44*	3	55	4	35	1	73	7	8	4	27	4	47	5	24	2	59	1-7
Thames Barrier Park	*4*	*38*	7	28	2	51	4	32	3	31	5	23	3	59	3	35	4	37	2-7
Neoclassical	*5*	*25*	9	18	6	19	5	32	7	8	3	32	4	47	7	19	6	26	3-9
Richmond Park	*6*	*23*	2	58	9	3	9	14	5	15	6	18	7	12	4	30	7	22	2-9
Perennial flower garden	*7*	*22*	4	45	7	14	6	27	7	8	7	9	6	18	5	24	8	15	4-8
Marsh	*8*	*20*	5	35	5	22	8	23	4	23	7	9	9	3	9	14	5	33	4-9
Meadow /Wasteland	*9*	*15*	6	30	8	5	6	27	5	15	6	20	8	9	8	16	8	15	5-8
Average %	*33%*		40%		28%		39%		22%		29%		35%		30%		36%		
Average nr. images chosen	*3*		3-4		2-3		3-4		2		2-3		3		2-3		3-4		

Table 6.5 Park Preferences by Ethnicity (including Amalgamated Categories)

Generally, there is a stronger association between ethnicity and park image preference than for age, gender or university education (Cramers V between 0.250 and 0.417).

There is however no good reason to assume the amalgamated groups would be culturally coherent, which could lead to weakening or distortion of effects. The secondary analysis was made, excluding all data but those from people of ethnic groupings that might be reasonably argued to cohere as a cultural group, as opposed to an aggregation of unrelated ethnicities, or solely racial groupings . The theoretical underpinning for these choices is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

The resultant data is compared across 5 participant selected ethnic categories - white British, British Bangladeshi/Bangladeshi, British Pakistani/Pakistani, British Indian/Indian, British Caribbean/Caribbean. The total sample size is reduced to 146, and overall rankings based on frequency of image selection recalculated for comparison (Table 6.6). The average number of images chosen varied for each ethnic group and a percentage representing equal distribution of selections has been calculated, to make it easier to interpret the observed selection percentages against each park image, in relation to an 'ideal' equal distribution for that ethnicity.

Seven parks again, have been selected in choices associated with the ethnicity of the respondents, with greater than 95% certainty that this pattern is not chance alone, and would be observed in

Image Reference	Overall Rank (r) & % selecting		White British		British Bangladeshi		British Pakistani		British Indian		British Caribbean		Chi-Square	Cramers V
	r	%	r	%	r	%	r	%	r	%	r	%		
St James's Park	*1*	*60*	1	60	1	60	3	59	1	46	1	65	n/a	n/a
Brownian	*2*	*49*	3	55	4	35	1	73	7	8	4	47	0.061	n/a
Geometric Garden	*3*	*47*	7	28	3	43	2	64	2	43	1	65	0.011	0.299
Thames Barrier Park	*4*	*42*	7	28	2	51	4	32	3	31	3	59	0.035	0.266
Neoclassical	*5*	*26*	9	18	6	19	5	32	7	8	4	47	0.012	0.298
Perennial Flower Garden	*6*	*25*	4	45	7	14	6	27	7	8	6	18	0.006	0.314
Richmond Park	*7*	*23*	2	58	9	3	9	14	5	15	7	12	0.0000	0.523
Marsh	*8*	*21*	5	35	5	22	8	23	4	23	9	3	0.022	0.279
Meadow /Wasteland	*9*	*17*	6	30	8	5	6	27	5	15	8	9	0.021	0.281
Average %	*33%*		40%		28%		39%		22%		35%			
Average Nr. Images Chosen	*3*		3-4		2-3		3-4		2		3			

Table 6.6 Park Preferences By Ethnicity Excluding Amalgamated Categories

Fig 6.9 Richmond Park (Picturesque)

the general population from which the sample was taken (this time the exceptions are St James's Park and Brownian park). For Richmond Park (Fig 6.9), the possibility that there is no association between selection of that image and the respondents ethnicity is less than one in a million. The association here is the strongest observed, having a Cramers V value of 0.523, a greater than moderate association.

The spider diagram below (Fig 6.10) represents the percentage of participants of each ethnic/ cultural background selecting any given park image. The diagram visualises a kind of 'field of tastes' for each ethnicity, the distribution and arrangement of which will be discussed in subsequent analysis.

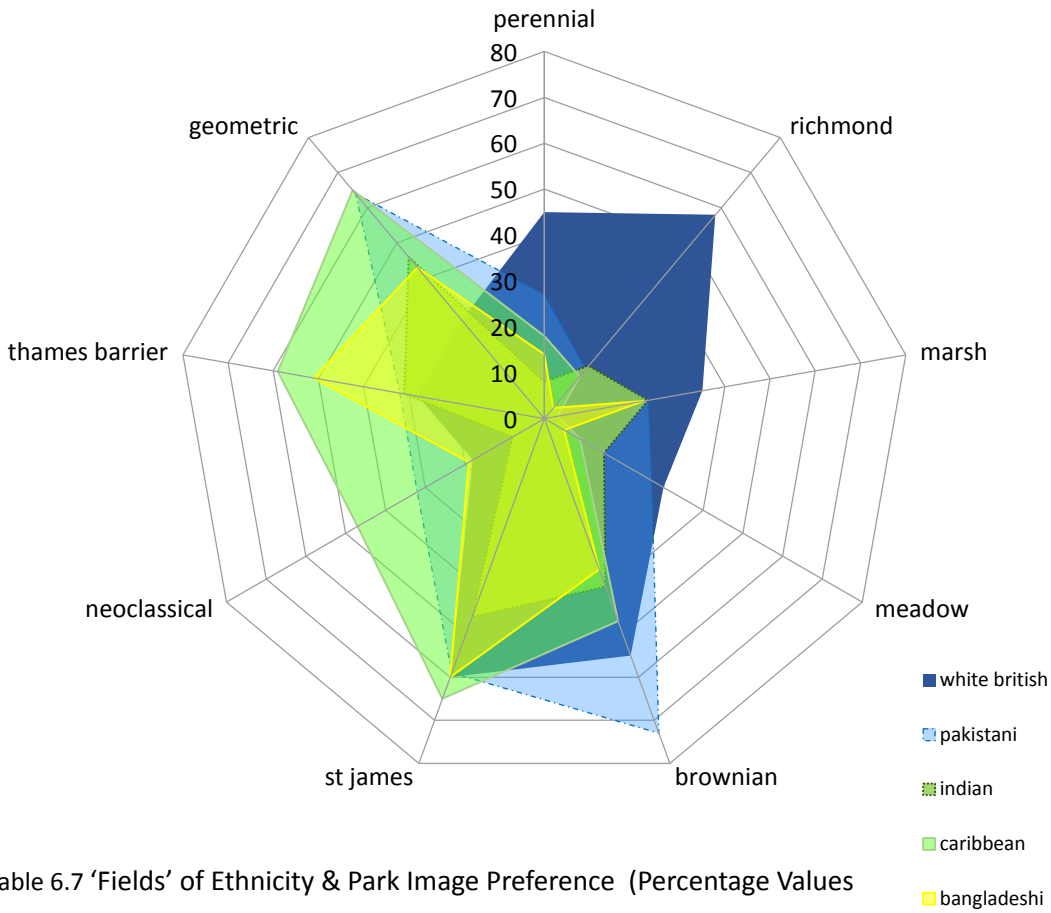


Table 6.7 'Fields' of Ethnicity & Park Image Preference (Percentage Values

6.7 Intersectionality

The preferences of the largest groups in the sample making up 111 respondents - 40 claiming white British ethnicity, 34 claiming British Caribbean/ Caribbean ethnicity, and 37 claiming British Bangladeshi/Bangladeshi ethnicity - were interrogated further, to look at whether associations between gender, educational background, age and park preference were consistent across each of the groupings. As the group sizes and sub categories are much smaller, the chances of finding statistically significant relationships decrease, and generalisability is more difficult to substantiate, however the data does support some claims quite strongly, and allows some triangulation with the associations seen in the overall sample.

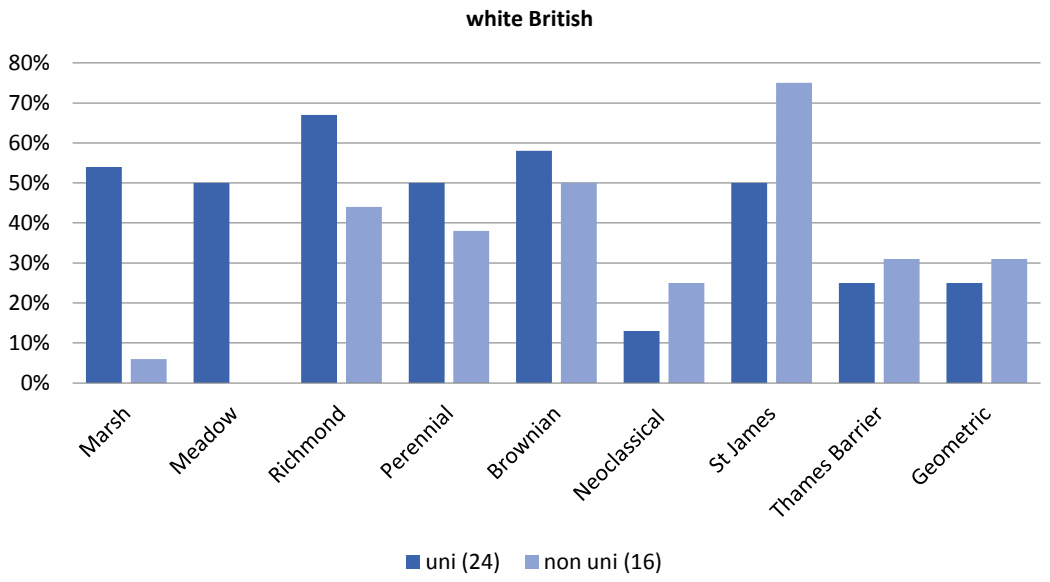
6.7.1 Ethnicity and University Attendance

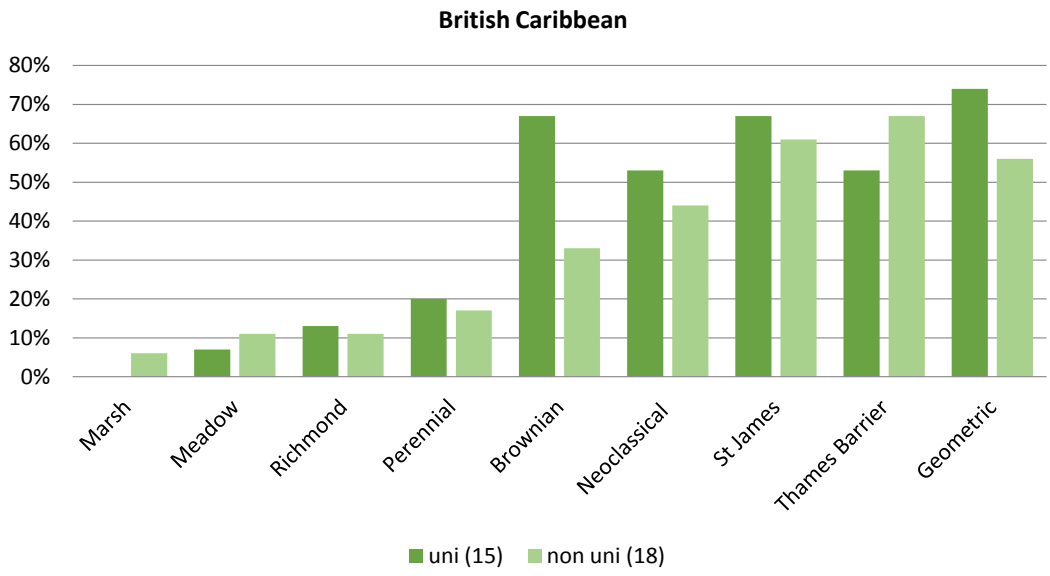
University attendance across the whole sample has been seen to increase the likelihood of selecting images of Richmond Park, the Meadow/Wasteland, Brownian and Marsh park styles, and decrease the likelihood of choosing Thames Barrier Park, tastes more typical of the white British group generally. The implication of this finding might be that attending university provides acculturation to British taste, however findings within each of the three main ethnic groups do not support this (Fig 6.11). White British people in the sample who have attended university are significantly more likely to select both the Marsh and the Meadow/Wasteland landscape, repeating findings from other European studies that University attendance increases the likelihood of preferring 'wilder' landscapes, (Van den Berg & Van Winsum-Westra, 2010, Buijs, et al., 2009; Van den Berg, et al., 2006) described evocatively in one study as landscapes " in which one may experience the greatness and forces of nature" (de Groot & van den Born, 2003). The Cramers V values of 0.492 and 0.535 show the effect of university attendance on behaviour in the white British participants is moderate, where across the whole sample the effects were weaker.

This effect however is not seen in either of the other two ethnic groups, where generally the impact of university attendance is much less pronounced, and overall rankings for park image selection quite closely map those of the whole group, again echoing findings in other research (Demireva & Heath, 2014).

There is one association that is statistically significant in the Bangladeshi heritage group, where graduates are less likely to select the Neoclassical park image, and one association which is near significant for the Caribbean heritage group - graduates more frequently selecting the image of the Brownian landscape. All three graduate groups in this sample show a tendency to select Thames Barrier park less frequently, though in this smaller sample the behaviour is not statistically significant.

In the overall sample, university attendance is significantly associated with a preference for the image of Richmond Park. In the three main ethnic groups, this is not a significant association, however all three do show higher numbers of graduates preferring the image of Richmond Park compared with non graduates. It is the most popular park image for people with white British heritage and a university education, chosen by 67% , but even for graduates claiming





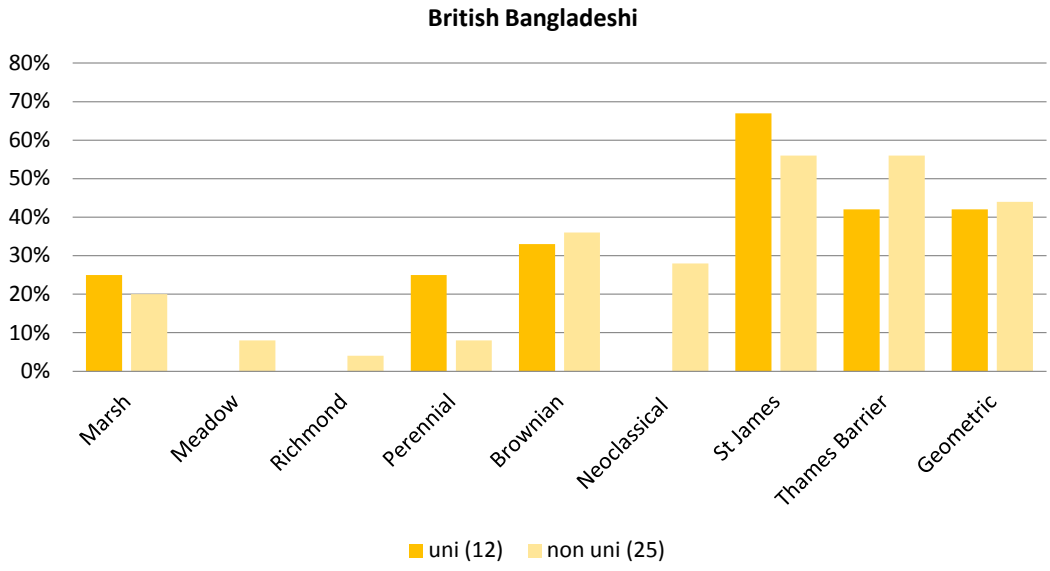


Table 6.8 White British, British Caribbean, British Bangladeshi Park Image Preference by Education Level.

Image reference	Overall Rank (r)	White British			British Bangladeshi			British Caribbean		
	OR	OR	UR	NUR	OR	UR	NUR	OR	UR	NUR
St James's Park	*1*	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
Brownian	*2*	3	2	2	4	4	4	4	2	5
Geometric garden	*3*	7	7	5	3	2	3	1	1	3
Thames Barrier Park	*4*	7	7	5	2	2	1	3	4	1
Neoclassical	*5*	9	9	7	6	9	5	4	4	4
Perennial flower garden	*6*	4	4	4	7	5	7	6	6	6
Richmond Park	*7*	2	1	3	9	9	9	7	7	7
Marsh	*8*	5	3	8	5	5	6	9	9	9
Meadow /Wasteland	*9*	6	4	9	8	9	7	8	8	7

Table 6.9 Frequency of Park Image Selection by Education & Ethnicity

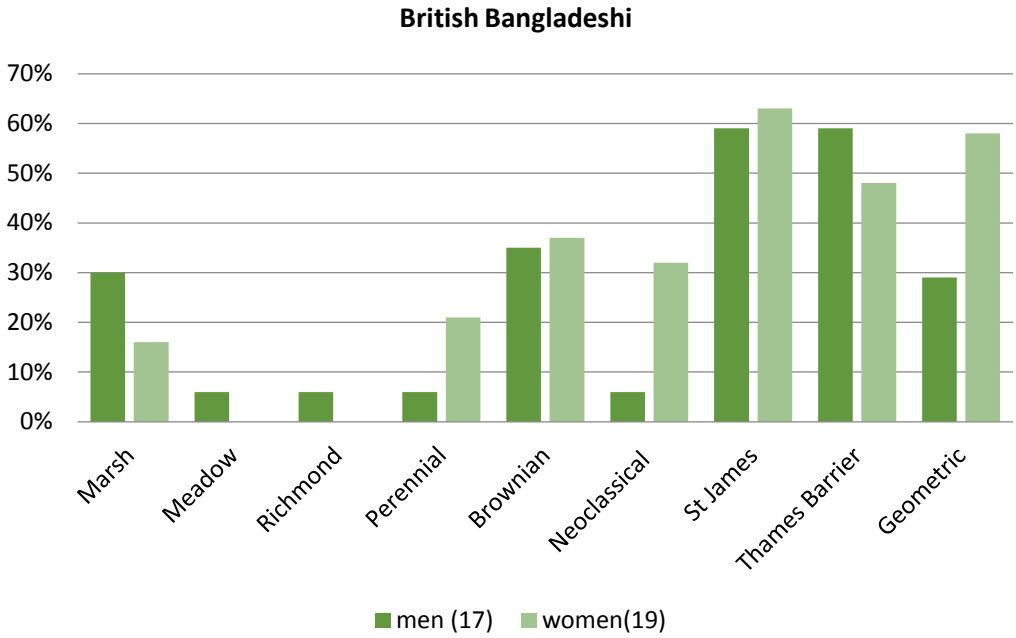
(OR - Overall rank, UR- University attendee rank, NUR - University non- attendee rank)

Bangladeshi or Caribbean heritage, it is still one of the least popular park images.

St James's Park, ranked first in the overall sample for frequency of selection, is the most popular selection for those claiming white British ethnicity who have not attended university, being selected by 75% of the sample, but its selection for white British university attendees at 50% only ranks equal fourth with the Meadow/ Wasteland and Perennial Flower Garden, fewer graduates choosing it than Richmond Park, the Brownian style park or the Marsh . These patterns are not seen in either the of the other ethnic groups (Table 6.7).

6.7.2 Gender & Ethnicity

The number of male participants claiming Caribbean heritage in the sample is only 6, too small a group for statistical analysis using Chi-Square. The other two groups have more balanced sample sizes. In both groups, women are more likely to select the image of the Perennial Flower Garden and the image of the Neoclassical park than men, echoing the associations found in the wider sample. The choice of both images is greater than 95% likely to be seen in the wider population for white British heritage participants, with Cramers V values of 0.453 for the Perennial Flower Garden and 0.338 for the neoclassical park. The association between gender and choosing the Neoclassical park in the Bangladeshi heritage group is close to 95% likely. Though not statistically significant, women in both groups are more than twice as likely to select the Geometric park



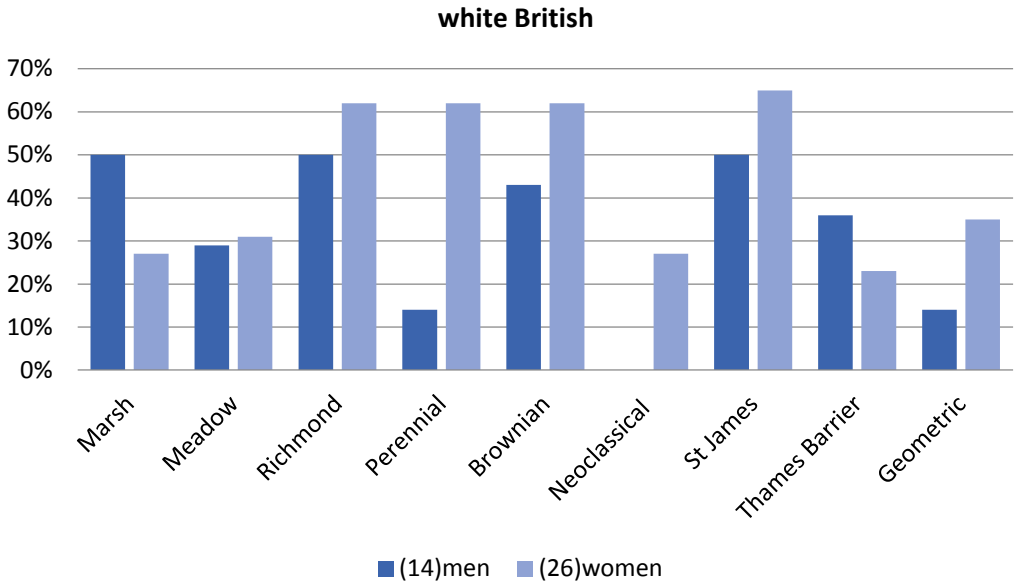


Fig 6.10 White British, British Bangladeshi Park Image Preference by Gender.

image compared to the men, and men are roughly twice as likely to selected the image of the Marsh in both groups (Fig 6.10).

6.7.3 Age & Ethnicity

The analysis by age group was again affected by sample size, and the ability to generalise from any findings is consequently limited. There were no significant associations found with park image preference and age group across the samples by claimed ethnciity, however within the groups, those selecting the Perennial Flower Garden and the Neoclassical Park Images tended

towards the older age ranges. In the groups claiming white British or British Bangladeshi ethnicity, younger respondents tended to be more likely than older respondents to select the image of the Thames Barrier Park, where in the Caribbean heritage group, this tendency was reversed.

6.8 Conclusions

Images were not equally popular across the survey sample. Some images were selected far more than others. When subgroups are created using demographic information obtained through the survey, and cross tabulated with park image preferences, clear patterns of association can be seen between different demographic factors and the selection of particular images, which are assumed to indicate differing values or stylistic preferences - landscape taste.

Age seems to have some small influence, but gender , and whether or not the respondents have attended university are associated, more strongly than age, with choice or rejection of particular images.

Studies of landscape preference included in the literature review also found that gender, and whether or not respondents have attended University are both significant in influencing the likely landscape preferences of respondents from some European ethnicities. As was found here, in other studies, university attendance is associated with more frequent selection of images of a less 'manicured' or more 'romantic' landscapes, (Buijs, et al., 2009; Van den Berg & Van Winsum-Westra, 2010; Van den Berg, et al., 2006; de Groot & van den Born, 2003). When intersectionality between university education and ethnicity was investigated, the association between a preference for wilder landscapes was found to be significant only in white British participants, for whom there was a far stronger effect on behaviour than was seen across the whole sample.

The most consistently rejected image across the entire sample is that of the Meadow/ Wasteland, chosen to represent the contemporary 'ecological picturesque' style. It is the least frequently selected image overall, selected by only 15% of respondents, by 14% of women, by only 8% of people who have not attended university, 9% of people claiming British Caribbean ethnicity and 5% of people claiming British Bangladeshi ethnicity. It is however a relatively popular selection for men aged 30 -50. It is equal in popularity to St James's park among white British people who have attended university, being selected by 50% of this group. The strength of this latter association is the strongest found in the data.

This finding, allied with the findings of the European studies cited above, supports a theory that the most educated and powerful groups in Anglo European cultures have tended to valorise as normative a 'romantic' or ecocentric view of landscape. This ontology is not universally shared, even within the white majority culture . The finding indicates a greater likelihood that landscape preferences particularly for 'ecological' landscapes are learned, socially constructed, and not universal or instinctive as has been claimed (Gobster, et al., 2007; Kaplan, 1987; Balling & Falk, 1982). This finding also challenges an assumption made in Community Green and Urban Green

Nation that 'biodiversity' is an objective measure of park quality, if the purpose of parks is primarily to provide attractive outdoor space for people irrespective of background (CABE, 2010; CABE Space, 2010; Bramley, et al., 2009).

The claimed ethnicity of the respondents was found to have the greatest influence on the park image preferences, affecting the selection of seven out of nine images to a greater than 95% certainty that this association could be generalised to the wider population, and with a stronger effect on behaviour than for any of the other demographic attributes tested.

The most consistently preferred image across all the different analyses is that of St James's Park, stylistically representing a Victorian park with some 'gardenesque' styling. It is among the most frequently selected park images across the whole sample, and only falls outside the top three for one group - people of white British heritage who have attended university, for whom it drops to fourth place. This finding makes Victoria Park's ethnically skewed visitor numbers difficult to explain, if stylistic preferences are taken to be the only significant determining factor in park use.

The image which shows the greatest variation in selection across different groupings is Richmond Park, stylistically representing a 'picturesque' landscape image, the photograph purposely chosen for the landscape's bleak, wintry aspect, tending towards the romantic and sublime. It is the most popular selection for university attendees/graduates claiming white British ethnicity, and second most popular selection for all white British respondents. It is among the least popular images selected by almost all other groups, and particularly among Bangladeshis. The likelihood that this association would not be found in the wider population is less than 1 in a million.

The finding that a taste for wilder more romantic landscapes is not shared by all the UK's ethnic groups supports findings of previous studies in the UK included in the literature review (Bell, 2005; Rishbeth, 2004) (Hitchmough & Dunnett, 2008; Bell, 2005; Rishbeth, 2004). Although a range of planting and spatial qualities were included in the park images for preference testing, the common features of park spaces most preferred by white British people are naturalistic plant forms, and informal or naturalistic spatial arrangements. For the other ethnic groups included in the study, parks displaying naturalistic plant forms are generally least popular, but both naturalistic and formal layouts are among the most preferred selections. The presence of buildings, does not seem to be a major determining preference factor for any group. There is no support found for the Kaplan's abstracted landscape preference matrix (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989). The presence of paths leading around the corner, or a rough ground surface has no discernable impact on park image preference.

There is clearly individual variation within the survey results, however the findings indicate strongly that there are what could be described as culturally normative preferences for park landscape styles associated with cultural background that are identifiable, and differ significantly. Ethnicity has a greater role in landscape taste than age, gender or education. The findings support a hypothesis that landscape style might have a role in the under-representation of people from minority ethnicities in UK parks. Why this should be, and if it will impact on use at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park will be investigated in subsequent chapters.

7.0 Focus Groups

7.1 Focus Group Description.

The focus groups comprised between 4 and 8 people, almost all of whom had previous knowledge of each other within the group, and some of whom were friends. No participant had lived in the UK for less than 15 years. All the groups had at least some participants who were in work, and from working households, with A level or higher vocational or academic qualifications, and all participants could speak English well enough to participate actively in the discussions.

One group in Poplar brought together five young men in their late teens of British Bangladeshi background, all of whom were in work, education or training. All were Muslim. One group member wore a tagiyah (woven cap) that would identify him as a Muslim, but otherwise the whole group dressed in casual jeans and sports clothing typical of that age group in the UK . The meeting was held in a youth and social centre where they often participated in social activities. (Poplar Group)

The group in Bromley by Bow brought together seven women. Five British Bangladeshi women and one Pakistani/Bangladeshi mixed heritage woman, in their twenties and early thirties, all with young families, and one older Pakistani woman in her fifties who was a worker in a nearby community organisation, and did not know the other participants. All were Muslim. Two did not wear a head scarf, and were dressed in smart casual clothing for work, two wore hijabs, and loose flowing clothing but were not veiled in public, and two were fully veiled in public. More than half the group were in work, and the remainder who were full time mothers, had working partners. Three participants held degrees, two at postgraduate level. This group was brought together in a community hall near where they lived and worked, during lunch hour. (Bromley By Bow Group)

The smallest group was the white British group from Lower Clapton, with four female participants in the age group 30-50. They all self identified as English, and were dressed in jeans and casual tops. All were working though three worked for much of the time at home. Two had attended art college, the others had attended University to postgraduate level. They all had children at primary schools in the area. This group meeting was held in a local pub. (Clapton Group)

The largest group was held south of Victoria Park , and was formed of 9 British Somalian heritage women, 8 of whom were aged 30 -50, one aged 18-30. All the women were Muslim and wore hijabs and shawls or scarves keeping their heads covered , but were not fully veiled in public. One woman had a university level education, the other women did not provide details of their economic or educational background, though they all lived in the surrounding area. This group meeting was held in a community centre where the women's children were attending extra curricular maths classes. (Victoria Park Group).

A mixed British Asian group of five women aged 30-50 was brought together at a primary school in Leyton during a parent's open day. They were all on the board of governors at the school

where their children were pupils. All were Muslim, and were fully veiled in public spaces. Three were of British Pakistani heritage, one was of British Indian heritage and one had a British Bangladeshi background. One had attended university, and all were full time parents within a working household.(Leyton Group).

The British Caribbean heritage group of six women was brought together at a children's day nursery in Hackney. Some were staff, and some were parents at the nursery. One wore a hijab and flowing loose clothing, associated with Islamic faith, others were dressed casually in jeans. Their ages ranged from early twenties to early fifties. All were in work, all had school level and further qualifications. Half the group had attended university, one to postgraduate level. (Hackney Group)

All groups and most participants, used, and spoke positively about parks. There were common areas of agreement and common spatial practices described across all groups. There were also individual variations and preferences, and importantly, there were discernably different ways of representing parks and their importance in everyday life within the different groups, that when raised by group members were received as acceptable and supportable in some groups, but in others were contested by the group or even mocked -providing evidence to support an hypothesis of varying ethnically based 'legitimate' tastes.

The commonly held values revealed in focus groups also help to provide an explanation for the quantitative findings of the research, and may ultimately help to explain the variation in park use by people of different ethnic backgrounds that has been observed more generally.

7.2 Economic Capital

Economic capital allows individuals to travel to parks or other leisure spaces that suit their needs, rather than being constrained by what is available locally. It has been found that low income groups make less use of parks than higher income groups because of economic or social class factors (CABE Space, 2010), although ethnicity was a more significant influence. University level education which is associated with greater economic capital, has also been found to influence landscape preferences (Van den Berg & Van Winsum-Westra, 2010; Buijs, et al., 2009). As described above, many of the focus group participants were from working households, giving them some economic capital, in what is measured as one of the most deprived areas in the UK. The inclusion of at least some working and highly educated people in all the groups was intentional, to ensure that economic capital and educational attainment were not major group variants as well as ethnicity. There was however evidence of variable economic capital across and within the groups .

Two themes that came up in the discussion were used to identify economic capital . These were evidence of use of or preference for paid leisure activities, and evidence of travel, within the UK and globally. (This also increased cultural capital, in the form of knowledge of park space and spatial practices elsewhere).

All members of the groups made some use of paid leisure facilities such as leisure centres, and all groups referenced spaces outside the local area, both inside and outside the UK. Some individuals evidenced having travelled more widely than others in their group. A few individuals made no reference to travel of any kind. The Bromley By Bow Group and the Hackney Group recounted self directed foreign leisure trips to the US and Europe, and also evidenced travel within London. These groups made less reference to travel within the UK than the Lower Clapton or Leyton groups. For many in the Hackney or Bromley By Bow groups, some non UK travels were linked to visiting family in their 'heritage' country. The Hackney group spoke to each other with great familiarity about trips to the Caribbean that indicated multiple visits.

The two groups who evidenced most travel for leisure trips, both within the UK and overseas, were the Clapton group and the Leyton group. The two most constrained groups were the Victoria Park group, and the Poplar group, who relied mostly on trips organised by local community groups, clubs or schools for leisure experiences outside their home borough, and also mentioned using free rather than charged leisure facilities, (like outdoor gyms in a local park), though these were not ideal for their cultural needs.

7.3 Cultural Capital

Cultural capital as described by Bourdieu (see for example Bourdieu, 1999: 12-13) is made up of various forms of learned 'knowledge', giving individuals power within the social field. Bourdieu theorises that cultural capital can be exchanged for other forms of capital, such as economic or social capital. It includes educational capital, which is cultural expertise/ knowledge in institutionally recognised form, evidenced through formal qualifications (eg GCSE's, Masters Degrees), and other forms of cultural competence, that relate to social power within a given setting (eg spoken English with a particular accent). These are expressed symbolically or through performance, and relate to tastes, possessions, ways of speaking, dressing and forms of knowledge that are not institutionalised in education, but nevertheless recognised and evaluated in social contexts.

The Clapton group had the most uniform cultural capital, and the greatest amount of educational capital in terms of qualifications, of all the groups. Non university attendees had been contacted, but were unable to attend when the group met, denying an opportunity to observe any qualitative impacts of differences in cultural capital within the white British focus group.

The Victoria Park group arguably had the least cultural capital, at least in a form recognised in UK society. Only one member of that group had attended University, or spoke English completely fluently without the need of occasional translation assistance.

As in the quantitative survey, which showed much less influence of university attendance in affecting landscape taste in groups other than the white British group, differences in spatial practices and preferences between those who had attended or not attended university within the same ethnic group were expressed in limited ways if at all, particularly in comparison to variation by ethnicity. This type of intersectional effect coincides with findings of recent research

into the impact of ethnic diversity on civic 'spirit' in British neighbourhoods using major datasets, that also found the effect of ethnicity is much more pronounced in BME groups than the effect of education, where education had been highly significant for white British respondents (Demireva & Heath, 2014).

There was some evidence of difference in taste correlating with University attendance in the Hackney group. The two group members who described themselves as having some 'romantic' tastes had both attended university. One participant visited Wanstead flats, found the Devon coast romantic (though articulated a perceived distinction between romantic and beautiful), and disliked crowded parks. The other participant described enjoying visiting parks or other landscape spaces alone for peace and relaxation. At the same time, while some of their preferences in terms of landscapes they used or considered beautiful tended to align more with a pastoral vision, they also evidenced many tastes and practices aligned with wider group views, supporting other speakers, or providing similar examples of preferences and activities in response to the remarks of others. Having said this, one of the two had had an atypical childhood within the group context, having been brought up partly in the Caribbean, and attending a private school when in the UK, and she now dressed in Islamic clothing. This participant clearly was distinctive within the group not just in terms of University education.

The following sections describe some exchanges between participants in more detail, and are followed by a discussion of the main findings from thematic analysis.

7.4 What Parks are For.

One of the primary questions used to stimulate discussion in all groups was "What are parks for?", a deliberately open and slightly provocative question that allowed consideration of practical, social or symbolic functions of parks.

There was some commonality in discussions on the functional role of parks in spatial practices across all groups, though the emphasis of these functions in the discussion varied from group to group. Many different parks were known, and parks were used by all participants, with preferences for different activities being located in specific places. All agreed that parks were there to provide places outside for kids to play, for regular nuclear family activities, for occasional extended family activities, for recreation and sports, and for eating outside.

Four groups (all except Poplar and Victoria Park) agreed the relative lack of provision for barbecues in UK parks, compared with parks in other places, was an opportunity missed. The Hackney group, more than any of the other groups, were very well informed about provision for and regulation of barbecues in their area.

There was a kind of commonly understood hierarchy of urban park typologies that many participants referenced when asked what they considered parks were for. It constituted the 'typical' neighbourhood park, with a limited range of spaces and facilities,

''It depends on the kind of person you are, 'cause there's a play area and sometimes there's a football pitch and obviously there's grass, if you want to get physical exercise, or sit down with your family or just by yourself and read a book, eat something.''
(Poplar)

and a larger scale urban park that would perhaps be more distant, and used for more special occasions

''I know that I feel like, when we go with a big group, we are looking for extra activities ... we look at boating and like nice garden flowers area, so it has to be big, so that we're all entertained, from oldest to youngest.''
(Leyton)

The groups in Leyton and Clapton also made frequent use of a third type of park space-that could be characterised as a 'country park' typology. One group, the Hackney group, generally had strongly negative views of this type of space, though one participant at Hackney, as described above, spoke of using and enjoying the same spaces as the Leyton group.

Very different experiences had influenced different representations of the same parks, even within the same groups, leading to some contestation. There was evidence of very strong feelings and controversy in all groups over provision for dogs in parks, which will be discussed in greater detail in a later section of this chapter.

Beyond the programmatic or functional purpose of park spaces, there were subtle but identifiable differences in how the groups accepted or challenged views that represented a more abstract role for parks in city life, which arguably point to different culturally normative ontological positions regarding the relations between group and individual practices, between city and country, and between humans and nature.

For most members of the groups at Bromley by Bow, Leyton, Poplar and Victoria Park, the park was represented as a place for active recreation for and with children, but also it was frequently represented as a space to relax, to not work, or 'do' anything. Parents used it for 'time off' while children were safely occupied. Those without children could find a place to just be.

''You just go and relax and let the kids run around, children have fun,''
(Victoria Park)

''Gathering and relaxing, for children to be safe and to play and explore''
(Bromley By Bow)

''If I'm away working or something like that, I might sit down just to calm myself, to eat something...''
(Poplar)

In the groups that emphasised relaxation in park space, the opportunity to get a break, in a separate place away from daily working routines was ''restorative'' , associated with mental

refreshment, re-charging.

> ''Open spaces is for the...., for you to enjoy, to unwind, especially in Tower Hamlets, big blocks, it's a very overcrowded situation. It's your escape place,..... it is a place to socialise, to have fun, get fresh air, yeah. Even for myself, I see other mums. It's good!''
> (Victoria Park)

> ''When you do in home, cleaning or something, you feel tired. You go to outside, in the park, you feel relaxed, fresh air. You got your friend, socialise. I like the park.''
> (Victoria Park)

> ''You wouldn't want to be inside. Couldn't get that relaxation and peace except in the fresh air'' (Poplar)

> ''I think just to clear your head as well, I think. It's nice to...''
> (Leyton)

The absence of other people was not desired, or required for this type of 'escape' and for most participants in these groups, an opportunity for sociability was a component of a park's attractiveness. The amount of space required was not large, and being physically still was part of the objective. The behaviour was represented as a pleasant and intrinsic part of London urban living, not apart from it. These type of visits were not represented as needing to be particularly long in duration, or requiring a great deal of planning, and usually took place in a park space within easy reach of home or work.

In Poplar, Victoria Park and Bromley by Bow groups, the green-ness and ''freshness'' of an outdoor space, not a solely visual but a more embodied physical sensation associated with differences in colour, temperature, humidity and air quality, were frequently represented as a key aspect of the beauty and attraction of landscapes.

> "In the middle of Canary Wharf people in suits and ties and they are working really hard, and you see in the middle is a little grass field . When you work in an office you see the dullest colours around, blue, dark blue, grey. You're staring at a computer screen. It's nice to see a bit of greenery, and green is the easiest colour on the eye as well, so it's just nice to go out there and have some fresh air and scenery."
> (Poplar)

> "Even looking at the green space it is so nice for your eyes to look at the trees and the green space ."
> (Victoria Park)

> "some place is nice, have grass, it looks fresh."
> (Victoria Park)

> "Bangladeshi countryside, it's so beautiful all the green fields and it just seems really clean

and fresh and it's just...yeah the open air"
(Bromley By Bow)

The strong association between freshness, greenness (specifically as opposed to browner dry or dead vegetation) and a place of beauty were present in all discussions with British Bangladeshi participants, and was a focus of prolonged contestation between the British Bangladeshi participant and the British Pakistani women in the Leyton group, part of which is included in a later section of this chapter. The strongly marked differences in landscape taste between British Bangladeshi and British Pakistani participants echoed the findings of the park preference survey.

The Victoria Park group were also seeking freshness and greenness in the city in parks, and the Leyton group speculated about the possibility of finding tranquil and spiritually uplifting spaces outside.

Not all experiences of green or park spaces were restorative though. In considering what parks were for, discussion frequently moved to problematic aspects of sharing park space with others. Through this process, a kind of 'ideal' typology of urban landscape, one not currently available to these participants, was proposed in Bromley By Bow, Victoria Park, and Leyton: a calm, access controlled or managed, dog free space.

''I would say ideally somewhere that was a really big space, where had like a food garden, where me and my kids could come and grow some things together, also have lot of things for children's play. No dogs allowed. You can close it and you can relax, and you won't worry about the children playing outside, or no dog biting them.''
(Victoria Park)

''Some place is nice, have grass, it looks fresh, and some place is small, and dogs not allowed, is comfortable, you can sit, you take your kids. Is nice to relax, bring your food or something like that . '
'(Victoria Park)

L1:"I wouldn't mind paying one or two pounds for each person to go in the park where its clean, and safe"
L2:"Safe"
L1:"And you can do your barbecues , where its clean environment, clean toilets, no dogs, and if you're having a picnic, alcohol is kind of down..."
L2"To a limit."
L3:"I wouldn't mind paying that."
L2:"I wouldn't"
(Leyton)

In Leyton, Poplar, Victoria Park and Bromley By Bow, discussion about relaxation and refreshment to be found in park spaces was supported by general murmurs of agreement, or followed by further contributions illustrating a similar theme.

The Hackney group in contrast generally only approved representations of parks as a place of active recreation and sociability for adults, and play places for children. Parks were not represented as uncontested places of replenishment or spiritual refreshment and calm. Only one participant in Hackney identified they would think of visiting a park as place just to relax and be calm. She represented herself as distinct from the group, and adopted a slightly theatrical comic attitude when making this type of contribution to discussions

> ''I'm quite a romantic individual, and when I get, whether it's in England in the park and its quiet, or in the Caribbean on the beach, but there's not a lot of people there,... I feel really at ease... it even makes me to speak softer''
> (Hackney)

This and other contributions on these lines from this individual were contested, met with raucous laughter and expressions of disagreement or disbelief. Other group members described relaxing with friends only as incidental to watching children's play, but relaxation per se was not an emphasised purpose of park space. In most exchanges, unless there were identifiable events and activities, and a lot of sociability, park spaces were represented as being of limited appeal.

> "Summer was quite good wasn't it? I've got the two girls. Louise and Davina would call me up and say "Why aren't you bringing the girls to the park" and I'd say "What are they going to do there?" That's what I used to say"
> (Hackney)

> " I would go..., with a bunch of friends, if they have barbie or something, and I will come and meet you, but me personally to say I'm going to do something, to say "Oh yes let's go to the park" No I wouldn't"
> (Hackney)

> " I like to go to the park with a bunch of friends and have a gossip."
> (Hackney)

The Clapton group similarly emphasised the role of parks as spaces of active recreation. As with all the other focus groups when visiting parks with the family, finding things for everyone to do was clearly important, and the parks with the best play facilities for different age groups and leisure space for parents had the greatest appeal.

> ''I love Vicky Park. The boys like the skateboarding and the thing... they've got the massive... the skatepark, next to a playground.... and the pub.''
> (Clapton)

> ''As your kids get older as well I bet you're finding now with (your kids)..., two totally different needs. About a year ago I lost that "We are all going to do this". They want to do completely different things. Actually Vicky park ticks a lot of our boxes, and Mum and Dad's pint at the end of the day. ''
> (Clapton)

However this group also saw some parks or urban landscapes as potential places of escape,

> "If you don't have a garden, it's your outside escape."
> (Lower Clapton)

> "Yes outside escape places in cities"
> (Lower Clapton)

but unlike the groups at Victoria Park, Bromley by Bow and Poplar, the escape being sought was not the temporary restorative respite from daily work to sociable green spaces described in other groups. The Clapton group described a more a prolonged escape, to extensive, less maintained spaces that arguably offered a simalcrum of rural experiences, something represented as not really 'of' the city, a place with freedom to roam.

> '' We're running round the marshes at the moment at 6.30 in the morning, and we are... I've written it down here as one of my favourite,... like..because it's on your doorstep. It might not be the most beautiful place in the world, but the fact it's on your doorstep...and we go cycling, we go running, we walk the kids there... We can run to the Olympic Park, we can run to Stamford Hill. Just the fact that it's a London thing is quite incredible. We run we cycle we walk the dogs we go have picnics. There's a place called the stones....''
> (Clapton)

These variations arguably indicate ethnically distinctive norms relating to spatial practice and ontologies of park spaces. Individual positions are possible, but are positioned by the group in relation to 'norms'. Individual positions that differ from perceived norms are contested, or ridiculed, by processes of symbolic violence. Where individual representations are aligned with perceived norms, they are approved and supported by the group.

7.5 Do We All Find Beauty in Nature and Countryside?

Previous research, included in the literature review, (and indeed the introduction to the book 'The Dynamic Landscape' that was so influential in the development of designs for the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park) has clearly identified that many people from BME groups dislike ''wildness' 'in landscape (Buijs, et al., 2009; Hitchmough & Dunnett, 2008; Bell, 2005; Rishbeth, 2004; Herzog, et al., 2000; Kaplan & Talbot, 1988; Washburne, 1978).

In Chapter 3 there is a discussion of discourses allied with particular landscape tastes, ideals and aesthetics. Two similar but distinctive discourses on nature and landscape developed in Europe and North America in the 18th and 19th Century. One is the 'Romantic' discourse of reverence for wildness and 'untouched' wilderness, where 'pure' nature was first represented as a direct revelation of God's Glory to be marvelled at, informing a taste for 'sublime' awe -inspiring landscapes. The other an 'enlightenment mentality' where nature is revered, but man has a responsibility to improve and control it, a view allied with a more 'pastoral' visions of landscape

beauty. In recent landscape preference research these views correspond broadly with positions termed 'Ecocentric' and 'Anthropocentric'. (Buijs, et al., 2009; Van den Berg, et al., 2006)

Then, there are discourses of country and city: The historically English cultural 'pro - countryside' norm, where the countryside (both wild and/or pastoral) is imagined as desirable place, away from the crowds, squalor and depravity of the city, where rural landscapes are experienced as a visual spectacle and leisure resource. This contrasts with a more typical 'pro - city' view from other cultures, of city life as sophisticated, cultured and civilised, the countryside less attractive, its brutish way of life representing ignorance or basic existence. (MacNaghten & Urry, 1998, Chambers, 1993, Bermingham, 1987, Williams, 1975).

It is not the intention of this thesis to seek out and catalogue all the possible discourses relating to nature, people, cities and the like that are present in different societies globally, however the four discourses described above indicate there are likely to be many- discourses, tensions and oppositional views that inform thinking on parks and nature in contemporary multicultural London. These four discourses can provide a kind of preliminary framework within which to attempt to locate ontological 'norms' that emerge from focus group discussion. With this in mind, further subject prompts were developed from them to try to understand what landscape ideals, if any, might inform the participants preferences and spatial practices in park space.

Two groups, Leyton and Lower Clapton, seemed to support a view of countryside as pleasurable leisure resource. They referenced multiple uses of the 'country park' space typology discussed in the previous section, and also represented visits to visually 'spectacular' picturesque landscapes for leisure; scenery as visual refreshment .

When discussing personal memories of being in a beautiful place, the Pakistani heritage members of the Leyton group displayed a very wide knowledge of British National Parks, citing visits to at least five different National Parks - Snowdonia, Yorkshire Dales, Peak District, Brecon Beacons and the Lake District.

> L1: "It would have to be somewhere like Snowdon, the mountain and then just driving around then just stopping off and then walking, like through some trees , then there'd be a massive lake.."
>
> L2: "Yorkshire Dales is lovely as well."
>
> L3: "Even Lake District is really beautiful."
>
> L1: "I think there are parts of the Lake District now that are over commercialised, but Snowdon is..."
>
> L3 :"No its nice, there's lots do -"
>
> L1: "But the major touristy areas are just over ...."
>
> L3:"Windermere? - But there are other areas that are really nice"
>
> (Leyton)

A summer trip to Snowdonia National Park was referenced in answer to the same question by the mixed British Pakistani/ Bangladeshi heritage participant at Bromley by Bow, as were picturesque landscapes of the Swiss Alps or the Swat Valley by the participant who had lived until

adulthood in Pakistan before coming to live in the UK. This type of UK or European landscape was not represented by other South Asian groups' members. The Clapton group also mentioned the picturesque landscapes of the Swiss Alps, but added moorland in Yorkshire, and coastal landscapes -the Atlantic coast of Biarritz, and beaches in Norfolk

> "It has beautiful clean sandy beaches and it's on the corner as France turns into Spain. It's a really rugged coastline. It has amazing sunsets it is just idyllic. Crashing waves, quite dynamic. It's the Atlantic so its..it can be big and epic..also quite calm or serene..It's quite wild and rugged."
>
> (Clapton)

> C1:"I think the beach in Norfolk is pretty amazing. The beaches in Norfolk blew me away, I couldn't believe it was in England, they're so flat and white....."
>
> C2: "The sea is so far, the sky seems massive"
>
> C1:" .....Norfolk has that feeling of loneliness. It is so massive you always feel like you're on your own even if there are with other people there"
>
> (Clapton)

Their descriptions emphasised aspects of a somewhat more daunting, powerful, or bleaker landscape aesthetic than Leyton group had done.

There was a contrast between participants in Clapton and Leyton with regard to feelings for and use of the Lea Valley. The Lea Valley landscape between Clapton and Leyton is one of marshes and species rich grassland, industrial ruins, and graffiti. It is criss-crossed by rail lines and other urban infrastructure - a contemporary industrial 'sublime' landscape, managed to an ecological agenda, accessed by a footpath network, occasional boardwalks with some facilities for parking and picnicking. While the Lower Clapton group made extensive and frequent use of the Lea and Marshes, the Leyton group did not really consider this space an appealing leisure destination.

> L1: "I have gone past the Lea but it just doesn't have the same..."
>
> L2: "It seems quite dirty as well"
>
> L3:"Is it dirty?"
>
> L2:"The Lea seems quite dirty as well you know"
>
> (Leyton)

They were familiar with it, particularly Hackney Marshes just to the north of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, and had used it in the past, but considered it a dirty and unsafe space, preferring to visit other 'country' parks like Wanstead Flats, or Hollow Ponds (Fig 7.1), for family walks or cycling at the weekends, and for paid leisure activities in the school holidays. These spaces were felt to be valuable as an educational resource for children, a safe space for active family leisure, and provided an opportunity to interact with wildlife - to feed ducks or look for insects with children -in a 'natural' setting. However they were also perceived as increasingly problematic, for reasons of increased dog fouling, and constant conflict with dogs off the lead.

In describing themselves in a beautiful place, the Leyton Group in particular, and several members of the Bromley By Bow group described being in larger agricultural or horticultural landscapes of great peace and tranquility, with reflecting lakes, or fountains- the Alhambra Palace Gardens, a rural lakeside at sunset, or landscapes associated with Mosques in Brunei, Casablanca and elsewhere

> "the scenery, the calmness, it's spiritually uplifting to just sit there and think. Sometimes, you know, you are somewhere else."
>
> (Leyton)

This was not something the Leyton group thought of as available in UK parks, though they felt it would be desirable.

From these exchanges and others, it seems the British Pakistani participants and white British groups shared a normative ' pro country' taste for the UK's rural and other picturesque landscapes as a scenic leisure resource. Arguably, participants of Pakistani heritage displayed a leaning toward improved 'pastoral' nature, with managed landscapes, viewing point restaurants, or beautiful structures in the foreground of remembered scenes, perhaps representing preferences for an 'arcadian' tranquil, managed aesthetic ideal of scenic landscape beauty, rather than a preference for more challenging, environmentally harsher, more isolated conditions, the 'sublime' romantic view, that aesthetic and spatial preferences of the Clapton group seemed to convey. The cleanliness of park and other green spaces were more important to the Leyton Group, tolerance of pollution, graffiti and structures associated with former industrial use greater in the Clapton group.

Both Clapton and Leyton participants also described urban landscapes they found beautiful -the view from Waterloo Bridge especially at sunset, or St Katherine's Docks, but while these preferences were not contested by other group members, they did not lead to the flurry of additional representations evoked by discussion of scenic rural landscapes as places of beauty.

In contrast, the Hackney group in particular evidenced a 'pro - city' ontology. Participants in this group mentioned some English landscapes during discussions of landscapes that might be 'culturally important' for people of their ethnic background (British Caribbean), indicating a strong identification with belonging in England rather than Caribbean, and a familiarity with countryside in the UK, but there was no real enthusiasm shown in these representations. Names of places were put forward by members of the group, but were not expanded on or followed with anecdotes. There was however far lengthier description of urban scenes, and mediated or 'improved' natural beauty - City skylines; the view over the river Thames at sunset from a riverside penthouse; city lights over water seen from an aeroplane; Niagara Falls but especially when lit at night.

Some 'natural' landscapes were represented passionately, as embodied, as well as visual memories of spectacular natural phenomena, but these desirable natural landscapes were not located in the UK. Each representation was immediately supported by others in a similar vein.

"When we went to C.....'s aunt's house (in the Caribbean) you'd literally see the mist, like one minute all you can see is the mist it looks cold but it's not cold, and it clears just like that, it really does look beautiful, you look far in the distance it looks really, really nice to see it like that, seeing the sun come up and stuff like that that's what I really enjoy."

(Hackney)

"I went to Glistening Rivers. The water's like sparkly when you put your fingers through it, it's like..., can you imagine,.. like glitter, like a trail? They said there's only two places in the world that has it. Right there and a place in Mexico and its all natural water."

(Hackney)

"When you go in the volcano, when you look at the sulphur, it looks black, but when you put your hand in it its clear, and you put your feet in it and you.. you touch that. It's just clear."

(Hackney)

"They have a tap that flows down from the volcano that runs down to a part in Montserrat and when you turn it on it's the freshest water you could ever drink"

(Hackney)

In general the qualities of outdoor and natural life in UK were represented as not being up to the standards found elsewhere.

''In England you don't normally see the stars in England I'm sorry"

(Hackney)

" There are some nice parks over there with children and you can walk around. I can't say that over here there is a park that I would want to go and walk around in the heat"

(Hackney)

"Because we don't have that great weather here, when we do have that great weather, I would take the opportunity to take my daughter to the park"

(Hackney)

While the British outdoor experiences did not live up to those in the Caribbean, the 'civilized' urban life of the UK was represented as preferable, particularly regarding animals, and the production of meat. Many stories were exchanged with some horror of goats and chickens being caught, killed and prepared for dinner, at the home

"On Montserrat, in the morning they were like "Here chick, chick". In the night time they were giving us chicken soup I couldn't eat it."

(Hackney)

> "I see them plucking the feathers off the chicken. I'm like, "No, I don't want to do that!" We have it easy here we don't have to do all those things"
> (Hackney)

Similarly contact with animals in the UK was represented as undesirable. Hedgehogs, foxes, pigeons and rats were grouped together and described negatively, with some horror, as something to be avoided, and removed or chased out by others. This revulsion at proximity to animals was represented by the group as a collective rather than individual view, and will be touched on again in a later section . Allied with dislike of wildlife, habitat, like the marshes in the Lea Valley, and the canal towpath where animals might be encountered, were represented as space to avoid.

When participants were asked if they thought parks might perhaps provide some kind of spiritual uplift through contact with nature one participant responded

> " I don't. No. I'm not a nature person''
> (Hackney)

This sentiment was entirely uncontested, and actively supported by several in the group.

The British Caribbean participants represented a normative view where desirable outdoor spaces provided activities, and attractions. Even spaces described by those participants in the group who had stated a preference for, or an enjoyment of, less crowded or rural settings, mentioned visiting city farms, or adventure playgrounds- they were activated, sociable, places to be with friends, for celebrations and for physical recreation, spaces aligned with a 'pro city' ontology. Rural lifestyles or UK wild spaces were generally represented with little romance.

7.6 What Makes Places Beautiful?

All participants were asked during focus group discussion to talk about a memory of being in a beautiful place, and whether there was any landscape that might be considered as an ideal of beauty by people of their ethnicity or cultural background. Some of the responses to these questions have been captured above. Participants at Leyton and Clapton tended to respond in terms of visual scenes, with some reference to atmospheric or phenomenological conditions (mist, sunset). At Hackney as described above, these included embodied aspects. Bangladeshi and Somalian heritage participants descriptions of beautiful places made reference not only to visual beauty, phenomenological and embodied experiences, but also intellectual and social components of the experience of beauty and place, and were not restricted to beauty in landscape or nature.

> BB1:"Bangladeshi countryside it's so beautiful all the green fields and it just seems really clean and fresh and it's just...yeh the open air. I went there recently after 26 years and it was absolutely beautiful, seeing the wildlife and the landscape there"

BB2:"And the villages, the culture there"

BB1:"And the people there, so friendly, the warmth of the people"
(Bromley By Bow)

"We live in the city and every summer I used to go to my uncle who used to live in the Village really far away. A place with so many trees. Me and my cousins used to go fruit picking. So many different trees there's not in the city, picking the fruits and climbing the trees. I used to have fun, in the forest, just the nature. In the city the food is spicy. There, the food is different. In the villages they just eat like boiled rice, they milk their cow or the camel. Is just a beautiful experience,"

(Victoria Park)

"My new school has a lot of new facilities and equipment that was really fascinating. It was a huge improvement from my previous school. They refurbished it..... It looked like a prison before."

(Poplar)

Green-ness and freshness were key components of landscape beauty mentioned by many British Bangladeshi participants at different points, as described above. There were almost no references to beautiful rural spaces in the UK made by any Bangladeshi participant. Again, as with the Hackney group, natural beauty was found outside the UK, though unlike in Hackney, there was no discussion among British Bangladeshi participants of UK rural spaces to evidence familiarity. There were positive representations of highly maintained controlled landscapes and new structures in the UK representing beautiful spaces for these groups.

" I went for football trials to Chelsea training ground. It was really nice. The way I play, the training place is just over the road. In Chelsea, who are way higher up in a league level, it was such a long journey, (from their ground) and on the way to the main pitch ... there was a massive waterfall inside the area, massive grass and big trees, ... it was really nice the waterfall and the training facilities and the grass and everything was kept in nice condition."

(Poplar)

The lone Bangladeshi heritage participant at Leyton similarly made reference to green, fresh and highly maintained spaces as her preferred landscape type. When the group looked at images of possible park landscapes she expressed these views again. Her opinions were strongly contested by the British Pakistani group members. She, like the Hackney group member who felt outside the group, used self parodying humour in representing her views, however she was very firm in her dislike of 'natural' plant forms and less well maintained vegetation.

L1: "No I do not, I really don't like.. where's the freshness? It looks all dead. "

L2:" But this one,(pointing to one picture) that's all very natural, this one (other picture) something has coloured the grass, made it shiny green, it's artificial"

L3:" What you like is all the neatness it's .."

L2:" All in order."

L1 " I'm a bit OCD guys..... I'm not really an outdoor, greenery, but now I find these places peaceful, I do like it, but I do not like bees near, I want to go to place that is neat and tidy"

L2: " I would take my children there to explore, that would be more educational for them, they will learn more"

L1 " If I'm thinking of children then I think it's different, but if I think about myself, an ideal place for me to go, where I would feel peaceful then it's a place like this. But if I'm looking for education, it's for my kids to learn science , then that's different''

(Leyton)

The Bangladeshi heritage participants had interest in some animals and wildlife - deer from a fondly remembered summer trip to Richmond Park, or wildlife in rural Bangladesh were spoken of positively, but many participants of Bangladeshi heritage found less maintained or 'overgrown' spaces, and associated animals problematic - rats, foxes, bees, and dogs were all negatively portrayed by participants. As with the Hackney group, it was an acceptable position in Poplar, or Bromley By Bow to claim not to like nature, at least uncontrolled nature, and to represent wilder areas as filled with weeds, pests or vermin, an interpretation that was strongly contested by the Leyton group. British Bangladeshi participants found restorative relaxation, refreshment and pleasure in maintained green spaces, were keen to support their children's enjoyment of outdoor space, but did not share a picturesque ideal of beauty and had no romantic desire to escape to untouched wild spaces. There were many representations indicating a strong preference for outdoor environments that were highly mediated.

The Victoria Park group did not specifically associate beautiful places with outdoor experiences and described only urban experiences when asked to recall being in a beautiful place. Two described visiting the London Eye, and looking all across London, two described a visit to Madame Tussaud's waxworks museum, one the London Aquarium, others did not wish to offer any specific examples in response to this prompt, but contributed remembered special places and events at other points. Recounting a special childhood memory from an outside space, one described teenage visits to city centre Mogadishu, and enjoyment of urban living

"that time I was living in Mogadishu, and me and my friend, my best friend, her name is M..., we went together in the afternoon to the city, to town, and we go to cinema sometime, and the market, and sometime the shopping mall, we buy something and we watching, alone, alone, alone (without parents). We enjoy it.

My friend, when the Somalia Civil War, every people they moving somewhere, some to south some to North, and still I do not see her, I miss her, I don't know what happen to her, she died or alive, but still I remember, a nice time...."

(Victoria Park)

The countryside both in Somalia and in the UK was generally represented positively though at least one participant had found country holidays in her teens too constraining for her urban preferences, and found the food intolerable. Several participants in Victoria Park described annual trips with the community centre to Devon, and to Kent for fruit picking, as beautiful,

however they were content in the city, as long as some green space was available. They identified themselves as positively urban, and distinguished qualities of urban and rural life.

> "(The countryside) is good, it's fun. When you live in the city, the country it's fun, is fun, but the people they have a different way. Is two different ways."
>
> (Victoria Park)

Although parks were not part of their own upbringing, the group were positive about the role of parks in London, were familiar with local parks, and made use of the canal.

> "Back home we have big, big cities. - they got own garden for our own house, they don't want to go to a park. Park is like,.. like the bush, far from where you live, but everyone have their own garden. Everybody they have their own space at their house so we don't leave the house. So nobody say "We got to go to the park", you don't hear that. But here in the, in UK you need a big park like Victoria Park, Bethnal Green Park, "
>
> (Victoria Park)

> VP1:''I go, me and my daughter go there (the canal), with my daughter, all the time."
>
> VP2: "Absolutely, we do that a lot. ...I think it's dirty but it doesn't matter, they are doing okay in Tower Hamlets cleaning wise, it doesn't bother me, but I wouldn't say it's clean,"
>
> (Victoria Park)

The landscape image preferences of the Victoria Park group selected at the end of the focus group discussion tended towards parks with 'garden' like quality - more exotic shrubs and flowers, smaller very green enclosed spaces. They were generally attracted by the Richmond Park image, unusually within the non white groups that expressed preferences for parks based on photographic images either in the survey or in the focus groups. They said it reminded them of the bush. While they enjoyed green fresh spaces, they were less concerned about levels of maintenance or cleanliness than either the Hackney or Leyton groups.

7.7 Inherited Cultural Capital

According to Bourdieu, the habitus, and our cultural capital, is shaped in part through upbringing, (for example see Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:130). We initially learn what is to be valued and what is not through our parents, as well as others around us in childhood. Throughout the life course we have opportunities to contest and modify the inherited cultural capital we gain, but nevertheless, our inherited cultural capital can be highly influential. Understanding what 'inherited' values participants may have gained from their parents regarding outdoor space, nature and the city, and whether these were typical of others around them, then and now, might shed light on current behaviours and preferences, and on the consistency or otherwise of the focus group participants and perceived peer group norms. All groups were asked for example, for childhood memories in outside spaces, and whether they had been encouraged to play outside as children. All participants had played outside as children, but not all had been encouraged to

do so, or been encouraged to value outdoor space or experiences of nature. In some groups it was more common to find that participants felt adults had not supported outdoor play.

British Bangladeshi participants in all groups, and the Victoria Park group's accounts showed the greatest restrictions in opportunity to play outside in spaces away from home or to play unsupervised in childhood.

Somalian participants linked this restriction to differences in cultural practices for girls and boys, however there were two tomboys in the group who had been defiant of parents, and had played football with the boys, to parental disapproval. Most participants recalled having been allowed to play sometimes in the garden at home, and all had been allowed greater freedom to play when sent to countryside in the summer. Unlike the other groups who generally were more restrictive of their children's freedoms than had been the case in their own childhood, Somalian participants permitted their children greater freedom in accessing park and outdoor spaces near home, including taking them to parks, and allowing them out unsupervised. The group were clear they contested the gendered restrictions that had been placed on them by parents, and were keen that they should not be reproduced.

British Bangladeshi participants of both genders who had been raised in London were greatly restricted in their unaccompanied access to outside space, for their own 'protection'.

> "When I was younger we was more restricted going outside. Our parents was concerned about us being outside. They worried quite a bit. They wanted to keep us safe at all times. Once we reached an age, they did give us a bit of freedom just to go out, but when we were younger we had to be supervised by my uncle or my auntie, something like that."
> (Poplar)

This was not the case for a participant, a male youth leader who had been raised in rural Bangladesh, indicating spatial restriction through concerns for safety may be allied with living in this area of London, or perhaps linked to a more generalised fear of urban situations. Historic issues of racism in this area of London may have informed parents behaviours (Dench, et al., 2006). There were accounts that suggested traditional gender roles in Bangladeshi society may also have some significance in women and girl's freedom of movement outside the home. According to Dench, Gavron and Young's account, among Bangladeshi migrants to the East End of London, men were traditionally the family members who managed any affairs outside the home (Dench, et al., 2006). One participant indicated her mother had not enjoyed being in the garden or outside the home at all, and she had felt similarly as a child.

The Leyton group generally (aside from the Bangladeshi heritage participant), and the Hackney group members, had had extensive engagement in their childhood with park spaces. They 'lived ' in the park as children, and the Hackney group in particular recalled spending a great deal of time there unaccompanied. Hackney and Leyton participants had been taken to environmental education centres in the Marshes and Epping Forest as part of their schooling, and one of the Leyton participants, who identified herself as British Asian, still made use of the environmental education centre she had visited as a child for her own children's holiday activities.

The Pakistani heritage participants and one Hackney participant had used parks from childhood for extended family gatherings of about fifty people of all ages. These types of gathering were infrequent, and significantly less common than park visits with immediate family and friends.

One British Pakistani participant in Leyton, who was a keen sportswoman and cyclist, described having a family who had instigated long term "appropriation" of park spaces (Lefebvre, 1991[1974]) as part of community activity, for what is arguably an example of spatial practice reinforcing cultural identity (Floyd 1998).

> "My dad what he used to do is, he used to have the youth, you know the teenagers, and he used to play cricket in the park. So he used to take a whole bunch of youth in the area, they had like this separate place that was known for them there, and everybody would like stay clear from that. Every day after work he'd take the youth there, and play cricket. It wasn't like swings and slides he was using with them, and they would all go, the 18 year old, 15 and the 16, and the 17 a big bunch of them."
>
> (Leyton)

While some Leyton group members had often visited the park alone as children or teenagers, most had frequently been taken there by their parents. The Hackney group expressed variable parental support in their relationship with outside space. Though all had gone to the park and played outside a great deal as children, half the participants felt their parents had never taken them to the park at all, which they identified as being more typically Caribbean.

> H.1 "We would go as kids on our own, to the adventure playground in Battersea Park. It was great! We would go there on our own, but it's not like our Dad would get up one day and say ''Come children. Let us go to the park''. It never happened."
>
> H2. "My stepdad used to take us to the park, but my Dad didn't and my Mum didn't "
>
> H3. "I used to go the park often with my parents actually. We used to go to different parks sometimes Victoria sometimes ...or Hyde Park, Epping Forest on the bikes - a Caribbean (upbringing) with a bit of English as well "
>
> H2. "That's mine"
>
> H4. "I don't ever remember my Mum and Dad taking me to the park. I had a few older brothers"
>
> H5. "Yeah I had a brother"
>
> (Hackney)

Their enthusiasm for sociable outdoor play, meeting friends in park spaces in childhood included stories of finding ways to be outside even if they weren't allowed.

> H1:"If we were in groups we could go to the park like Springfield Park or Hackney Downs but only in groups. Because I had two older siblings I was allowed to do those things. The majority of the time I was outside we did get a lot of free time as long as we did our chores we were allowed outside and it was fun."
>
> H2: "I lived in a big block of flats off Wandsworth Road . We spent a lot of time in Larkhall

Park. If I was allowed out I'd change school clothes -schhht- and go out, and if I wasn't allowed out I wouldn't go home first I'd just go straight out."

H3 "There's a lot of parks around my area, I had two older sisters as well We'd say "Oh L... has to go out" and my mum would say "Okay you are allowed to go out if your sister goes as well. " So we'd leave the house together, and then separate kind of thing..I'd go to this park they'd go to the next park."

(Hackney)

One participant in Hackney, whose family had faced specific issue of racism, due to her pale skin tone compared with her parents and siblings, had not been allowed outside at all in the UK. However, she had spent much of her childhood with relatives in the Caribbean, where she had had complete freedom to play outside. Most of the Hackney group described experiences visiting the Caribbean as children and having a great deal of freedom to roam. They had spent a lot of time outside, and been taught by relatives to trap lizards with a grass noose, a trick they had then brought back to the UK to trap native wildlife. While they had clearly enjoyed these activities, parental reactions were negative.

H1: "We used to catch (pigeons) when we were kids. We used to put rope down with bread in the rope."

H2: "...and pull the string innit - That's evil! ha ha" (laughing)

H3: "We did that in Jamaica with lizards, with grass. In Jamaica they'd teach us when you're young, that knot tie thing..."

H1, H2: "Yeah"

H3:"...and we used to catch lizards. I never forget, I took one into my Mum (acting proud)"'Look what I found." My mum screamed, and cause she screamed, I panicked so I dropped it "

(Hackney)

The first speaker, despite this early familiarity with trapping and handling animals growing up, will no longer consider touching or being near them, and expressed an almost phobic dislike of 'nature', which, in the case of urban wildlife, was a view widely shared in the group.

The Clapton group members too had largely played outside unsupervised. Three of the group had had a suburban upbringing, and one had grown up in the country. Only one had made frequent use of a formal park space, which she accessed through her back garden. Two had been to parks occasionally, but spent more time unaccompanied in marginal urban land - large tracts of allotments, building sites, peripheral industrial land, railway access tracks and urban woodlands, arguably similar in character to the Lea Valley around Walthamstow Marshes.

C1: "We used to play on a building site, we'd go out on our bikes, we lived in an area of housing and there was a big field, where they'd started to build houses but they hadn't really finished but it was all muddy and overgrown and there was all scrap stuff there all the time building material. We'd go and do reprobate type stuff, light matches "

C2: "We used to do the same. There was a mill behind where we lived and they used to

> dye synthetic fibre, and there were always these bales of synthetic fibre in their car park on the edge of a field . So we used to use that as a climbing frame."
>
> (Clapton)

Three participants at Clapton talked about being taken for long rural walks by parents. Two had had family dogs that accompanied these lengthy walks.

Though participants in many groups had visited parks freely as children, many felt this type of behaviour was more unsafe now, and did not allow their children similar freedom, though the reasons expressed by participants in different groups were not the same.

> "When I was growing up there wasn't a lot of cars on my Mum's road as much as there are cars now. We were able to play Kingball in the middle of the road on a Sunday and have the road to ourselves and play and be free, and our Mum's could just look out the window. With my little brother I wouldn't even dream of saying to him go out and play with your friends. Its different now."
>
> (Hackney)

> L1: "Our son, this is our fear, my son he wanted to go out the other day riding his bike on the street. He's just turned 12. You can imagine I don't let him out."
>
> L2:"It's not being strict, it's just protecting them." (from theft, attack)
>
> (Leyton)

From the discussions, it seemed that many participants had, taken on the values and behaviours of their parents regarding the use and attraction of park space -most of the Clapton group had been taken for long rural walks by parents and enjoyed being able to re-create a similar experience for their children in the Lea Valley. The Clapton group also evidenced extensive unsupervised play in childhood in UK countryside spaces or urban fringe landscapes that would typically have had low levels of plant maintenance , and it is possible that associations with positive childhood memories also inform a more positive attitude to images less maintained park spaces and former industrial lands with an 'ecological' aesthetic now, irrespective of values acquired in adulthood.

Many participants in Leyton had been encouraged to use parks and open spaces by their parents and spent lots of time in parks and other green spaces with their young families now.

Caribbean participants evidenced a significant role for park spaces in their own childhoods, but they now seemed generally to have less enthusiasm for wildlife, or for parks, as a necessary part of adult life. Their parents had more often been discouraging of interaction with wild animals and less supportive of park use, which seemed to some extent to have been adopted as normative in adulthood by participants the group

Irrespective of ethnicity, the majority of participants provided evidence of a significant role for outdoor space in their own childhood, and without doubt, this informed their perceived importance of park spaces for urban children, including their own.

7.8 Visiting Parks as Individuals, or Groups.

The most typical model for park use evidenced by the participants in all locations was use in small groups of around two to five people, representing small social groups, or family groups with children and one or two adults.

Some participants in all of the groups either had visited, or felt they might in some circumstances, visit a park alone, but in general none of the participants expressed a preference for it. The choice to visit parks alone is, to some extent an issue of what is considered normative culturally, as evidenced below. However fear of some form of unpleasant interaction with other park users, and therefore an individual's perception of their relative power within the social field of their locality was clearly influential in decision making about where or when lone visits to park spaces might be made.

Most users visited (or had visited) parks with their nuclear family, or with their children, and many met up with other families by arrangement or casually in park spaces. The Poplar group, the Hackney group and the Bromley by Bow groups typically met up with several friends and socialised in park space. The Clapton and Leyton group recalled socialising in park spaces in their teens, but generally used the park as a group meeting space only for special events, making most use of park spaces only with close friends and immediate family. Participants in the Leyton and Hackney groups described a longstanding tradition within their families of occasional very large social and family gatherings, with around thirty to fifty people, which would take place in large parks, usually with food and games. The Bromley by Bow and Victoria Park group spoke about attending group picnics in parks, organised by their local community centre or children's schools, but did not self organise these type of gatherings.

Members of the Clapton and Poplar groups, some of whom were engaged in competitive sport, felt comfortable to visit some parks alone, at some times of the day, as part of fitness training. Generally though, if visiting park spaces for relaxation, or for recreation, where possible it was preferred to visit with friends or family. The Leyton group were the most negative about visiting parks alone, and expressed fear of being in such spaces by themselves. Only one participant in Leyton ever visited park spaces alone, because she walked through the park to take her children to and from school. She tried to suggest to others in the group that it could be pleasant, and that there was no real reason to fear being in the local park alone, but her view that lone park visits might be enjoyable was strongly challenged, indicating it was not considered normative.

The Hackney, Bromley by Bow, Leyton and Poplar groups generally found it hard to imagine wanting to go to the park without others, not for fear, but for the lack of sociability.

> ''I wouldn't go alone (for exercise) I don't know, even for relaxing, I might go alone to relax maybe take a sheet to lie on. I wouldn't go alone for jogging I don't know why. I would want company"
> (Bromley by Bow)

> ''I'd feel a bit lonely I want to go with someone. I want to share, and go "Oh look at that!" ."
> (Bromley by Bow)

It was not considered legitimate for men to use parks alone in all circumstances. The Poplar group, (the only male group) and the Hackney group referred to the idea that males who used parks alone would / should be viewed with suspicion, particularly if visiting spaces where children were playing.

> ''I wouldn't feel right going on my own being in a park by myself. I would feel uncomfortable especially if there's lots of little kids around I wouldn't want to be accused of anything''
>
> (others laughing).
>
> (Poplar)

> "We had issues with a guy who is training in the children's park, and he's training. He upset a lot of people because he's training and he's very friendly. He doesn't understand. You don't be friendly with young kids. They were going to hurt him because.. and we had to get the police to get him out of there."
>
> (Hackney)

Suggestions that deviant or immoral behaviour could be associated with unaccompanied visits to traditional urban parks may have some influence in the 30-50 year old male preference for 'country park' style landscapes identified in the park preference survey.

7.9 Social Capital: Sharing Space With 'Others'

The focus groups provided significant evidence of tolerance and acceptance of 'difference' in London's multi ethnic spaces. For example, discussing issues of single gender space, or modest dress in public parks in the UK during hot weather, there was some variation in the extent to which the Islamic women in different groups felt inhibited or embarrassed by other people's 'lack of modesty'. Many of the women in the focus groups were dressed to cover much of their body, in accordance with Islamic custom, and several were veiled outside and in mixed gender settings. There was a great deal of enthusiasm expressed at Leyton for the idea of single gender outdoor spaces where the women might enjoy the sunshine uncovered, or participate in exercise without being very restricted by clothing, as is found in Islamic countries at the beach or in urban parks, or even like the Women's Pond at Hampstead Heath (previously unknown within the group). The lack of such spaces was not represented as a significant barrier to use of open space however, and nor was sunbathing, or drinking in parks by non Muslims, up to a point. Generally all the participants seemed to operate a live and let live policy,

> "we just kind of stick to ourselves and even though there are other people there, they are welcome to do what they want. We do our thing, and nobody is really imposing on anyone else"
>
> (Bromley by Bow)

Participants represented efforts to see others viewpoints, even in the context of what might be seen as antagonistic behaviour, and tried to accommodate them sympathetically

> "I think it's difficult for them as well, I think looking at us. They would find it frustrating - it was hot and I was just walking and a guy just shouted at me "It's summer!" ...They feel frustrated looking at us."
>
> (Leyton)

> ''It's hot day. They wearing the hijab, and a shawl. Some children say, "You want an ice cream?" (everyone laughing) Sometimes it's funny''
>
> (Victoria Park)

Children's gauche comments were felt to be generally harmless, something participants in Victoria Park particularly expected to see change with growing understanding in maturity. However not all issues of difference were as easily managed, and racist/ethnically motivated antagonistic encounters did constrain behaviour, described in section 7.11.

Exploitation of unequal power relations in London's urban spaces were evidenced by all participants, lending far greater support to Massey's representation of generally contested rights to public space (Massey, 2005) than Rogers idyllic vision of a public realm of equality and interaction (Urban Task Force, 2005). These expressions of power in the social field, or relative 'social capital' impacted on participants choice to use or not use particular spaces, especially when alone, or as a lone adult with children.

Fear of attack and the fear of child abduction influenced most women participants movement in park spaces. Parks with poor visibility and high (overgrown) vegetation were generally most avoided. Three Mills Park described by Bromley by Bow participants as highly enjoyable, probably their favourite space, also created some anxiety through its design, because the children's play space was spread out and unfenced in long vegetation, and children could not be seen without being closely followed, which reduced the parents enjoyment of the space, making their use of it a little stressful.

> "It's dangerous in the sense... sometimes you think "Is it safe?". In a sense the kids are exploring. In some ways there's danger "
> (Bromley By Bow)

One of the participants in Leyton described an incident in a local park where she felt her son had been threatened with abduction.

> "I was with my husband, we called (my son). A guy wanted him to go to a secluded sort of place(to show his bike), ...this is in my local park,... and when we challenged, when we called him.. he wanted my son to go with him, and he was going to go! He was going to show his bike. When we went round the corner the guy disappeared, and there was a car there, and he was near the entrance, and that was really frightening. We thought, you know what, well, I might go far (away) where the kids are safer, in open places, rather than (our local park) with secluded places."
> (Leyton)

While fears for children were generalised in all focus groups, South Asian participants spoke of fear for, and constraining effects on behaviour of children for their safety, more than any of the other participants, a finding supported by other studies in the literature review (Livengood & Stodolska, 2004; Wheway & Millward, 1997). Level of fear may be a matter of perception of threat, rather than based on a real level of risk, as has historically been claimed for women's fear of crime outside the home more generally (Marne, 1996 or see discussion in Pain 2001). The accounts here, I argue, indicate that these women's fears were not unfounded, and seemed based on actual incidents involving themselves and their family members, rather than anecdotal accounts or news reports. The level of fear may be indicative of South Asian women and children's relatively low "social capital", or power, in public space, within some ethnically mixed settings or neighbourhoods.

> "My brother is now 14 we got him his first cycle, at the age of 14, out of the fear that someone might take it. He took it out, first week he was ok. Second week someone took it. Someone told him to get off it and he said "No", and there was a threat, so he came home without his bike..[...] It was just near the house. It was just in the neighbourhood. We live in Hackney. It's just an opportunity for someone who can't afford a bike to take one, so again, these sort of marshes, parks, are avoided because of safety."
>
> (Leyton)

For many people in all the groups, in the day time, if the park was busy with other 'safe' users, it was generally felt to be a safe place to visit unaccompanied, or to take children. If there were conflicts with other users who appeared threatening, or morally deviant, then moving further away rather than leaving the park would often be sufficient to manage concerns.

All the female participants, even those who used park spaces alone occasionally, expressed that they would not want to visit parks alone at some times of day, for fear of personal attack.

> "but before it goes dark, the teenagers are hanging round and I've been chased through a park at that time, and I've been chased along the canal at that time... By kids! One was about 11! They had a go at me"
>
> (Clapton)

There was mention made in the Clapton group of a female runner who, when threatened on the towpath, had jumped into the canal to save herself from her assailant, and a 'girl' who had been killed in Victoria Park when jogging. The latter story, from 2003, is mentioned as a significant deterrent to young South Asian women's use of Victoria Park in a PhD on Asian young people in Bethnal Green (Gaskell, 2005) , but there were no other references to that or similar incidents made in any other focus group.

Most people preferred spaces that were overlooked, and close to populated areas, although the participant from the Clapton group who grew up in a rural setting said she felt most comfortable running alone in more remote spaces like the Walthamstow Marshes, and preferred the canal to other spaces.

> " I feel safer on the canal (rather than the park). There's lots of boat people there, loads of dog walkers,... there's not the people on benches type that worry me. There's not the people sitting on benches with a can of beer kind of thing."
>
> (Lower Clapton)

The same marsh and canal spaces were found so frightening by one of the Hackney participants that rather than use the shortest route between her home and places in the area she often visited via the adjacent towpath of the Lea Navigation, she preferred to walk much greater distances up steep roads avoiding the canal and marshes altogether. Fear of the canal towpath was mentioned anecdotally by some participants in Clapton and Victoria Park, allied to a fear of being pushed into the water, but fear of the canal towpath was more generalised in the Hackney group, linking fear of attack with dislike of the marshes as a whole.

> "I walked down the canal one time to meet T... cos she came out Lea Bridge Road. It was the worst thing I ever done..... Now I will walk all the way round. I'm scared someone's going to just walk past and just push me into the water."
>
> (Hackney)

> "It's so spacious, you just feel like you don't know where they could come from. It's a big area, and no one watching."
>
> (Hackney)

These diametrically different views of the same geographical space lend credence to theories of space put forward by Massey and Lefebvre who recognise in their formulations the importance of personal and cultural belief in understanding space. Space experienced is more than just its physical or visual manifestation. The same place has multiple meanings, and is interpreted in different ways by people who occupy it at the same time. (Massey, 2005; Lefebvre, 1991[1974])

Fears of entering park spaces alone were not reflected in fears of movement alone in the wider urban fabric. Most participants said they felt safe to move around alone in their neighbourhoods, and in London generally in daylight, and had no specific fears of other neighbourhoods they could identify in particular, though some did express disliking specific areas that they had visited or had lived in, in the course of other discussion (see 7.11) . Members of the Poplar group felt they would probably not visit Brixton, and members of the Leyton group expressed concerns over visiting Hackney, reflecting perhaps some low level anxiety of areas known to have higher populations with an African Caribbean background, and the longstanding stereotyping and prejudices in British representations of these communities (see for example, discussion in Alexander, 2008:13-14).

Unknown men generally presented a threat, and were perceived to have greatest power in the social field. The presence of men drinking, groups of men, or predominantly male teenage 'gangs', irrespective of ethnicity were felt to be physically threatening. The Clapton group and the Victoria Park group described feeling unsafe near men drinking in public parks, and would avoid or leave spaces where this happened.

> "In last couple years, Eastern Europeans come. They have a lot of drugs, they carry a lot of alcohol. So many people they carry alcohol and they sit in the park. You can't sit down with the kids. Everybody they drink, so big age. Not feel safe. Have to go home always (disapproving tongue click noise.) Go straight."
>
> (Victoria Park)

A fear of 'gangs' claimed to be present in several local parks was expressed by the Leyton group, and groups who might be understood as gangs were described in general terms, but not specifically at Poplar.

> In some areas, especially if you see a lot of boys and they're hooded up, in their twenties thirties, you start to get a bit concerned. They might not be doing anything wrong, but it's just the fact that the intimidation factor is there. If you saw a bunch of hooded boys thirties twenties, instinct, its natural, to just go the other way and that's how a lot of people's mind work. I wouldn't necessarily be afraid, but it's just general, general. Generally speaking a lot of people would just go the other way, but me personally I feel comfortable going a lot of places.
>
> (Poplar)

> L1"It makes me uncomfortable as well, if I'm taking my kids, like the other day, when I was taking my kids to the local park the other day and there's youths there... "
> L2"Yeah, yeah."
>
> L1 "...then you're put off. "
>
> L3 "Threatened."
>
> L1 "I just came back that day."
>
> (Leyton)

The Hackney group evidenced a more confrontational approach to groups who considered themselves 'gangs' .

> H1: "Two years ago when I was younger I wouldn't go Balham, but now I go anywhere .... I didn't want to go to Balham, not 'cause I thought someone was going to go for me, but in case someone would quiz "Where you from?" I don't want to put myself in that situation. Now I say "London!"
> H2: " "What's your post code ?"(with scorn) You don't own anything!"
>
> H3: "That's what I say! " When you die, look at Holly Street. The government just mash it up and name it something else, then what you been fighting for?" "
>
> H2: "Until you pay council tax, you don't tell me nothing."
>
> (Hackney)

This confidence points to acceptability, (at least within the focus group if not actually evidenced beyond it), of assertive female behaviour, and some expectation amongst participants that women would and could contest rights to space for themselves, that threats were exaggerated, rights to power unsubstantiated, and capable of challenge.

This representation of relative power in the field of social relations is perhaps founded in some familiarity with the people in their locality who were staking territorial claims, or perhaps it grew from some confidence in the possibility of obtaining neighbourhood support should any confrontation arise, as many participants in the Hackney group evidenced longstanding links with their residential neighbourhoods and exchanges hinted at extensive social networks.

It was not however replicated in the Leyton group, although the majority of participants there had also been resident in their local area for many years. Only one other group's participants felt sufficiently empowered that they might occasionally individually contest unacceptable behaviour by others in parks - the Clapton group- though the confrontations they represented, over unauthorised use of pre-booked tennis courts for example, were not generally advanced with those who seemed likely to respond with violence.

Participants in Leyton, Bromley by Bow and Victoria Park made many representations of interactions in park space that were generally characterised by powerlessness to influence any others, not just those who threatened violent or unpredictable behaviours. This was particularly true in relation to dogs.

> You can't say to them "I'm afraid this is a dog free.., you're supposed to have a leash.'' They're gonna say "Yeah right." They're gonna say "On your bike woman!"
> (Leyton)

7.10 Social Capital: Dogs and Incivility in East London's Urban Parks.

Every group had at least some participants who had problems with the numbers of dogs in the larger parks and green spaces they used, and several had changed behaviour to avoid spaces that they found most problematic. More than half of all participants in the focus groups represented some negative attitudes towards dogs in park space. Even those who stated they liked dogs, and had personally owned dogs, were sympathetic to the concerns of others in their group who did not, and raised issues of the lack of control of dogs in local parks.

The focus group findings indicate there are likely to be significant numbers in the Olympic Park catchment of all ethnicities who feel more control of dogs in East London's parks is warranted.

Participants in Leyton described frequently going several miles across London to Regents Park in preference to nearby large parks, and not just on the occasions when they planned to be with 'big family'. They enjoyed the space behind the mosque there, which as I later discovered, is a large designated dog free area. The designation was not known to the group. They reported going there both as there are less dogs, and because of a more "international" feeling, which I understood from other discussion to mean more tolerant of Islamic people, less territorialised, and less unpredictable in the likely exchanges that might take place there between users. The group described growing problems with free running dogs and dog faeces in the country parks they used locally. A recent tendency to remove dog proof railings from play areas in smaller local

parks in Waltham Forest was also noted negatively by the Leyton group, who felt such action was removing a last bastion of safety in their local green space.

This may seem a small point, but is worth noting. Unfenced play areas have been promoted widely across the UK's local authorities as part of the 'natural play' 'best practice guidance' in official Government / Big Lottery design advice, for example through the Play England Play Design Guide (see case study of Altab-Ali Park, Bethnal Green (Shackell, et al., 2008: 64)).

Of the large parks accessible to participants, Victoria Park, that has been identified in Heritage Lottery Fund user counts as a disproportionately 'white' park space, was most frequently cited as being dominated by inconsiderate dog owners.

> "I hate Victoria Park. It is possibly the worst park for me. There are so many dogs in Victoria Park. If you go there, there are dogs and they aren't on leads. They're just running round. I can't handle it. It's my worst nightmare. It's going to hell for me. Victoria Park is like going to hell!"
>
> (Bromley by Bow)

> "We went to Victoria Park with big family, twenty plus. We were all playing a game - donkey- obviously throwing this ball around, about 10 of us. Then these dogs, these dogs, the woman... the leash is off them. They come running towards us, ' cause we've got the ball, and there's small children, and everyone's just screaming hysterically and running. So the dog's thinking "Ok, this is a game now". So they're running after us, and everyone is screaming, and then my sister, she fell over, and the dog jumped on her and started licking her. But then that's not right, because you need to respect other people! You know fair enough, your dogs running there, but you can't just allow your dog...."
>
> (Leyton)

For many Islamic people, as participants at the Victoria Park group went on to explain, dogs are unclean, and being touched by their mouthparts requires those who are touched to wash seven times, including clothing, before they are clean for prayers, which are required five times each day. The amount of work entailed through this type of contact with dogs, irrespective of any feeling of liking or dislike of the animals themselves, would therefore be a significant motivator to avoid physical contact.

Many incidents described in the focus groups portrayed a kind of unintentional misunderstanding on the part of dog owners, who fail to see any real need to manage their dogs, or keep them away from others, imagining the only issue of note is the fear of being bitten by a dog that is unfriendly. Dog owners generally, it seems from these accounts, do not recognise other people's right to enjoy a park space without interaction with dogs.

> "I know everyone says "It's alright, he's friendly." Yeah but I'm not friendly with it, and the children are scared! Hollow Ponds , there's just too many dogs. They're not even on any leads, they just let them loose!"
>
> (Leyton)

It was clear from some representations though, that not all incidents with dogs were seen as a result of misunderstanding. Fearful reactions were treated by some dog owners with contempt, and understood by participants as an opportunity taken by them to victimise Islamic people and exert spatial and social dominance.

> "Oh I hate dogs, I'm sorry. I don't know if you are a dog lover, but I don't like dogs, especially when they let it go, and they see you are afraid, or the children are afraid. Especially our religion, dogs are not allowed to touch us. Sometimes they let it go. Some owners are really good and they apologise if the dog touch you. Some, as soon as they see the fear in your eyes they just let it go! A dog attacked me in Meath Gardens. It just grabbed me on the back when I was pushing my daughter on the swing, and the owner, she is on the phone, she just says (quietly and disinterestedly) 'Get off, get off', and it had me round there, (holding hands to the back of her neck) and two of my children, they just run away, and they are screaming, and the one I was swinging, was screaming and crying, and the woman, she wouldn't even get off the phone! I just couldn't believe it."
>
> (Victoria Park)

The disjunction between these lived experiences of chaos, fear and oppression in park space, and the restorative serene green spaces idealised by many Islamic participants in earlier discussion is stark, and distressing.

There were many such anecdotes, followed by supportive comments or further similar accounts in the majority of the focus groups. It is clear, both from the extracts of discussion here, and in the 'elite' interviews that a positive view of dog ownership, and of dog owners rights to almost total freedom of park space is considered normative in London parks. Dog owners / dog lovers then have greater power or 'social capital' than those who are threatened by their uncontrolled presence, and consequently dogs could be argued to have far greater rights to the majority of park space than some people. Many people are deterred from making more use of parks because they do not wish to interact with, dislike, or fear dogs, and many of those people are from religious or ethnic minorities. This dynamic has been reported time and again in social research, (CABE Space, 2010; Bell, 2005; Morris, 2003; DTLR, 2002; Dunnett, et al., 2002; Madge, 1997). That is paid so little regard, particularly in multicultural London contexts should be challenged.

7.11 Social Capital: Cultural Conflicts, and Everyday Racism

The Hackney group, Clapton group and Poplar group described some constraint on their behaviour and on movement due to fear of victimisation or violence, again supporting the assertion of Massey and others of the role of unequal power relations in determining access urban space. As discussed above, the threat represented in discussions was not specifically racialised or ethnically based in these groups accounts.

However the participating Islamic women described both ethnically and racially motivated exchanges, some of which are included above, that might be termed 'everyday racism', and might

be expected to have a similar controlling intention/ effect on the targeted people's movement as incidents of 'everyday sexism': small acts of harassment or disapproval incidental to daily life, repeated frequently and acting as a reminder of threats of significant victimisation or violence (Butler 1993, Bell et al 1994, Marne 1996). These incidents were represented in some instances as being typical of particular London neighbourhoods, where participants had felt themselves to be, or were told they were, an ethnic minority.

> "In front of my house is by a park, when I sit in my living room, I can see it out of the window. I say to my children ''Go to the park and play'' but sometime they go, and other children, the Bengali children say to my children, ''Where are you come from?''. They say ''Shandy Park''. They say ''Shandy Park is Bengali park'', and I ask why they come home they say '' The children say ''This is our park'' "..... I was in Roman Road. I moved 6 years ago in Stepney Green. So many Bengali there, and the children wouldn't go alone. Always we try. The children they are not happy alone. Is the group, the majority, they live there. Sometime when I was busy and I can't take them, I say okay stay home."
>
> (Victoria Park)

They were also represented as more typical, or generalised, in the less racially/ethnically mixed spaces outside London, a factor that has been identified as a deterring people from ethnic minority backgrounds from visiting the countryside (see discussion in Bell 2005) . The participants sought relative safety in what they considered more mixed multicultural London settings.

> BB1: "I'm going to sound bad saying this, but I don't mean anything by it. I'd rather go to a park where its more multicultural. When I used to live in Poplar, there was quite a few parks round, but I didn't go there, 'cause it was on the estate and there weren't any Asians. .... I think that's what it is for me. I go anywhere and anywhere, just people hating Muslims."
>
> BB2:"You can't go to Essex, we used to live over the Essex side. Oh My God!"
>
> (Bromley By Bow)
>
> "Outside London in the countryside, we went somewhere,... seaside, ...a little village. Group of Somalian ladies. We got off the bus. When we walking the road, everyone stares. They never seen so many black people at one time. We say "Oh, why they looking at us?" We laughing and laughing, '' What are they looking at?'' Not children they were adults! After 10 minutes we saw one Somali boy, black colour. We say ''How you live here?'' he say ''Everyone here know me!" "
>
> (Victoria Park)

However even in multicultural London environments, xenophobic incidents were routinely tolerated in public space, patterns of behaviour participants felt were encouraged by the media.

> VP1: "One day when we go to school, there is a lady she cover her face , and a young girl, a white girl, she looking at the lady, looking at the lady... and the lady say "What you looking at?", and she say " I scared of you". She is not children, she is 17! She can see only

the eyes. ''I am scared of you''. She say ''Scared of what''. Some people they shake their heads."

VP2: "They get that from the news isn't it. She might be a terrorist, because she is a Muslim, she might be carrying a bomb! A lot of people who think like this."

VP3 :"I have a friend who is Rumanian. She is white, she has converted. People saying "Can't believe it, look!", especially after she put the Niquab (*veil)* on. All the people say "They are forcing her." Nobody force us, believe me!"

(Victoria Park)

"..(*They say*) ''Hmm ;look how many kids she got. She doing it for the benefit!''. It annoys me so much. My husband works, we don't get any benefit. One guy I saw him counting the children "1,2,3,4". so I said ''There's 10 more at home you know!" I used to get so upset go home and cry, but then you get used to it"

(Victoria Park)

7.12 Discussion: Focus Group Findings

The focus groups provided a very enjoyable, sometimes surprising, rich, and informative method of exploring peoples' experience of, and preference for park space, with a particularity for this part of London that projections made from studies elsewhere could not impart. Ordinary local people, given freedom to discuss and converse with each other around subject prompts, were very able to articulate with vitality, energy, humour, and intelligence aspects of park design they would enjoy, stylistically and functionally, and elements, or spatial behaviour they found difficult. They contested ideologies of the city and the country, and perceptions of nature. They were literate in aesthetic distinctions, for example articulating perceived differences between romantic and other forms of landscape beauty, or identifying and grouping North American landscape designs within images of other contemporary landscape styles. The participants willingness to engage, their breadth of experience, and knowledge of place sits in contrast to the to the reported opinions expressed by professionals engaged with park production, who found little information of real value in their consultation exercises that might influence park designers (see Chapters 4, and 9).

The focus groups were not internally uniform in terms of age or level of education, some were not uniform in ethnicity, but they were intentionally single gender, and the participants in each group were mostly known to each other, which generated good rapport, and room for confident friendly disagreement. Within the groups there were individual differences, but the dynamics of discussion indicated that some participants views chimed with the group 'norms', as they were generally approved, and supported by other group members, and some individual variations were deemed unconventional. These were put forward timidly or ironically, and were subject to challenge or ridicule by the majority of the group. In this formulation, individuals are not seen as being bound to a particular view, however acceptable positions are anchored to a norm, within a

range of deviation that is constantly being remade or challenged in group discussion. Within the Bourdieusian frame I have used for my analysis, the group dynamic illustrates ongoing processes of social reproduction, influencing the formation of the habitus consciously and sub-consciously adopted by any who wish to belong to or set themselves apart from the group, and establishing the value of cultural capital within the particular group setting at that moment in time and place.

Whether the norms evidenced are specific only to the particular focus group itself, or indicative of wider ethnic group norms in the park catchment or beyond cannot be established from a single group's data alone, but connections between representations made according to self claimed ethnic identity between different focus groups, and findings from the park preference survey, combined with research in the literature review indicates that at least some of the conventions that were articulated by debate in each group may well be examples of wider cultural group norms.

7.13 Summarising Group Expressed 'Normative" Values

In three focus groups, participants claimed to not like nature or the outdoors. One was challenged (in Leyton), two were not. (in Hackney and Poplar). These statements in themselves call into question studies that claim, or have been understood to claim, that a preference for natural landscapes, or green spaces. without further definition, is a universal, innate evolutionary human characteristic. Combined with representations of extreme fear and stress associated with some urban green spaces, the accounts presented in these focus groups challenge research assertions that nature and green space is a universal restorative (Gobster, et al., 2007; Van Den Berg; et al, 2007, Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Appleton 1975, Kaplan, et al., 1972) and suggest further research in restorative effects for greenspace across a range of ethnicities, and in particular social contexts may be required.

7.13.1 Represented Values of British Bangladeshi Participants

The British Bangladeshi participant in Leyton described how her mother had not enjoyed being outside, and her childhood as a consequence had not involved much outdoor activity, but in adulthood, she herself had come to love being in her garden. She associated restorative feelings with being in controlled green outdoor spaces, and associated green vegetation colour with 'freshness', a positive quality. However she wanted a very controlled space, and particularly disliked insects. She expressed ongoing concern for safety of young siblings and children in her family, who were not allowed to play unsupervised in outdoor spaces. She was highly expressive in her dislike for the Meadow/Wasteland landscape and Richmond Park images. These 'nature' spaces were associated for her with increased stress and anxiety. She was ridiculed for her preference for highly controlled 'artificial' landscapes, but would not be persuaded, and remained adamant.

British Bangladeshi participants in Poplar were similarly appalled by the image termed Meadow /Wasteland , and found beauty in places that could be described as 'man -made' - highly maintained, luxury landscapes, or in modern architecture. Though one claimed to not like the outdoors, other representations indicate he was perhaps referring to 'the great outdoors' meaning wild or rural settings outside London, rather than simply a dislike for being outside. He represented restorative aspects of green park spaces within the context of urban life, and parks as social spaces in the home neighbourhood. A good place to meet friends, and for children to let off steam beyond the confined spaces of home. In Poplar too, parents reaction to use of outdoor urban spaces was represented as somewhat fearful, and one participant recalled being very frightened of other people as a child when visiting a crowded theme park. Within the group, it was typical to have been very constrained in terms of access to outdoor spaces for protection against an unspecified threat.

In the Bromley-By-Bow Group, British Bangladeshi participants cited exotic landscapes like Miami Beach, or Turkish coastal resorts as beautiful places, as were the lush green landscapes of rural Bangladesh, though this beauty of place was in association with social factors - the warmth of the people, plenty to do. Freshness to be found in green spaces was frequently mentioned as something sought in park space by the group. Unlike the British Pakistani participants, British Bangladeshi participants did not have any tradition of self organised extended family outings to large parks, and generally talked about far fewer park spaces known to them than the other participants, perhaps indicating less awareness than other groups of space beyond the home neighbourhood. PhD research into reducing childhood obesity through increased physical activity also found that British Bangladeshi's in London's East End typically did not travel far, or allow their children to travel far to visit park space (Foster, 2008).

The values, spatial practices described, experiences and perception of parks and landscape spaces among British Bangladeshi participants across three separate focus groups, when allied with the findings of the park preference survey, indicate that there is a culturally distinctive norm for this ethnic group, at least within the area around the Olympic Park. Referring again to discussion of known European discourses of nature, countryside and city, British Bangladeshi participants ontologies regarding city and country as revealed in the discussion are hard to categorise. Neither overtly 'pro city' or 'pro country' in aesthetic or social terms, arguably they do not prioritise or decontextualise landscape aesthetics. Participants seemed to generally fear what might happen in urban public spaces including parks more than other groups which might chime with 'anti - city' views, particularly if viewed alongside positive representations of Bangladeshi countryside, however participants referenced highly artificial landscapes as an ideal of beauty, in preference to idealising the rural landscape images. Participants found restorative value in green 'fresh' vegetation, and sought safe outdoor space for this purpose and for children's play. The group's outlook might reasonably be termed 'anthropocentric', fitting best with a view that nature is beautiful when improved by man, and wild nature is not always desirable or attractive.

The 'Community Green' study (CABE Space, 2010) discussed in the literature review found that most Bangladeshi's they interviewed, also in East London, perceived one local park to be of low quality, when the same park was assessed by a 'multi ethnic' assessment group to be of very high quality at least indicating some differentiation in park quality assessment. Quality used by

study authors included high biodiversity, which as discussed was not part of a normative view within these focus groups, though it is not necessarily biodiversity that was the issue here. As discussed previously, the park preference survey indicates that issues with use of Victoria Park are unlikely to be aesthetic.

Whether there are generalisable preferences or practices, or similarities in attitudes to landscape, parks and nature in Bangladeshi heritage people in other areas would require further investigation. The findings here across the focus groups are theoretically consistent with other studies that have identified British Bangladeshi/Bangladeshi heritage participants as least likely to visit parks frequently or travel to distant parks (CABE Space, 2010; Foster, 2008).

7.13.2 British Pakistani Participants

British Pakistani and participants at Leyton and Bromley By Bow, in contrast to British Bangladeshi participants made reference to many visits to National Parks in the UK, had wide knowledge of London parks, made use of local country parks for family cycling outings, and self organised 'big family' days meeting extended family groups of up to fifty people in parks. They reported having 'lived' in the park as children, and had been positively encouraged in outdoor recreation activities by their parents. They seemed to share an ontology of rural landscape as spectacle and leisure resource with white British participants, and represented similar landscape types in recollecting beautiful places, though with a caveat that their expressed preferences tended towards more mediated experiences, with a higher degree of human intervention and control, a clean landscape, and perhaps a more pastoral vision, as opposed to the more sublime 'wild' landscape ideals, and higher tolerance for pollution expressed by the Clapton group. They found restorative value in parks and rural spaces. They also valued serenity that could be found in certain highly controlled cloister or lakeside landscapes such as at the Alhambra Palace, at Mosques in Brunei or Casablanca, and felt there was a kind of spiritually uplifting quality to these spaces, though this was not something they had found in spaces in the UK.

This could be described as a normative value tending towards an ecocentric or Romantic position, however there was also a strong 'pro - civilisation' discourse, favouring calmness and tranquility over the wilder sublime, and enjoying urban sociability in (some) park spaces.

Although the views expressed were consistent across focus groups, and indicative of a different normative ontological position to other ethnic groups in the study area, and the Community Green study found British Pakistanis far more frequent park users than British Bangladeshi participants in their survey (CABE Space, 2010), this finding is worthy of further investigation with larger sample sizes across a different demographic profile. I have found less research into British Pakistani groups with which to compare findings, and there were some other factors within this study that could prove influential. Most of the British Pakistani/ Pakistani participants could be described as 'middle class', evidencing uniformly higher economic capital than almost all other groups, although only half were university educated. In addition, while the most popular selection from the questionnaires for this ethnic group was the image of Brownian

pastoral landscape, which is consistent with the findings of the focus group discussion above, the sample size for British Pakistani participants was not large. In total, only 22 questionnaires were returned by people claiming a British Pakistani ethnicity, and there were some reprographic inconsistencies in the questionnaires returned. Some had been produced by a voluntary group supporting the research, and the meadow image and Richmond Park image were very dark in 8 returns. In the focus group, further images of park typologies were provided for discussion, and landscapes with long grass and more natural plant forms , including the image of Richmond Park were preferred to the Brownian image, which though it was still among the most popular selections, was questioned in the focus group for its 'fake' green grass. The Meadow /Wasteland image with its rusted metal artwork however was still not widely chosen.

7.13.3 Are There British Asian Values?

There was notable consistency between the views of British Pakistani participants several miles apart, and strong contrast between their views and those of British Bangladeshi participants. Representations within ethnically mixed focus groups could have provided an Asian group 'norm', had views of British Pakistani participants not been divergent or so strongly held, and vice versa. Irrespective of limited evidence presented here, studies which seek, or claim a common British Asian viewpoint in spatial preferences or practices are called into question by these findings (CABE Space, 2010). The findings in this study also indicate that where park policy decisions are being based on consultation exercises, grouping together results from 'British Asians' in a single category, and assuming adequate representation of views from people of different Asian ethnicities is potentially highly problematic.

Where there was common ground however was in the frequently expressed fear for children's safety and in more frequent expressions of powerlessness than other groups.

7.13.4 British Somalian Participants

White British participants, British Somalian participants and British Caribbean participants participated in single ethnicity focus groups. Triangulation between focus groups was not possible, though for British Caribbean and white British groups, there was evidence from the questionnaire survey with which to draw some inferences.

Somalian British participants however did not identifiably complete many park preference questionnaires, and so there is only evidence from the focus group from which to draw any inferences of normative cultural values for this group. As they were all attending the same community group, it may be that they shared other commonalities beyond their shared nationality that may have influenced their represented 'norms', and so the findings here should not be regarded as generalisable without further investigation

Participants tended towards a 'pro city' ontology. They generally represented natural spaces

and countryside as beautiful, but did not see the country as a leisure resource per se. The ontological positions of ecocentricity or anthropocentrism do not feel a 'good fit ' with this group, who seemed accepting and appreciative of landscapes fitting either position. They did not demonstrate any preference for nature over man-made space, again challenging claims of universal preference. They enjoyed city life, and found beauty in the city, its landscapes and attractions, though they evidenced less economic resources than other groups, and less freedom to travel independently. They sought and enjoyed restorative visits to sociable urban green spaces, often for children's play, but also for themselves. Ideally this was where there was some level of control over behaviour other park users, who in their experience could be very unpleasant. In identifying from images which parks they felt they would visit most if they were all in a 10 minute walk of home, there was a tendency to prefer images of more horticultural rather than ecological landscapes, reflecting perhaps their expressed desire for 'garden' like spaces as part of daily life. However they were not adamantly 'against' the more ecological or picturesque spaces as British Bangladeshi or British Caribbean participants were. They felt they would like to visit Richmond Park, which reminded them of the countryside in Somalia. They visited the canal locally, and were tolerant of dirtier urban spaces.

7.13.5 Evidence of Islamic values?

As British Pakistani, British Somali and British Bangladeshi participants in the focus groups and in the East London area are majority Islamic, previous studies that sought to identify or formulate a single landscape preference based on a conception of a unified Islamic ontology of landscape and nature, city and country, should also be called into question (Buijs, et al., 2009; Tips & Savasdisara, 1986) . The one common issue across all the Islamic groups however, was stress caused by being forced to share the vast majority of local park spaces with uncontrolled dogs.

7.13.6 White British Participants

The white British group expressed some pro-city ontological positions, and found Victoria Park generally more appealing for family use than areas of Walthamstow Marshes, which they vistied more without children. However in common with the Islamic women participants, they also expressed negative views about the presence of threatening others, particularly men who were drinking, and shared with the British South Asian participants concerns over groups of teenagers in many urban public spaces.

Their park preferences indicated by their image selections, chiming with the questionnaire survey, tended to be expansive picturesque and ecological landscapes. In discussion they clearly valued leisure 'escapes' to romantic, expansive landscapes, with few people, where they could enjoy communing with wild nature. Overall, the group acknowledged a normative position indicating the most 'ecocentric' or generally 'Romantic' landscape ontology, and a taste for the sublime, however in practice they also made great use of and enjoyed traditional urban parks.

They spoke with wide knowledge of available parks and open spaces in London, and had visited the North Park at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, but found it difficult to get to, and of limited appeal for their children in comparison to the formal play offer of Victoria Park, or the wilder, naturally overgrown former industrial spaces in Walthamstow Marshes.

This group generally had few problems with dogs, though there was discussion of fear of attack from some dog breeds, and general dislike of dog fouling in natural areas.

7.13.7 British Caribbean Participants

British Caribbean participants in the focus groups clearly demonstrated a normative pro-city ontology with a high degree of anthropocentrism, and a preference for urban landscapes that appeared to support activity and sociability. It was normal to vehemently dislike 'wild' spaces like the Lea Valley, for their isolation, and presence of native wildlife, to dismiss such spaces as offering little to do, and have limited regard for rural landscapes in the UK. This groups preferences again challenge claims of universal appeal of natural environments, or the objectivity of biodiversity as a measure of park quality.

They were also the only group who asserted they found little or no restorative value in visiting green space, just to 'be in nature', at least in a UK context. Even in spectacular and exotic landscapes, mediated experiences were preferred. University education may have influenced tastes in this group to enjoy a 'pastoral' aesthetic in addition to urban contexts, supported by evidence of a similar trend within the park preference survey data, but the most highly educated group members also evidenced a pro- city ontology, valuing civilisation and the relative luxury it offered rather than romanticising rural spaces and ways of life.

The normative preference for parks within this focus group was for activated space supporting sociable exchanges, or opportunity to participate in identified activity. Dogs were disliked by some participants, particularly for fouling. Getting dirty outside in general was represented as problematic. The intriguing popularity of the geometric garden with British Caribbean participants in the landscape preference survey (most popular selection equal with St James' Park) is perhaps explained by a participant's suggestion in the focus groups that it was a maze, a programmed space offering opportunities for chasing games. This feature, implying other activated spaces, was perhaps significant, rather than the high level of control of plant forms that had appealed to British Bangladeshi participants. Again, this finding evidences Lefebvre and Massey's assertion that space is not objectively observed. It is more than its physical composition. Different people will make different readings of the same spatial configurations and visual information.

7.14 Conclusions

The focus groups here provide further evidence in support of the park image preference questionnaire, and a body of empirical findings described in the literature review, that preferences for landscapes and nature are neither universal, or completely idiosyncratic. Different discourses of nature and city appear to underpin different 'legitimate' tastes within the groups. Ethnicity has very strong associations with values that inform park preference in terms of configuration, style, management and spatial practices. These values are almost certainly learned, though this is not to say they are so flexible as to be easily altered to align with white British graduates 'legitimate tastes'.

All participants used and liked parks, but they did not find the same things valuable and perceived identical spaces differently. The park preference survey found the most consistently preferred image across all the different analyses is that of St James's Park, stylistically representing a Victorian park with some 'gardenesque' styling. The 'traditional' London Park like St James's Park offers a variety of spaces, activated programmed space, and unprogrammed lawns, some sociable seating on main movement routes, facilities, play spaces and other attractions, and in the Royal Parks, which are well and visibly staffed, including by dedicated Parks police, there are controls operating over presence of dogs and acceptable types of behaviour. This lends an assurance to some less socially powerful groups that they will have rights to use space without unchallenged interference by others. It is likely that knowledge of such spaces informed selection. However the image itself was selected from several other available views for its specific content. That particular image contains an ornamental fountain in a naturalistic pond, fences indicating control, and a wide well maintained litter free lawn space in the foreground that is likely to extend beyond the picture space providing some freedom. There are clean surfaced paths, and places to sit off the grass. The image shows a place balancing evident human intervention and naturalistic, though somewhat ornamental vegetation. It is a city space that is urban, but reflects an idealised countryside. From the focus group evidence and discussion, it is likely that different people found different qualities appealing in the same image, that multiple meanings are projected onto this representation of a single physical space, informed by different personal and culturally based ontologies, supporting a Lefebvrian view of constructed meanings in 'spaces of representation'.

Doreen Massey's assertion that the rights to public space are socially regulated and competitive is borne out by the focus group discussions (Massey, 2005). In general, while all participants were constrained to some extent by fear of physical oppression, and none of those interviewed expressed the complete freedom of movement that might be associated with a place at the top of the hierarchy of power in the field of urban park space, examples of symbolic violence, and actual incidents of oppression meted out by strangers were most frequently represented by Islamic women participants. They represented themselves most often as powerless in the face of this behaviour, a belief perhaps exacerbated, or simply evidenced, by an awareness that these views are supported by institutions. Local authorities and park managers, sanction, or fail to manage, space dominated by dogs. The media are accused (with some justification) of fuelling Islamophobic attitudes.

In the next section, the spaces of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park as built by Summer 2014 and to some extent as planned for the next twenty years will be reviewed, and some conclusions then drawn about the extent to which values expressed within the existing residential community in the park's catchment might have been accommodated or found concrete expression.

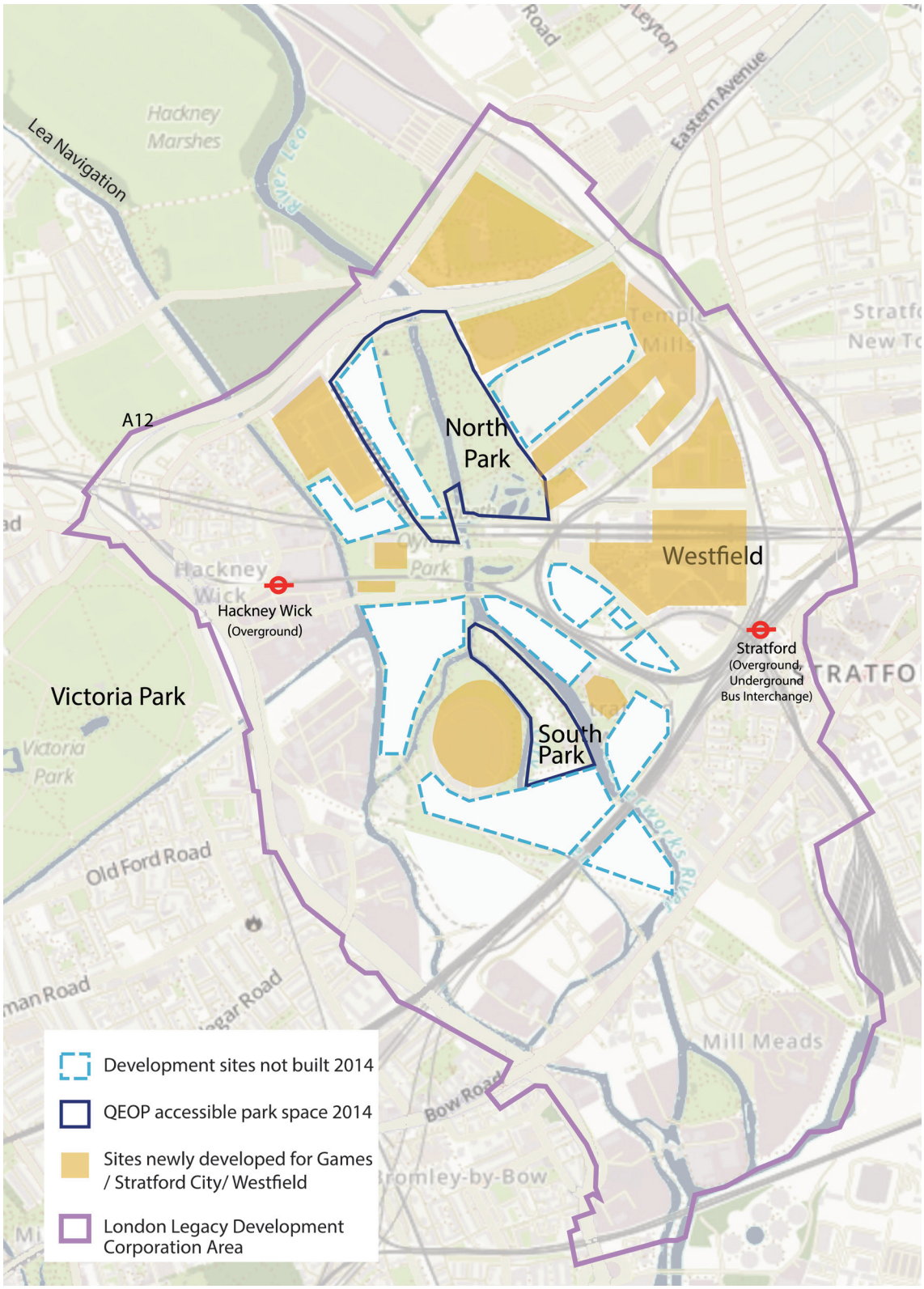


Fig 8.1 The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and Legacy Vision for 2030 (Development sites and retained buildings from Hartman 2012, map © OpenStreetMap contributors)

8.0 Spatial Analysis

8.1 Introduction

In 2005, the site of the London Olympics was largely unbuilt land in its northern and eastern edges (the area immediately south of the A12, and the land around the Channel Tunnel rail line). A north south strip of industrial buildings followed the western bank of the Lee river through to the Greenway in the south, reaching the eastern edge of the Lea Navigation just south of Arena Field (Fig 8.2). The area could be characterised as a patchwork of islands ,with primarily urban periphery land uses and naturalised vegetation:- railway sidings, vacant lots, land fill, industrial buildings and storage yards, travellers sites, allotments, 'commons' and the Eastway cycle circuit. These islands were edged by a complex, difficult to navigate, pattern of waterways, railways and major roads.

Now, all along the Lea Navigation to the west of the Olympic site, and to its east, from the A12 to Stratford are new buildings, or sites planned for buildings (Fig 8.1) The pattern of islands is still present., though it has been modified in places, and overlaid with grid pattern development and some legible cross routes, particularly to the east of the Lea/Lee River. The publicly accessible green park spaces of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park form a relatively narrow strip from north

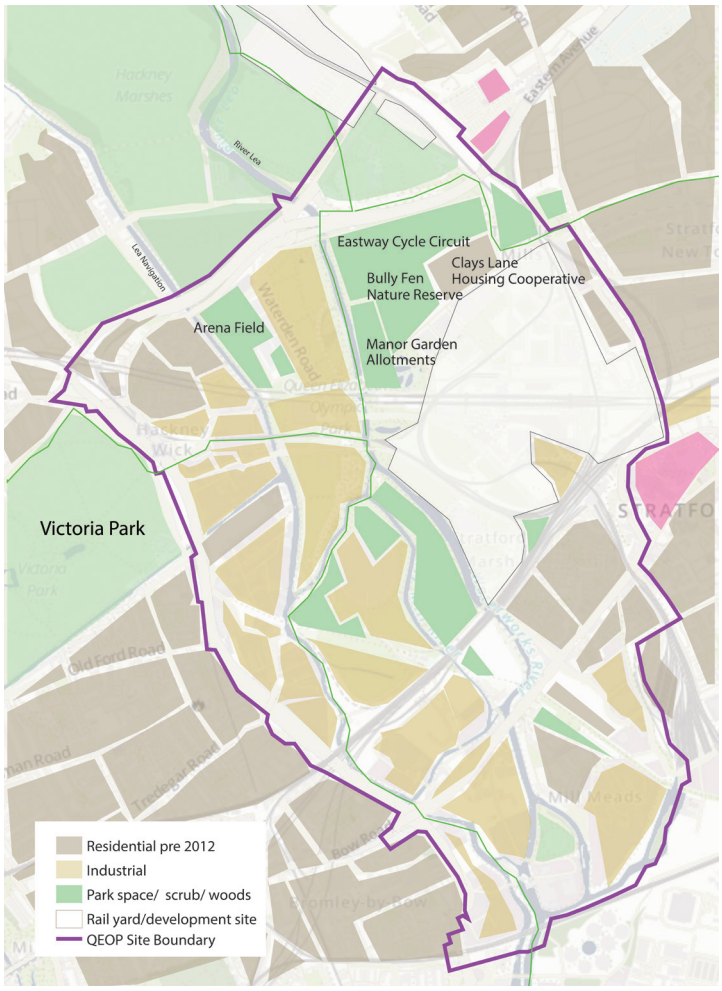


Fig 8.2 The London 2012 Olympic Site in 2000 (from Hartman 2012, map © OpenStreetMap contributors)

Fig 8.3 View of Infrastructure from the Bridge Connecting North and South Park

to south along the River Lee corridor. Although plan views seem to show a continuous green 'park', between the North and South Park, publicly accessible space is reduced to a bridge high above rail lands where London Overground and Channel Tunnel lines meet, and where a new four lane road connects Westfield and Hackney Wick (see Figs 8.3, 8.7)

8.2 Edges

'Edges' as defined in this spatial analysis, are extensive, continuous features in the urban landscape that limit cross movement, in accordance with use of the term by Kevin Lynch in his 'Image of the City'. Edges surrounding and crossing the 2012 Olympic site are mapped in Fig 8.4. Edges formed of continuous infrastructure have been found to define the perimeter of neighbourhoods in people's mental maps through empirical research. Beyond the edge is outside the neighbourhood, beyond the area of 'belonging' (Lynch, 1960). The pre Games structure of the urban edges between residential areas, and the new park spaces in the Lea Valley remains largely unchallenged by either Olympic or Legacy developments, arguably putting the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park outside most local people's imagined neighbourhood.

Major multi lane roads like the A12 present a psychological as well as physical barrier , due to the continuous noise of high speed vehicles (Ouis, 2001). The A12 passes to the north and west of the 2012 site, with very few crossing points for vehicles or pedestrians, creating extreme severance between the adjacent longstanding residential areas, and the Lea Valley (London Borough of Tower Hamlets, 2012). Rail corridors are also a physical barrier and visual barrier, but generate only intermittent noise. Overground railways cross the site from east to west and along the southern boundary, presenting physical barriers to movement along much of their length, even where elevated on viaducts. River and canal corridors present physical, but not visual barriers, associated with low vehicle speed for boats and cyclists, and tranquillity rather than noise, however possible crossings are infrequent.

The presence of these continuous barriers limits the number of direct and legible routes that can cross, and / or enter the new park. It reduces the physical area of city that is within 20 minutes walking distance, the journey time found to be the physical limit of frequent journeys on foot. Even within a 20 minute walk, possible routes are made more complex by the limited options

Fig 8.4 Edges (map © OpenStreetMap contributors)

Fig 8.5 Land Use
(map© OpenStreetMap contributors)

available to cross multiple edges. Complex and convoluted routes have been found to be a deterrent to use, people preferring, and making most use of routes that are readily understood and very direct (Snaith, 2006; Hillier, 1998).

8.3 Land Use

As shown in Figure 8.5, pre-Games residential areas (brown) mainly lie beyond edges formed by major roads and railways, to the west, and east. An exception is the pre existing residential area in Hackney Wick between the Lea Navigation and the A12 as the road orientation turns from roughly north south to east west to cross the Lea Valley. Although this land area is physically connected across the canal by a new footbridge, the Olympic site is not really publicly accessible, as the bridge lands on the western bank in a fenced off primary school playground, and is accessible generally only to school pupils. The pre-Olympic view across the canal for residents of these houses was of the green space of Arena Fields, but as of 2011 the residents are visually as well as physically cut off from green space by the former Olympic broadcast centre, now in use by a private sector company. (Fig 8.9) In the final months of 2014, a programme of tree planting commenced, that will filter views of the building somewhat longer term.

As can be seen from the diagram (Fig 8.5), all residential areas that predate the Games are visually and physically distanced from the major new park spaces at North Park and South Park, because, in addition to the severance by infrastructure, new buildings border, or are planned to border the South and North Park spaces to south, west and east. Arguably, provision of

physically accessible quality park space, and visual access to nature has been unchanged by the developments on the Olympic site for most of the surrounding residents. Visual access to nature has actually diminished for some, in particular along the Lea Navigation. The Local Plan (London Legacy Development Corporation, 2014) developed post Games indicates that efforts are now being made to re establish something of the former green character of much of the canal side prior to 2010, though the thirty year vision as it was envisaged in 2012 (Fig 8.1), indicate this was not always part of the design ambition.

Transition areas (toned in yellow) were mainly in industrial use prior to the successful Olympic bid, with a small percentage in use as artists' studios (see for example mapping undertaken for Design for London (muf Architecture, 2009). These areas would now more aptly be described as being in transition to mixed use. Industrial buildings and uses remain, but in accordance with local area development plans, sites are being bought and redeveloped for residential and more institutionalised cultural industry use, with allied leisure uses restaurants, bars and galleries (Fig 8.10 p164). The neighbourhoods are characterised by complex street patterns with poor visual connections, and indirect walking routes.

Westfield's shopping centre on the former rail lands south of the Channel Tunnel rail link is the UK's third largest shopping centre (London Attractions, 2013). It has multilevel retail use with major UK 'high street' retailers, anchor stores like John Lewis and Marks & Spencer, and areas of restaurant and leisure provision including a casino, along internal and external 'streets'. The connection to Westfield from the station at Stratford is via either an underground passage, or via a spectacular bridge. Both arrive at the entrance to Westfield into a cacophony of commercial displays, movement, lighting and soundtracks (Fig 8.8). The Stratford Shopping centre south east of the Station in contrast to Westfield which it predates, is a relatively staid, calmer retail environment, despite the new sculptural screen now dressing its public facade as part of the Olympic Legacy. It is a local facility rather than the destination shopping centre for east London that is represented by Westfield.

8.4 Movement Generators & Connections

The most frequent users of park spaces walk to the park (CABE Space, 2010). Empirical research has found that the most frequently used walking routes in cities are those that are continuous, with few changes in direction. Public spaces, attractions and retail uses located on these direct connections are well used, and conversely, direct routes connecting retail areas and other attractions in cities are busiest. Public spaces that are either elevated above, or located lower than primary movement routes tend to be less well used than those along the busiest movement routes which are at the same floor level (Whyte, 2000[1980]; Hillier, 1998).

The most extensive direct pedestrian routes into and through the park space in 2014 are indicated in blue on Figure 8.6. The plans available for the future development of the site do not indicate any significant changes planned to circulation in the coming decades. Few routes extend continuously across the Olympic site, or connect directly into the urban areas beyond,

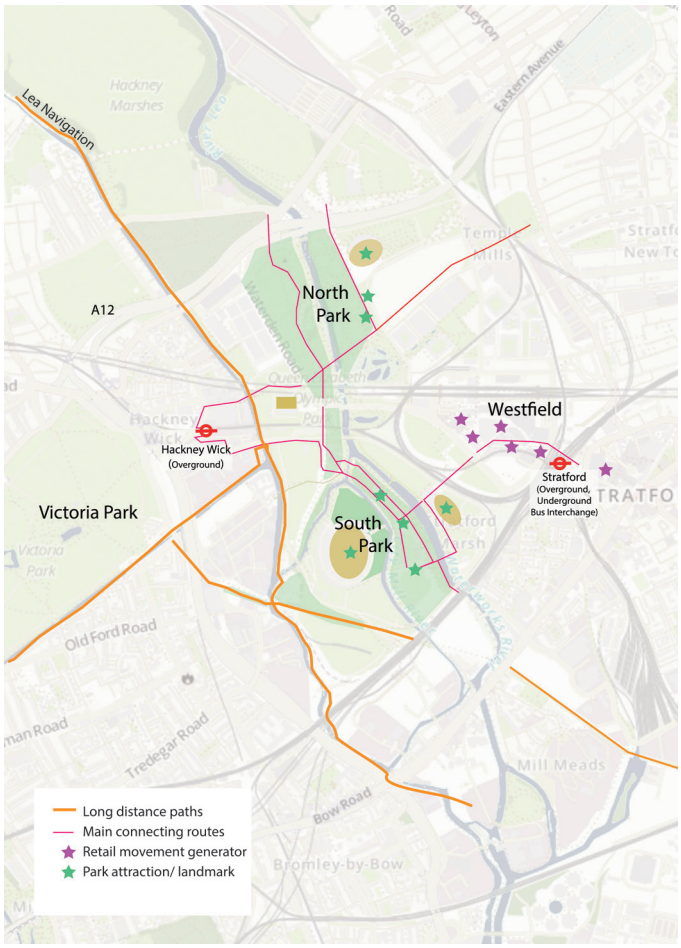


Fig 8.6 Movement Generators and Connections (map © OpenStreetMap contributors)

Fig 8.7 Western Park Entrance from Hackney Wick / Hertford Union Canal

Fig 8.8 Park entry via Westfield, from Stratford

and (although this is not legible from the plans), there are major changes in level which have to be negotiated.

Long distance cycling and walking routes are located along the Lea Navigation and Hertford and Union Canal towpath, connecting to the Thames in the south, Hertfordshire in the north and via the Regents Canal to West London and beyond. These are indicated in yellow/orange. Connections from this network to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park are most direct south and north of Hackney Wick, but require a change in level(Fig 8.7). There is very little visual connection from the strategic routes, other than views to the stadium, just south of the Hertford & Union Canal junction at Old Ford, which may be lost in future depending on the height of planned canal side developments, though a new canal side park in construction at the end of 2014 is creating a more attractive public connection with the Olympic site than earlier plans appeared to indicate.

Connections from the Queen Elizabeth Olympic park to the Greenway in the south, and under the A12 in the north are indirect and were not opened by the time of the last field visit to the North and South Park spaces in September 2014.

Two stations provide walking access to people beyond the immediate area, and can generate movement. There are two routes from Hackney Wick station lying to the west, one turning

north from the station, the other turning south. The northern route provides the most direct pedestrian access to the North Park, Velodrome and Copper Box arena. To the south there is an indirect, visually and physically complex route with four lane roads to negotiate provides access to the South Park (Fig 8.7).

Stratford station to the east provides relatively direct access route to the South Park, at the same gradient as surrounding spaces, but without any visual access, as the route is through the heart of Westfield, a major shopping mall (Fig 8.8). Westfield is a major attraction for local people and east London more widely (London Attractions, 2013), as is the Olympic swimming pool, which is now managed as a public facility year round. The Arcelor Mittal Orbit tower, and the Olympic Stadium provide further landmark destinations to generate daily movement into the South Park. Car parking for Westfield is located at the west of the shopping centre, and can also be used by park visitors. The relatively direct pedestrian connection, and its proximity to major movement generators are theoretically likely to result in the busiest park spaces in the South Park.

People tend to gather most frequently in public spaces that are close to busy movement routes where ample linear seating is provided (Whyte, 2000[1980]). There is plenty of seating in the South Park along the main movement routes at the upper level, which is therefore likely to be well used. Children's play was put forward in all focus groups as a major attraction of park space. The play areas in the South Park and North Park are spectacular and unusual, and operate as attractions to families and young people. The planting too, particularly in the South Park, is

Fig 8.9 View of the Former Olympic Broadcast Centre across the Lea Navigation

Fig 8.10 Industrial Buildings Converted to Mixed Uses (Transition Area)

Fig 8.11 North Park April 2014

Fig 8.12 North Park September 2014

highly maintained and invested in heavily, and is unusual in its extent and variety in comparison to other parks in London. It too can act as an attraction for some, though many areas of planting are below the main movement levels, and therefore likely to be less busy than upper areas.

8.5 Stylistic & Functional Content : North Park

The riverside landscape in the North Park is designed and managed to an ecological picturesque aesthetic (Fig 8.11, 8.12). Its style is closest to three images in the park preference survey, the image termed 'Meadow / Wasteland', the image termed Marsh, and the image of the long grasses of Richmond Park. It is an aesthetic then, of the three least popular selections by all groups in the park preference survey, other than the white British participants. In the case of the Meadow / Wasteland in particular, the style was only a frequent park preference selection for white British university graduates.

The central ecological wetland areas and meadows are framed by upper level mown lawns, they are crossed by high contrast surfaced paths, and the whole park has a clearly artificial landform, all of which moderates the impression of 'wildness'. Vegetation growth has been rapid, and trees are planted at quite high densities in some areas, so planting already does, and may increasingly, limit visibility of some parts of the space, which is otherwise overlooked from the higher level access routes and viewing lawns. The quality of materials, their lack of wear, the high standards of cleanliness and the maintained modern setting for the space, act to dispel feelings of isolation or neglect that can be associated with landscapes that have achieved this appearance 'naturally', rather than by design and painstaking construction.

There are few 'programmed' spaces in the North Park. Activities available to visitors include: visiting the cafe, which is in an enclosed area near to one end of the linear children's playground; bringing the children to a 'spectacular' play space, also with a 'wild' or 'natural' theme, but with an overtly designed look (Fig 8.13) ; admiring views of buildings or objects in the landscape like the Olympic rings , the architecture of the Velodrome, or some art objects; enjoying being in a simulacrum of the countryside, on foot or by cycle (though routes are currently disconnected or terminate in huge flights of steps, so cycling can be a little frustrating); or sitting on lawns with or without river views.

The children's play space is spread out in a linear arrangement, set into raised planted embankments and connected by multiple winding paths through vegetation. It is entirely unfenced, and, due to its layout and planting design, has very limited visual connection either to surrounding lawn areas or between the many different play elements (Fig 8.14). There is little seating provision by some of the play spaces for parents who might wish to have their child in sight during play.

These design decisions mean that parents must be prepared to trust that unwatched, their children will not leave the playground, will not be hurt, will stay where they can be found, and will return when they are meant to. Alternatively parents must follow their children as they

Fig 8.13 Sculptural Climber in Play Area

Fig 8.14 Vegetation & Mounding Restrict Visual Access in Play Area

move through the play space, mainly standing, due to the limited seating. This would obviously present logistical issues for more cautious parents who have more than one child. It is also to likely to limit the amount of time parents will allow children to play before becoming tired of standing as they themselves cannot really relax or socialise.

In the North Park, the main off lawn seating provision is in the low lying areas, (Fig 8.15) away from major connecting movement routes and play spaces which are at the upper level. There are some short benches along the main access path beside the play area towards the Velodrome, but there is generally very little formal seating capacity offered. The upper areas, particularly the play area are busy, but even in fine weather, during the school holidays, as theory would predict, the lower paths and lawns have relatively few users.

There is dog access to all areas at all times, and no designated dog free spaces including so far as is it possible to tell, to the children's play space. Signs setting out any regulation of the spaces are quite difficult to find, as they are not at entrances nor widespread. Staff, when asked, state that dogs are supposed to be on leads. From the site visits made in 2014, this is not widely known, and only erratically enforced, however there have been very few dogs visible at all during site visits. This may change as flats on the Olympic site become fully occupied.

Fig 8.15 Seating at Lower Level, North Park, April 2014 (Compare user numbers with cover image & user count image of adjacent upper level lawn space taken within 3 minutes of this shot)

Fig 8.16 Fountain Play Space/ Entry via Westfield, South Park, April 2014

8.6 Stylistic & Functional Content: South Park

The South Park takes the form of a large 'embankment' perhaps thirty metres across the top at its narrowest, with two very steeply sloped planted sides dropping five metres down to river channels, edged by lower level walking routes on both sides. The embankment top is frequently hard surfaced, and where it surrounds the main play area it is bright red and spongy across almost the entire width (Fig 8.17). There is a main spine route or promenade to the eastern side which has characteristics of a formal avenue in a 'traditional' park, and is frequently punctuated with coffee and snack stands. It lies between lines of London Plane trees, is over strung by decorative globe lights, and has many wide timber seats . There is another north south continuous path on the western side of the embankment top, narrower and less formal in character, but this too is provided with ample seating. Between these paths, a series of playful spaces or 'rooms' in a variety of materials traverse the embankment top, separated to their northern and southern boundaries by seat walls (Fig 8.19), or by long grassy mounds, sitting lawns and decorative floral planting (8.18).

Fig 8.17 Sculptural Climber in Play Area, South Park

Fig 8.18 Quieter Lawn Areas with Planting.

Fig 8.19 Seatwall, South Park

Many of the 'rooms' are highly activated spaces. None appear natural, though the lawns and planting are sufficient to create a strong park like character, and there are plenty of green places to escape from the quite frantic pace of play at the children's 'dry' play area and fountain play area (Fig 8.18). At one point the embankment planting is replaced by a public climbing wall, where the red play surface appears to spill over the edge, dropping the full five metres in two dramatic red cliffs (Fig 8.20).

In terms of similarity to any landscape aesthetics of those pictured in the park preference survey, the style is perhaps best described as a modern interpretation of the gardenesque style, though it is perhaps more accurately carnivalesque. It is closest stylistically in some areas to the images of St James's Park, as it does have avenues, lawns and ornamental floral planting. It has a formal layout, though this is softened by the use of romantic as opposed to geometric planting with natural plant forms. Stylistically it could also be argued to share some characteristics of the Thames Barrier Park.

There is good containment in each sub-space and clear sightlines. All of the programmed play spaces have ample seating and visibility across their extent. The seating arrangements of long continuous and sometimes sinuous benches encourage sociability between parents, who can easily see their children and are able to chat. Generally supervising children in these spaces is less challenging than in the play spaces of the North Park and the children's enjoyment becomes a spectacle in itself (Fig 8.16).

Fig 8.20 Climbing Wall, South Park

8.7 Conclusion

In general, new park spaces are poorly connected to residential areas beyond the Olympic 2012 site boundary, especially from the west and north east, and relatively difficult to navigate to and through, due to major changes in level and a complex pattern of barriers to movement. The North Park is less well connected to transport hubs than the South Park, and is not very visible from or integrated well into, long distance walking and cycling routes, despite its proximity to them. This is particularly so for strategic access from the west, which meets the park where it is little more than a wide bridge over rail lines and roads.

No significant action has yet been taken to address severance of surrounding residential communities by major roads and railways from the new facilities in the Lea Valley. Placing the new park space at the centre of the available site, and planning developments around the periphery has compounded the issues of separation of park spaces from surrounding residential areas, ultimately putting it at the centre of a new neighbourhood, from which those living beyond it may feel excluded. Newham's residents have the strongest connection to the new park of all those in pre Olympic neighbourhoods in the surrounding boroughs. In general though, casual frequent use of the new facilities as a local park is unlikely to be an option for many, other than for residents of the new housing that will eventually surround the park.

The distance and difficulty of accessing new park spaces at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park on foot from surrounding housing areas beyond the Olympic site boundary is likely to affect those with the least economic capital most, as they have limited resources to pay for any other form of transport to take them nearer. In the UK, disproportionately high numbers of the poorest people

are from black and minority ethnic groups. The design decisions affecting access may therefore result in some under-representation of BME groups as park users due to uneven distribution of economic resources along ethnic lines in the park catchment. From the focus groups, and from other research in east London (Foster, 2008) , there is reason to think that British Bangladeshi people are less likely to use park spaces that are distant from their homes than other groups. Locating the new park centrally in the Lea Valley, and failing to address wider urban severance may result in greater under-representation of British Bangladeshi people than might otherwise have been the case.

North Park has less movement generating 'attractions' than the South Park, and less seating along main movement routes at the upper levels. Empirical research indicates it is likely to be less well used overall than South Park for these reasons. South Park has spectacular attractions, plenty of seats on main movement routes, and a relatively direct connection from Stratford's stations via Westfield shopping centre, which research indicates is likely to encourage use by many, in the park 'catchment' and beyond.

Space in the North Park with its ecological aesthetic, focus on scenic views, and relative lack of programmed activity would tend to fit most with the park preferences expressed by white British participants, rather than with the preferences of other groups. The very well maintained and highly controlled framing of the ecological spaces, their evident maintenance, cleanliness, and presence of park wardens and other staff also overlaps to a great extent with normative preferences expressed by British Pakistani participants in the focus groups.

The play area design however, with its hidden spaces, and lack of fencing may limit North Park's appeal to British Pakistanis and parents from South Asian groups more generally, as these participants were found to be the most concerned for children's safety in public space. It is hard to passively supervise children when no vantage points can be found to survey play space from, which limits the relaxation available to parents that might otherwise be associated with play area visits. The dogs on leads policy if it is unknown and/or or unenforced could also influence use by Islamic groups particularly.

South Park has plenty to do, particularly for children. It provides lots of opportunities to socialise and people watch, has green and planted quiet spaces to relax, there are gardens and flowers, plenty of places to sit on or off the grass, and excellent visibility. Like North Park it is clean, well maintained, and visibly staffed. The aesthetic is closest to a traditional urban park in the gardenesque style, which was most popular in the park preference survey, but with modern and spectacular use of materials, an ordered approach to spatial arrangements, all mixed with a romantic planting pallette. These factors combined mean it meets with the preferences of almost all groups in the park preference survey, as well as many of the needs of the people who took part in focus groups, irrespective of ethnicity. This PhD research indicates South Park offers something for everyone. If the park preference survey and focus groups findings are, as I argue, indicators of likely behaviours, South Park's users would quite closely resemble the surrounding population in user demography, albeit with the caveat that low income groups in general, and British Bangladeshis may be under-represented, due to distance from home and difficulty in accessing these spaces on foot.

North Park, more than half of the new park space at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in 2014, is built to a design aesthetic favoured in the park preference survey by many white British university graduates, but otherwise quite widely disliked. It has a functional programme that primarily supports viewing scenic landscape and enjoyment of 'wild space' , which does not chime with the values for park space identified through focus groups as potentially normative in other British ethnic groups. If, as I have theorised, focus groups and park preference survey findings are representative, and indicative of likely behaviours of local people along ethnic lines, these design decisions are likely to result in significant under-representation in the North Park by ethnic groups that are a minority in other parts of the UK, but together, form a majority here .

Understanding the processes that have driven the creation of these spaces as built, can help to identify whether potentially excluding ontologies and spatial practices are the result of individual agency or institutionalised practices in UK park design, and also the extent to which designers have been or can be reasonably seen as being responsible for any potentially exclusionary aspects of space formation at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park itself. The next chapter uses 'elite interview' methods to do just that.

9 0 ‘ Elite’ Interviews

9.1 Introduction

Physical, and social factors that act as incentives and barriers to park use, which could be considered within the influence of spatial designers were described in the literature review in Chapter 3. The distance, complexity, and quality of the journey required to get to a destination is thought to have an impact, as is the social mix of the neighbourhoods through which users must travel, and the attractiveness, or value of the park as a destination to its potential users. Further research evidence regarding factors affecting levels of use, and an analysis of the spatial arrangements at the time of the opening of the full Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in April 2014 have been set out in Chapter 8.

Any role that designers had, in locating the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park within the wider Olympic site, determining its accessibility, appearance, character and the possible activities that can take place within it, can influence how likely the park is to be used by particular surrounding residents. The official processes of design team selection and decision making are set out in some detail in Chapter 4, and participants selection for the ‘elite’ interviews is described in Chapter 5.

To establish perceived opportunities for and evidence of individual influence, or individual power in the field, (Bourdieu, 1999[1979]; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) the ‘field’ interviewees were encouraged to describe the process of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park’s formation, any role they had at different stages in its ongoing development, and their understanding of how the final configuration of spaces was determined. Their words, where quoted are not attributed in most instances, except where they could clearly have only been made by any one individual participant. John Hopkins interview was not carried out as part of this research, and is publicly available on line (Landscape Institute, 2012), so his words where used, are attributed.

A thematic analysis with a loosely Bourdieusian theoretical frame of forms of capital, influence of fields and players, and evidenced rules of the game, was undertaken to identify: how individual influence, and the influence of others in the field of spatial / landscape design, was understood and represented in interviewees accounts; views of the importance of external factors or other fields of influence; and any stated personal objectives, frustrations and successes. The accounts of events were not always consistent.

9.2 Determining Location and Accessibility from Surrounding Neighbourhoods

A large green space for public use as a park after Games time was only one of the elements political leaders wished to see created as an outcome of staging the Olympics in London, the green space of the park itself was seen as only part of a much larger project site. The requirements also included future development land for housing, employment and associated uses, and retained

sporting venues. As with any geographical site there were some physical constraints, and access from Stratford train station to the Olympic venues was of some relevance, but a planned 'tabula rasa' approach to redeveloping the existing context meant that in many ways, the choice of location and orientation for the park within the Lower Lea Valley was potentially entirely free, or arbitrary.

Even after the invited competition was over and the design team had been appointed, one interviewee makes clear the parameters for the site's location remained very wide.

> ''At this point (EDAW) weren't actually locked into this site, so you could actually go up and down the valley.''

All interviewees accounts stated however that the eventual location, size and orientation of the park had been established by the EDAW consortium, long before the UK Olympic bid had been declared successful, and no other location or orientation had ever substantially challenged this.

> ''This was the original, ... so the idea of the central park and the Olympic Village and everything, so basically most of it was laid down in the design competition submission''

> ''They (EDAW Consortium) did an absolutely fantastic job of getting all of the infrastructure in the right places, the venues in the right places the roads, the highways, the concourse the parklands themselves, the park at the heart of the park, and Jason Prior who is the landscape architect who led the masterplanning team right the way through process and Bill Hanway at EDAW Aecom, they were very clear that the park at the heart was never contested; that all of the politicians, the press, the public, at all the consultations the park at the heart, it was, actually it became the focus for the whole of the masterplan''

> ''That was all part of the bid, so basically, by 2003. 2004 the two planning applications were submitted for Olympics and Legacy, and they got permission in 2005, before we won the bid. So really all the key moves in terms of where the main venues were,..... the media centre moved but ....''

Yet, despite a stated end use of the park, amongst other things, as an asset to benefit existing deprived communities in east London, (London Development Agency, 2009) and a relatively free choice of site, the interviewees presented evidence that, as has been found in the spatial analysis in Chapter 8, the eventual location does not actually lend itself to easy use by many of the population surrounding the new developments.

> '' the tragedy is that ... This is the one, that also, this one, (pointing on a drawing to major roads and railways surrounding the Olympic site) it's just , the whole thing is cut off, ... you build an earth bridge, whatever you do, but otherwise there is no success at all in integrating this site anywhere with its surrounding areas, ''

> ''We did quite a lot of mapping work , 15 minutes for a local park. We looked at how many people live within 15 minutes of a lot of London parks. It's around 100,000 generally.

> We looked at our park and we had 15,000. We started to look at 3.1km catchment area, about a 45minute journey, and that felt right. You'd want those people to be going to the Olympic Park when it was a sunny day, but you have to give them a reason to get on their bike or car or get on the bus, 'cause they aren't going to walk for an hour and half ''

The choice of location and orientation which was made by the designers at an early stage has clearly not prioritised proximity to, or ease of access by existing local communities post Games over other objectives for some reason. Priorities that established this location and orientation must lie elsewhere. The original competition entry submission, that won EDAW consortium their chance to develop a British Olympic bid, can be understood as not just an expression of the designers' ideals, but of the designers' understanding of the Jury's preferences. As Prior says

> ''you know, you do the research''

Prior describes his team's strategy,

> '' use the Olympics to gather up land, we can plan you an Olympics, but the real trick is how much of the money you spend now is for the future, and that was the pitch basically.''

The alignment of the designer's representation, viewing the London Olympics not as the focus of the project, but instead as a vehicle for channelling economic investment into remaking east London post Games, is consistent with other reporting of the objectives of the regional and national politicians, who appointed the Jury. The statement highlights this designer's perception of the primacy to the jury of 'value' in the economic field, as opposed to say value of 'design ', in determining the appointment of lead masterplanners for the London Olympics, and of his own / his team's technical expertise in that area. While it is unclear in the quotation above what aspect of future space or future life money might be directed to, configuring space to stage a mega-event is represented as quite simple. However meeting economic objectives still allows other configurations for the park that would be more accessible to existing residents than the chosen, and seemingly problematic location.

The difficulty of physically crossing the Lea Valley and major urban infrastructure from east to west might reasonably have motivated an entirely different orientation of space, with new developments and park emphasising east west routes across the valley, rather than the chosen north south dominance.

A 'representation of space' (Lefebvre, 1991[1974]) first proposed in Abercrombie's influential London Plan of 1943, valorised by London's spatial experts (Patterson, 2013), was important here. The Olympic bid is represented as a chance to 'complete' the Lee Valley Regional Park, from the country in Hertfordshire to the Thames. A north south orientation for green spaces in the Olympic Park is described as an a priori assumption about the place, and how it should be responded to. This vision has primacy, irrespective of changes in urban configuration since 1944, not least the construction of urban motorways severing the valley from surrounding populations. The decision is represented by interviewees as an inevitability, the 'natural' , rational, and correct response, rather than arbitrary, or in any way problematic.

> ‘’ Moves like that, obviously stem from the fact that its one part of the 26 mile long Lee Valley linear park, I think that north south flow was part of the DNA of the area, that was never really questioned’’

> ‘’you complete this transect from the river (Thames) to that sort of urban hinterland, through. Actually, hugely symbolically important to drive it down to the river actually. ‘’

However in other accounts orientation was contested.

> ‘’I was one of those that was frustrated by the over dominance of the north south. ...., the big problem with here is this way it’s lateral, (East West) . You can’t get across it, so perhaps by just adding yet another ceremonial north south, albeit a park, you’re perhaps doing the wrong thing’’

Even accepting a north south orientation, the primary connecting walking and cycling route through the 26 mile Lee Valley Regional Park lies continuously alongside the Lea Navigation, a working canal to the west of the current park site. This towpath, though resurfaced in the run up to the Games to north of Hackney Marshes, and once edged by green spaces and unmanaged vegetation, is now flanked at the Olympic site by the blank facades of the broadcast centre, and power generation building, with no views beyond due to ground level changes, and limited physical connection to the main park spaces. Locating expansive park spaces along the Lea Navigation would have placed the new park on the main strategic cycling and walking routes north south, and created a straightforward strategic walking and cycling connection to the west via the Regent’s canal. The park could have been in sight , and in easy walking distance, of many more existing residents.

> ‘’We had all this rhetoric about this park. I said ‘’Nobody lives there, that’s where people live. This is a river (pointing to the Lea Navigation on the plan). Let’s put the park next to the river that people live on,’’ .... rather than actually separating them.”

The Lea /Lee river, which has instead been made the central feature of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, lies in a hidden, inaccessible channel for most of its journey through London. It is almost invisible within much of the Lee Valley Regional Park. Already separated from the Navigation that was built in the 18th Century, the river was diverted from its natural course into a concrete channel with the construction of north London’s major reservoirs at Chingford, completed in 1951. Its diverted course, as well as being inaccessible arguably lacks the charm or historical interest of the Navigation, with its brightly painted narrowboats, locks and lodges (Johnson, 2005).

Difficulty of access and long journey times to the new park limit access more for time poor or transport restricted groups - usually those with the lowest incomes. It particularly impacts those groups like British Bangladeshis, the majority ethnicity in several wards in east London, especially in the western catchment of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, who have been found to be less likely than others to travel far to visit park space (Foster, 2008). So why then is the new park centrally located on the River Lea, disconnected from the major strategic walking and

cycling routes, and seemingly as far as the site allows from all the existing residents?

By locating the park centrally, Prior's team could deliver the feted Abercrombie vision, pragmatically address Olympic layout requirements and future development aspirations, (others argue this could have been achieved in other ways, given the will) but this was not all, and as argued above, these factors did not ultimately locate the park in the inaccessible centre of the site.

By siting the park on the river rather than the navigation, EDAW Aecom were able to evoke what I would argue is a culturally situated romantic future vision of a 'natural' landscape setting 'restored' and recovered from industrial wasteland. The river, not the Navigation (which is still a working water way), offered most scope in Prior's view for this type of transformation, the best vehicle for professional, and national expression.

> ''We looked several times at could you get the whole thing (buildings) in a mass up here, but .. that's all out (Westfield/athletes village). So now you're down to some corners here, some pieces there, and actually, that's your biggest piece of developable land as the Olympic piece that you've got control of ..... The second thing is we were always much more likely to make this a beautiful river. There's not a park, a major park in London that's got a decent river running through it that you can get access, and that has by far the greatest potential compared to what is effectively a canal on this side, and we ... We always knew we could do much more with this.''

From discussions with other interviewees, it is clear that a high value was placed on creating an 'ambitious' park, and to Prior, this location offered the best opportunity within the valley for an ambitious landscape project, intended as a national showcase.

It proved a powerful, persuasive representation of space, a strong selling point to the jury for the original commission, to the jury who awarded the Olympics to London, to the political elites, to local councillors, and, (to the interviewees recollection), to local people, however at the time of the planning application, before London had the Games, there was much talk of greatly improved connectivity east to west, and as one interviewee describes

> ''The plans don't capture the extraordinary fragmentation of the space and the extraordinary changes in level,..... all these disconnected bits. But reading the rhetoric and looking at the architects impression, its all this wonderful seamless... .''

Not everyone was supportive of the planned spatial arrangements, but interviewees claimed few strong challenges were mounted in the early stages of the process, at a time when the spatial options were still open, and before substantial effort had been made in fixing a single vision. Some interviewees held the view that very few people believed that London would win the Games, so few gave much serious attention to the proposals. At later stages the configuration was challenged, when delivery became a reality, but by then investment had already been made in resolving the many interconnected complex spatial and economic issues, supporting arguments for the central park design. There was a great deal riding on keeping to time and

budget, and as one interviewee put it.

> ''the last thing you want to do is put yourself up against the ODA.''

Nevertheless, challenges were made

> '' Every time it was looked at again and tried to be upended, it all fell back in the same place again. ... . However many reviews were done and outside parties were brought in, and civil servants took it away and redrew it. I remember a classic meeting I might tell you about one day. It all virtually kept settling back at the same thing and while it all looks very simple , ... there are a series of issues to do with development depth and viability. If that's the model you are working to, you can't do less of that and more of this. What we kept arguing was 'Okay guys get over that now, really make that structure work'.''

The account here supports a Bourdieusian view of continuous contest, of struggle for control, for power, between players in the field (Bourdieu, 1999[1979]). Once again use is made of technical economically based arguments in supporting truth claims for the inevitability and demonstrable, practical almost 'common sense' approach of the preferred spatial arrangement. There is no foregrounding in these representations of the design's symbolic or cultural values though these are undoubtedly present, and are, I argue, among the most influential factors in determining the eventual configuration of this park space.

9.3 Landscape Style/Character

With the park distant and somewhat difficult to reach for most existing residents, its attractiveness, in competition with other leisure offers and park spaces might arguably be of increased importance in determining future use. Aesthetic/stylistic representations of the intended park design changed a great deal between 2003 when EDAW consortium won the commission to lead the bid, and 2009 when park building commenced, to the extent that, as one interviewee claimed, the built park was the second one designed.

The changing vision for the park landscape is captured in two contrasting representations.

In one account during the design's development:

> ''the environment, the quality of the river, the provision of open space, the idea of a sort of Royal Park was writ fairly early on in the script.''

another interviewee describes the park as built

> ''This is not Hyde Park or a virgin piece of countryside in the city. We shouldn't want it to be like that. It's a post industrial park. We should celebrate the kind of mad juxtapositions that you get, with railway lines and sewers, these massive venues. It's a sort of very different feel than I think what a lot of people... It was always talked about ''the same size

> as St James Park''. It was being presented as part of a tradition of design, which actually it was very different from.''

Most interviewees acknowledged there was a change in direction of the park design, and placed this in 2007, when Foreign Office Architects left the EDAW Aecom consortium, over irreconcilable design differences, and John Hopkins was appointed by the ODA. Hopkins had, until his appointment been partner in the firm LDA Design, who had been a major part of a rival consortium that bid for, and failed to win, the commission to be Olympic Park masterplanners, the commission that had been won by EDAW Aecom.

The change from a more traditional 'Royal Park' vision to an ecological aesthetic is attributed most often to, and was claimed most strongly by John Hopkins.

> ''John Hopkins came on board, and quickly basically appointed Hargreaves with LDA Design and by that time it was really the northern area that was their big focus, because so much had already been set in train in the south, ''

There is evidence from the research interviews that the merits of designs produced by either of the design teams are still contested, though in public, such as in the filmed and published interview with John Hopkins (Landscape Institute, 2012) a staged, consensual process of design 'development' is represented. Hopkins was project sponsor from April 2007, and wrote the briefs, then acted as the project client to guide/approve the eventual park design. (Responsibility for the styling of architectural elements and transport infrastructure were not within his remit.) Interviewees describe Hopkins outlook at the time of his appointment, and subsequent efforts made under his leadership to re imagine the park landscape

> ''John's passions were sustainability in particular, climate change and effects and things like that, and so he was very sure the park wasn't managing those...and he just felt it wasn't ambitious enough in terms of design and..... he was concerned it was all bitty, there were bits and pieces all over the place.''

Though Hopkins is reported to have distanced himself from the appointment of his former company, with George Hargreaves as the main consultant for landscape design (Slavid, 2012), he claims direct input in the choice of some of the consultants who supported the eventual landscape designers, and for determining direction the landscape design was to take to a great extent.

> ''We insisted in the brief that we wanted international class design and a whole series other consultants to be part of the team..... one of the things that I was clear about was that the work that the two professors at Sheffield University had been doing, James Hitchmough and Nigel Dunnett, the work they'd been doing set out in their book called ''The Dynamic Landscape,'' that, this was a new way of producing landscape. I wanted to draw together city design, landscape design and garden design, so I wrote a brief in the way that would ensure we got that.''

''The Dynamic Landscape'' sets out arguments for an ecological aesthetic in urban public space,

describes techniques to create ecological landscapes, the evolution of 'ecological' landscape aesthetics, and ecological urban landscapes now. Hitchmough and Dunnett summarise the new landscape style they advocate in the introduction to "The Dynamic Landscape'' thus

"We argue in this book ...(for a) move away from horticulturally - based plantings... plantings composed primarily of exotic species and cultivars, organised in culturally informed arrangements.... managed relatively intensively to reduce competition between planted stock and spontaneously invading weeds, and to instead develop plantings that exploit ecological as well as horticultural processes and understandings."
(Hitchmough & Dunnett, 2008:2)

The interviews indicate that there was a substantive change in the representation of landscape style from when planning permission was sought, to the constructed space. A park imagined and represented for support publicly as in the mould of the pastoral/ gardenesque Royal Parks like St James's Park or Hyde Park, was ultimately built to a less 'maintained', more dramatic ecological post industrial aesthetic, with elements of the sublime supplied by over scaled built elements. The park preference survey and focus group findings in Chapters 6 and 7 show that this change in style (at least of the North Park) is one that is likely to have a significant impact on the breadth of its appeal locally.

The book 'The Dynamic Landscape' is included in the discussion of landscape and culture in Chapter 3. The authors clearly acknowledge, and indeed include evidence in the book, that many people from ethnic minorities in particular may not find this aesthetic attractive, however as discussed, any concerns raised are tempered with reassurances that taste can be unlearned, re educated. Given that the majority of people in the catchment area are from ethnic 'minorities' the appropriateness of devoting large areas of park space in post Olympic configuration, to this perhaps controversial landscape style, might reasonably have been brought forward for discussion. That it was not considered significant enough to have merited any discussion at all, (at least it was not recollected as having been mentioned previously by any interviewees), arguably indicates two things. The park's design is primarily intended as a showcase for an audience other than the catchment population, and a taste for this type of aesthetic is considered more 'legitimate' by spatial production professionals than other landscape tastes.

9.4 Landscape Use - Envisioned Activities In The Park

FOA's departure and Hopkins (and others) arrival also coincided with a perceived change in emphasis in the ODA's thinking about the park, with a greater emphasis on the park's facilities for use in Legacy. Though credited by one interviewee to Hopkins, this emphasis on people has not been claimed by him in his interview for the Landscape Institute. In fact, as discussed below, he seems to refute it. Others attribute the change in direction to Sir John Armitt as chair of the ODA.

One interviewee describes the change in emphasis.

> ''There was a point as a bystander when we were looking at this, and the worries in the early days, ... it was a lot about what looked nice and not a lot about people actually, and I remember going to some sort of seminar, and John Armit wasn't long in, I don't think, it was first time I met him, and there was some bloke from Chicago, some Park's guy. He was the first. He came along, you know, it was an ODA gig, he came and spoke, at ODA this guy, and he'd been and done Bryant Park or something, and he came in, and totally nailed the idea that you should think about who was going to use the park . I'm not saying you weren't doing that before, FOA were. I can remember sitting in that audience, and us all getting really excited 'cause it seemed that something had happened in the ODA, and there was new thinking.''

This perceived change in thinking resulted in some programmatic changes for the park in Legacy, to provide for a greater range of activities.

> ''It needs to be a place where families want to go, ... North Park beautiful, but you can't really kick a ball around. It's a very, very sculpted landscape, not actually great for families in a way, and so that's why we decided to commission a playground - ''Tumbling Bay'' - and that's what led us to change the design of the cycle track so that you can create a big flat park there and kind of open up the riverside to fly a kite or kick a ball around . Also that's why we built ''Timber Lodge'' that was originally only required to be some toilets. We expanded the brief and got the money to make a proper community space and all year round there's stuff going on.''

From the focus group findings, the presence of the playground in particular in the North Park is likely to support visits from a wider range of ethnic groups than would be expected from visual spectacle alone. Formal children's play provision was part of most descriptions of the function of park space, and a major reason put forward for tolerating more unpleasant aspects of interacting with other park users, across all the focus groups included in the empirical research here.

The value of these changes was however contested by some of the parks designers on visual aesthetic grounds, supporting the claims of other interviewees that a focus 'on people' represented a shift away from the dominance of aesthetic considerations.

> '' It will be a beautiful park in its own right. There was a departure point where we were of the view this has already got too much going on in it - now enjoying just the openness of the space and the ecological content and the landform and the big sky that you get, I'm not sure there's a need to keep filling it up with things. ''

Framing quality in landscape space in terms of simplicity, the presence of nature, and large expanses indicative of freedom is a Romantic representation, dominated by visual composition,. It is represented here as a universal, or at least legitimate taste. Filling space up with things, having too much going on, is represented as of questionable value. These themes will be returned to in section 9.7.

From the evidence presented here, it can be seen that individual designers have substantive

influence in shaping space in accordance with their aesthetic ideals and values, albeit subject to approval and contest. They construct representations and narratives with the intention of gaining support of other powerful individuals. There is also evidence of shifts in dominance of individual players within the field, in the influence of various fields, of the relative power of knowledge claims, and relevance of forms of capital, across the time of the project.

The next section looks at how interviewees represent the strategies used to achieve their vision, and what evidence is provided of the ''rules of the game''.

9.5 Strategies to Achieve Spatial Authorship - Establishing Legitimacy of Cultural Capital.

The process of spatial formation is constantly subject to challenges. Designers construct 'representations of space' (Lefebvre, 1991[1974]), demonstrating how their vision represents an alignment of multiple priorities, to persuade others to support their ideas, or conversely revealing how many other issues will be at stake if proposed designs are required to be changed. They provide various types of evidence to support truth claims made in their representations.

To view the strategies, conscious or otherwise, represented by interviewees through a Bourdieusian lens, the players in the field of spatial design deploy different forms of capital to achieve authorship of created spaces (Bourdieu, 1999[1979]). Cultural capital (in the form of various kinds of technical knowledge, inherited cultural capital, and embodied cultural capital), and social capital, in the form of allegiances with other significant players within political and cultural elites, are all frequently deployed in strategies evidenced here, with the aim of determining spatial formation. Symbolic capital was also evident, for example in relation to place, and claims of belonging.

9.5.1 Strategies of Specificity: Understanding Place and Time

Before securing their role in the shaping of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, many of the interviewees, had acquired 'place based' cultural capital, through previous association with the wider Lea Valley and east London. ''Place - making'' and the ''Genius of the Place'' which are important concepts in spatial formation in the UK, are discussed in Chapter 3 and touched on in section 9.7 'The Rules of the Game' below.

Legitimate knowledge relating to place had primarily been gained in a professional context, and was used in the interviews in supporting truth claims of : 'intrinsic' qualities, and therefore 'correctness' of some characteristics of the local physical environment; conditions of life, and issues of importance for local people and the local area ; and familiarity with previous valorised ''representations of space'' devised since the 1940s in ongoing efforts to bring about the main shared goal of making a 'better' place out of this part of London.

The participants, generally contextualised both themselves and the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park within the Lea Valley and east London, in both space and time. Almost all of their accounts describe this project, and their role within it, not as an isolated event, nor as an end in itself, but

as part of a series of 'moves' in a greater vision for place, being played out over a very long time frame, and larger spatial area.

Playing a long term game increases the chances that an individual goal will ultimately be delivered, that shortcomings perceived now by some players will eventually be put right. Shaping places was represented by interviewees as work that takes time, and sustained efforts of many 'players'. Patience, persistence and commitment to vision are required.

> ''You have to be very Zen like in this part of east London. Stuff takes a decade and that's fine.''

> ''You don't tend to deliver broad scale regeneration by running headlong at the biggest problem on the horizon, you tend to have to create a context of success to build your way towards the bigger issues, hence, so yeah to take on a whole series of issues.... You can't run at the big problem at day one ... ''

> ''We knew in general where life was heading and some of the things that needed doing, about the severance and all that, ...that was already being mapped out long before the Olympics, and the Olympics came along as a thing to grab to get some of that done, actually to get a lot of it done, but I don't think, or many of us ever thought the Olympics would do it, or that the Olympics was the thing. If you have a 30 year sense of direction, the Olympics was going to come along, and helps you to do something.''

Place based expertise also provided personal contact with, and knowledge of, other players in local networks, a form of ''social capital'' articulated by several of those interviewed, as a tool to be used in influencing urban forms.

Local area connection additionally has perceived symbolic exchange value as well - Jason Prior, who unlike some other interviewees, had no longstanding professional connection with the project site, describes discussions with local politicians where he made reference to his local birth and family's subsequent departure. Claiming 'belonging' in this way could perhaps reduce distance between the expert 'outsider' and local people - symbolic capital that might be exchanged for political gain and popular support.

9.5.2 Making Use of Social Capital

Any contemporary urban building project at this scale employs teams of professionals with different expertise who together deliver 'representations of space' from drawing to reality. Controlling the vision as far as possible is clearly the aim of individuals in the process, in the belief that good will come of their intervention. Being able to claim authorship means increased power in the field, access to more opportunities to shape space, and sustained / increasing personal capital, both financial and technical. The individuals interviewed acknowledge that alone they do not have all the expertise required to realise a project of this type in its entirety. They describe different strategies used to bolster their individual knowledge claims, and thereby gain power over spatial formation.

Individual knowledge claims were evidenced primarily based on lived experience - other similar projects successfully completed / built- rather than, for example educational qualifications . Bringing in supporting professional allies in key roles gave individuals the opportunity to gain greater authorship, marshalling not just their own cultural capital but that of others, and benefitting from multiple experiences. Social capital - personal connection - in the field of spatial production is clearly instrumental .

> '' we needed some real fire power ..so we then .. so we were really good mates with Allies and Morrison, we'd done a ton of stuff with them. We got on well with Graeme, Bob and co. so , said well, so that's fine... We needed engineers so we got Buro Happold - we'd done a ton of work... basically we got our mates together...''

> ''He immediately went to you know recognised leading experts on green space - management as well as design and building, so I know he spoke to quite a few people at that point, partly in order to build a business case but to also to put together a very strong brief for the designer,''

> ''er John got in touch with me in roughly 2008 he wanted someone to assist as project sponsor''

Social capital with key decision makers was also evidenced by most of the interviewees in securing powerful positions or gaining support for their recommendations.

> '' David Higgins was at the table, he was running EP - (EDAW) were doing a lot of work for David at the time, Howard Bernstein was at the table, (EDAW) were doing a lot of work for Howard,''

> ''David Higgins, set up a special design panel which he... it was called the ''Kitchen Cabinet '' there was myself, Stuart Lipton, Nick Serrota, Ricky Burdett, Richard Rogers, and we used to sit down on a monthly basis with David Higgins the Chief Executive, just go through the designs, masterplanning making sure everything was on track'',

> ''David Higgins, CEO of the ODA, so he was the key person, if you could get him to agree to start to do this at a very late stage of the process then you'd have a fair wind behind you..... John got him along late one evening to Hargreaves office in London, they had that big model, this fantastic model, they had George Hargreaves there, who persuaded him.''

9.5.3 Strategies of Similarity: Aligning with Elsewhere.

Having secured a position of power in the field, preferred options must be defended, challenges by others must continually be countered. Knowledge gained through personal experience is bolstered for example by knowledge of 'best practice' from specific valorised examples, and conversely, recommendations are distanced from known critique,

''... but I was talking with the guys from Barcelona summing up that conversation: the city project is more important than the Olympics. ''

''I went on a trip over to New York to see how they activate parks there, obviously Bryant Park is an extreme example, even Brooklyn Bridge park, just like kids classes happening in summer ''

The use of any examplar projects to bolster truth/ knowledge claims presupposes the applicability of the example to the present scenario, and that the correct 'lessons' have been/will be learned. Knowledge of critique is similarly marshalled to defend the preferred approach.

''We had a really great arts and culture programme, which is really quite subtle. It's not your normal 'plop art', where the art just lands within the park...''

The social, temporal and cultural context of projects makes them unique and specific. While there may be similar challenges, any example from another place is unlikely to be entirely transferable. It could also be argued that by seeking to transpose information from one place to another, the interviewees reveal an ideology of spatial neutrality, where physical space is divorced, distinct from the social (Massey, 2005). In some instances, the presupposition of applicability was questioned.

''he spoke about Central Park. The image he had in his mind was clearly a Central Park concept where they would build actually quite high density around the park, and I can recall saying to him ''Central Park is at the centre of the upper West Side. This is in the arse end of nowhere.'' There is nothing that irritates me more than the use of the inappropriate analogy.... whenever there's water people talk about Amsterdam, just because it's got water.''

9.5.4 Scientific Strategies: Establishing Proof.

At the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, a 'cutting edge' planting strategy was proposed, where neither direct experience nor best practice examples were available to counter challenges. The project's success or failure was going to be visible globally, and in this instance, with a long lead in time to delivery, empirical findings from a number of full scale trials were used as reported by John Hopkins, to evidence truth claims.

''My first project manager was Matt Heal, and I remember sitting down with Matt to explain to him the principle of annual meadows that we were proposing to use in the parks . So annual meadows you sow three months before you want them to be in flower, and then they're in flower. Matt said to me ''So let me just make sure I've understand this correctly. The whole area around the stadium, on the river side and all the landscape there will be bare earth three months before the Games?'' ''Yep.'' He said ''I'm not so sure about this,'' but I said ''Okay, no problem. We will trial it for two seasons before the Games.'' Never been done before, so we trial it two seasons, learnt all the lessons.''

9.6 Fields of Influence

As with any park making project, there is a surrounding spatial and social context including historical and cultural elements, an economic and political context, which influence the types of space that can be produced, and there is a project budget and anticipated completion date. There are physical challenges that are geographically specific, for example the locations of urban infrastructure, level changes across the site, or areas of contaminated land that constrain design options. Addressing specific physical challenges adds to costs and / or takes more time, shortage of time can mean a need to increase spending to meet deadlines, rising costs are assumed to be linked to political challenges, and so on. Atypically of other UK spatial production processes, in the making of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park there were also the IOC's and host nation specific demands: a requirement to meet the Olympic Games spatial needs, and marry these with perceived long term area needs. Specifically these were an immoveable deadline for completion; a claim to be creating ''the most sustainable Games ever''; and a desire to see the park provide a positive international representation of ''brand GB'' (Evans, 2011; Hayes & Horne, 2011).

Individual spatial producers are emotionally invested in their own idea of the best solution, and in any work they have already produced, and want to their ideas to move easily from paper to concrete space, so in most circumstances, even without the extra challenges here of having to rebalance many vested interests, there is great motivation to resist change, or even to revisit any elements actors feel have already been completed. Accounts of efforts to redesign the park after Hopkins arrival describe the type of resistance encountered to redirecting a project that already had significant support and momentum behind it.

> ''even within the ODA it was a battle to get anything changed. Because everybody else, all the other people responsible for bridges or structures were saying ''Oh no, you can't do anything,'' so it was a very, very difficult few months. It was like turning round a supertanker.''

The London 2012 Games site was bound to be a site of contest between major players in a range of fields - politics, finance, cultural production, spatial production, security. Spatial producers needed to consider interests of many powerful people to achieve their preferred vision. Knowledge of interests and constraints and an informed, supportable, intelligent or even 'elegant' response to them is part of good design. Interviewees representations showed how 'fields of influence' were used instrumentally, either in construction of their own arguments, or as part of other designers strategies to justify as practical and rational what are arguably arbitrary individual preferences and decisions.

This section looks at the various 'fields of influence' most often referred to in the interviews as having real impact on spatial formation, and provides evidence of designers efforts to align multiple interests across fields in support of their 'representation of space'.

Though separated here for simplicity of analysis, these fields of interest are interdependent and not conceived of as static or distinct in reality. They are separated as they were in the thematic

analysis of interview transcripts, but they are not meaningfully separated in effect or action, or even represented as having been imagined that way within individual interviewees perception. Amorphous and indistinct, relative power across the fields is constantly shifting, as a result of the actions of 'players' inside and outside the 'game'.

9.6.1 The Field of Development /Revenue Finance and Economics

One of the fears for cities and nations undertaking to host the Olympic Games or other 'mega events' is, that they will make an economic loss on, rather than gain from their investment. In the context of a major global financial crisis arising after London won the competition to host the Games, the project was under arguably even greater pressure than might otherwise have been the case to control spending, and prove itself an economically worthwhile public project (Gold & Gold, 2011) . The London bid from its earliest conception was represented in ways that showed the importance of thinking about long term economic benefit and 'value for money'. The reference to many United States case studies as 'best practice' in strategies for sustaining the park in Legacy perhaps also indicates the increasing importance of 'monetised' thinking about revenue funding for public parks in the UK outside the Olympic context, and interviewees arguably evidence the use of forms of 'calculative expertise' dominant in many other types of publicly funded projects in the cultural sector (Prince, 2014).

The commission to produce the new space for the Olympics and beyond was awarded, at the outset, to a team already identified as making their strongest claims not in design excellence, but of technical expertise in physical, social and importantly economic urban regeneration in a UK context. (They did also field a strong design team including leading UK architecture /landscape architecture practices, and with capacity in FOA for 'cutting edge' conceptual design thinking). Summarising the winning consortium's proposed long term strategy, one interviewee describes their approach as

> ''We should think of this as a big London comprehensive estate... a big public land holding - this was early on at the CPO hearing - Don't borrow the land for the Olympics and give it back again. What if we can get this?... Surely you can run an economic model inside a comprehensive land holding that would make that viable?''

A financial 'viability' framing of spatial change is used by interviewees to provide both economic justification for some spatial decisions, and to limit the scope of visions to those that can be represented as 'realistic':

> ''most schemes are successful if there's a strong economic rationale for it. The day you punt an idea that requires loads of subsidies, millions pounds of drain on the public purse, you can sound its death knell at that point.''

The use of an emotive term 'drain on the public purse' indicates a mindset either being responded to or projected. Negativity around projects requiring long term public investment is a prime consideration, irrespective of any arguments that might exist for other measures of collective value, say in public health or wellbeing, and for which arguably, public monies are assembled in the first place.

Once the Games had been won, the bid budget was shown to be unrealistic, and public funding requirements grew dramatically from the £4 billion pound bid estimate. By 2007 Olympic infrastructure costs on the Olympic sites alone which were to be met by public funding stood at over £9 billion. This amount did not include costs of buying the land, staging the Games themselves, or wider regeneration or transport investment (Evans, 2011). From the interviews, the increasing costs, later combined with the crisis in the UK economy, did increase pressure to justify every item of spend. However it also strengthened financial arguments to resist change, supporting the continued development of EDAW Aecom consortium's original arrangement.

In the face of spiralling project costs, post Games award announcement, interviewees described the project consolidating into an inward looking ' centripetal plan', failing to address severance beyond the Olympic site boundary. As one interviewee put it:

> ''along the boundaries .. that's where the Olympics area of focus sort of petered out .... If the Olympics had been on both sides of the railway you can be sure they'd have sorted it out''

Asked to reflect on why the park has taken its current form, why, for example, major roads and railways that isolate the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park from many surrounding residents were not buried or bridged, as they have been in other world or European cities not even hosting an Olympics (see for example Munich's Petuelpark) or why the relationship between the canal and the main areas of parkland remain indirect, cost was frequently cited.

> '' There's a point where you say, in your public budget, do you want to spend another billion on the railway line?, the water main?, whatever..... When we work in other parts of the world we do just that, but there's a point you know in this country.... ''

> ''Having said that we had no real pull on some of the issues of the design, nor did we want to.... All you'd be doing would be saying was you need to spend more money on this road or on that.''

Embedded in this idea of city building at the London Olympics is an expectation that money spent for the public benefit is not justified unless it can be recouped, through revenue raising activities and increased land values: city enhancement as a business proposition. The notion that collective wealth might be being generated in society specifically in order to fund societally beneficial projects, like making the city less polluted, more attractive, more enjoyable or more healthy to live in does not seem to have been a supportable expectation.

As previously stated, the interviews suggest that possible costs, along with time constraints, were among strategies used to prevent consideration of alternatives. There is some evidence of this in regards to dealing with voices 'external' to the process in the next section.

9.6.2 The Political Field

Power in the political field to influence the spaces at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, (outside of the clear influence of free market thinking), is inconsistent in its representation across the interviews. In advance of securing the Games in 2005, interviewees suggested that, other than the Department of Culture Media and Sport , Central Government was not ''really interested'' in the Olympic project. It was largely being overseen at that stage by the then Labour Party London Mayor, Ken Livingstone, through the London Development Agency (LDA), with support of local politicians, in a context where a London Olympics was not viewed as a realistic prospect.

After London was announced as host city, and the budget had to be substantially increased, other Central Government departments, including the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister became involved, initially under a Labour Government. An independent entity the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) was in place in 2006 to manage project delivery, and a Conservative London Mayor, Boris Johnson elected in 2008 replaced 'Red' Ken Livingstone. After the financial crisis, and subsequent elections in May 2010, the national tier of political oversight was under the Conservative Coalition Government who were pledged to reduce public spending. These ideological changes in the political field were not readily identifiable in most narratives of the project's development.

Local Borough level politics was represented in the interviews as either having had a limited influence, or in some accounts, very little involvement. In some representations, local politicians were encouraged to support the Games bid, and to see how they might make political capital from it by securing local votes - not through the event itself, but through the idea of Legacy improving employment, housing or environmental prospects for local people long term.

Some local Borough policies were represented as influential in determining aspects of the project and location of specific elements. Newham's representatives were described as driven to see their Borough's statistical shortage of green open space addressed, and were reportedly very concerned to ensure the exact quantity of open space originally promised was retained throughout various revisions, despite the suggestion that the area of the Borough with a deficit in access to open space was in fact too distant from the Olympic site for those residents to benefit. Hackney were as determined to see industrial land use on land adjacent the Lea Navigation, as this was long term planning designation. According to interviews, they held this line irrespective of the merits of other arguments, or changed market conditions, and were at least partially responsible for seeing the enormous broadcast centre 'shed' (generally represented in interviews as a problematic and ugly building) being sited opposite housing , on previous canal side open space, blocking views and connectivity between canal and the new park.

Tower Hamlets reportedly presented a design challenge to the Legacy masterplans by commissioning studies by spatial researchers 'Space Syntax' that highlighted the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and Westfield's severance and isolation from the existing urban movement networks, and the project's overall lack of connectivity/permeability. What the impact was of their findings on the built project was not described in interviews. It is clear though from the commission of the Space Syntax study, and from remarks in the interviews that there was an

expectation at least early on, that the Olympics would do something to deal with the severance of the site. As one interview said

> '' That's the frustrating thing. People saying ''Did you not realise that Roman Road was cut off from the Olympic site '' of course we realised. We'd been going on about it since 2003 or longer.''

There is an impression created in some of the discussion that local issues, even those raised by the relatively powerful voices of local politicians, advisors in the Mayor's office, or 'stakeholder' agencies weren't readily heard in the overwhelming push to make London's Olympics an international success.

> LLDC 1. '' ... so by the time we were working with the five host borough team on the connectivity projects outside the Olympic Park, they had an ask initially of £500 million, about two years before the games.''
>
> LLDC 2''It was way too late.''
>
> LLDC 1 ''Way too late.''
>
> LLDC 3 ''With the Boroughs? We'd been making these points consistently.''
>
> LLDC 1 ''We all had.''
>
> LLDC 3 ''....It was a process of being listened to sufficiently so that there was any money''.
>
> LLDC 1 ''.... We ended up getting 100 million from central government, different sources. But by that time all we could really do was the quick win projects.''

The idea that local politicians might make political capital from a Legacy improving employment, housing or environmental prospects for local people long term implies that local people would have some political capital to exchange for favourable outcomes. Therefore local views might have some ability to determine the vision, at least in the run up to obtaining the initial planning permission for the Olympic Legacy designs. Consultation, was, according to the interviewees, extensive, both in the run up to the planning application and throughout the development of Olympic and Legacy designs to construction. However the voices of local people are not represented in the interviews as having been influential at all on the designs, at least not as part of an ''options open'' process where local views might have really impacted in changing or even guiding eventual spatial form.

Consultation is represented in some interviews as a means to provide information to local people, to help them understand the decisions that have already been made, and as a setting for public validation of particular visions (even if the visions validated were of a Royal Park that was not delivered).

Alternatively local people were represented by interviewees as having nothing substantive to say about parks at all, with people from ''minority communities" largely having been recorded as being interested only in housing and jobs, and in not having to overcome too much bureaucracy as specific groups who might want to make use of the park. That this might have been a result

of the consultation methods themselves, rather than an accurate representation of local views about the values or otherwise of different types of park space or activities in parks had not been considered. In general the representations of consultation in the elite interviews supports strongly the descriptions of researchers reviewing the process at the time, as set out in Chapter 4 (Davis, 2011; Hayes & Horne, 2011).

Nor were local politicians described as representing local interests in terms of any specific locally vocalised needs. Policies acted on seem to relate only to expert opinion and quantifiable assessments of need, rather than for example qualitative discussion of the type represented in this study .

9.6.3 Olympic Influences

Staging an Olympics has requirements set by the IOC in terms of facilities for sports, for athlete accommodation, for the global media, and for circulation and access of athletes and officials. The represented goal of those interviewed was the long term configuration of space, including design of a public park. To all interviewees, the Olympics was seen as a means to an end, however the specific infrastructure requirements of the Olympics were called on in arguments to support a particular configuration of space.

> ''to run the games effectively you need ...uh, venues either side, so the way you do it is public in the middle, venues either side and a secure circulation for athletes and officials round the outside ok, so there's like, there's a couple of rings within each other. So first of all you've got to create the volume for a quarter of a million people somewhere in the middle, you've got to have enough space for the venues around it, then you've got to get enough depth behind the venues to get all of these things to work,''

This model sees the highest quality public space located centrally, the servicing and ancilliary functions to the periphery, closest to the surrounding population. In this construction, the implication is there are no alternatives, the proposal is not arbitrary. Technical capital associated with staging mega - events would not be widely available in the context of pre Olympics London, and making use of it in arguments to support preferred configurations of space would limit the potential for challenge. Asked if meeting the Olympic requirements had ever seemed at odds to what might have been the right solution for the area without an Olympics, one interviewees response was that designs always looked at Legacy as well as Games time, and so this had not been an issue. The number of retained venues was represented as the most significant impact of designing first for Games, in terms of the long term financial viability of those facilities. Other interviews identified further negative impact in terms of urban quality in the development sites that adjoin retained venues.

Clearly, as different Olympic cities have taken different approaches, there are other options in managing Olympic requirements, even in designs led by the same person, as the following extract illustrates:

> ''I vividly remember I said to (name of designer) ''Why are we spreading all these things around because what it means when we come to develop this land, it's all got the sports mausoleum in the middle of it, you instantly taint...They have a dynamic and a service requirement that is inimicable to living.'' He said ''It has to be like that for crowd control. The other day he did a very good presentation of the masterplan for Rio, and the buildings are all together!''

Another Olympic characteristic, which places this project outside 'typical' park making practices, is the certainty of the deadline, which cannot be extended without significant reputational damage for all concerned. The amount of time available to resolve all technical issues and achieve construction within the time frame clearly impacted on designers attachment to spatial representations they felt had already been resolved. While more money might be borrowed or allocated, and where some adjustments to perceived shortcomings can be resolved in Legacy, the Olympic Park and facilities had to be tested and ready for use for the opening ceremony on July 27, 2012. Interviewees consistently referred to the pressure of time as affecting the openness of decision making throughout the process,

> ''My sense of it was the project managers were very influential in determining what got done because it had to be done by Friday. It had to be done to time and budget so go back and fiddle around with your drawing but..... The first Gant chart , I was there, the first Gant chart, the project was finished June 2013! You know, something had to give.''

Major infrastructure adjustments that would have been required to address severance were not just framed as too costly to consider, but impossible to fit into the tight deadlines for delivery

> ''when you start trying to sequence that enormous amount of build in the time you've got,...''

Once the Games was awarded to London, and the project became 'live', the interviews make clear that only a very significantly supported argument could have caused deviation from the vision developed up to that point. Efforts were directed to making the already agreed vision a reality. In this context, the spatial changes proposed by the new design team, appointed under John Hopkins leadership, that required revisiting previous decisions and designs, could only have challenged existing ideas if framed as absolutely essential to the project's success. This view is supported by his recorded interview for the Landscape Institute, and by some statements made by other interviewees. These statements refer to two other 'fields' of influence: directly to ''sustainability''; and indirectly, to a perception of ''national image'' discussed in section 9.8 below in ''rules of the game''.

9.6.4 Sustainability

The discourse of sustainable development has been described as part of a modernist ideology, founded on faith in science's ability to reliably define, and then manage the limits of natural processes. 'Sustainable development' arguably supports the idea of progress, and rather than challenging its fundamental principles, accommodates a neoliberal agenda of continuing

economic growth and financial flows against the critique of environmentalists (MacNaghten & Urry, 1998; Hayes & Horne, 2011). The Olympic movement's incorporation in the 1990s of environmental 'responsibility' into its core values for new bidding cities to respond to, can be seen, at least in part, as a response to critiques of 'gigantism', as the IOC were requiring host cities to expend huge sums and vast resources just to stage an ephemeral 'mega event' (Gold & Gold, 2011). London's Games promoters, responding to this environmental agenda, made claims it would be the ''greenest games of modern times'' and that the park would set a ''blueprint for sustainable living'' that would set a standard for future Games, and for continued development of the Thames Gateway (Evans, 2011; Hayes & Horne, 2011).

John Hopkins interview for the Landscape Institute covers in some detail his passionate interest in the idea of sustainable development, and particularly One Planet Living principles. He felt the Olympic open space designs he directed represented how park spaces should be made in future. The standards he required, were to his view, providing lessons for global development by, for example, remediating land previously contaminated by industry, using recycled materials for paving, creating soils from waste, helping manage flood risk, providing habitat in the city, and implementing planting based on ecological principles. A key claim for the 'Dynamic Landscape' approach to landscape design (Hitchmough & Dunnett, 2008) championed by Hopkins is increased sustainability, through working with plants best fitted to conditions, and letting them grow to a 'natural' form, rather than choosing plants which are less well adapted, more susceptible to competition by weeds, and/or shaping them to specific shapes. The 'ecological' approach leads to less demand on resources like water or labour, and less need for chemicals when compared with other 'horticultural' approaches. It also has the attraction of promising less economic resource for maintenance as a result. Sustainable development discourses are undoubtedly a key determinant of the ecological aesthetic that is predominant in the North Park.

One Planet Living is referred to by Hopkins as a principle that was of importance across the whole Olympic development, however none of the other interviewees described concern for sustainability principles in the same way, indicating again the importance of personal ideology in key positions as a determining factor in spatial formation .

Though no other interviewees made significant mention of sustainability as a driving force for their own spatial vision, ''the sustainability speak/trope'" as one interviewee called it, was implicated by other interviewees as a determining factor in other elements of spatial configuration that impact the park's accessibility. A rail head and aggregates storage area, is retained alongside the Lea Navigation, to the south west of the Olympic stadium. It is a visually unattractive site, gravel spills from it enter the waterway, and it blocks direct physical access to Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park for significant numbers of residents at one of the few pedestrian and cycle crossing points of the A12 near Bromley by Bow. It has been retained in its original location as a facility of great importance to sustainable London, as it allows aggregates to enter the city by rail rather than road, and was used to bring materials to site during the Olympics. There was some speculation that it may be a site of future private sector development.

A new power plant, with blank facades in rusted Corten steel, is also sited on the Lea Navigation, north west of the main stadium, and just south of the broadcast centre, at the point where

the strategic north-south footpath and cycle route is joined by the east-west strategic route- the junction of the Lea navigation and the Hertford & Union Canal. Interviewees recalled the power station was sited here, in what arguably might have been a prominent park entrance point for walking and cycling, or a potentially marketable location for more activity generating development uses, due to an idea at the early stages of the project that a wharf situated on the canal would serve barges bringing biomass from further north in the Lea valley, for use in sustainable power generation. In the end the system chosen for power did not use biomass, however the building location remained. Interviews suggest it may still be possible in future to 'retrofit' the plant for biomass generation.

9.7 National Image, Taste, and ''The Rules of the Game''.

From the interviews, there is no doubt that London's design for the Olympic Games, and to a lesser extent for the Legacy, was required to perform as an example of what Britain can do, and to be emblematic of some sense of ''Britishness'', the nation's own representation of itself.

As a global-mega event, the London Olympics also provided a widely televised and photographed prestige project, a showcase for British spatial practitioners seeking to increase their symbolic capital, and power in the field. The discussion has so far considered 'competition' between professionals to secure authorship of the park, however interviews, and arguably the built spaces themselves, illustrate ongoing competition between the different built environment professions - architecture, landscape architecture, planning and engineering- for a dominant position in the field of spatial design within the UK as a whole.

Two excerpts below reveal an expression of power relations in spatial design in the UK context, with architecture arguably evidenced as the dominant profession. The first quotation describes a time period when FOA were working with EDAW Aecom consortium, the second the time after FOA had left, but before John Hopkins had appointed LDA design and Hargreaves to bring the parklands and public realm back under 'single authorship'.

> ''There was a view that maybe, we.., there would be a common aesthetic across this thing, (landscape and buildings) and so we started working on one. And then we came to a view that no, you're going to end up using multiple architects, because, at one level, there was no way the architectural community were going to stand for one person doing all of this stuff - and actually an eclectic mix of buildings of its time, showcasing a range of British design skills, from big to small firms was a much better idea. But the place where.... where there was consistency was in the public realm, in the retaining structures, and the bridges and how you handle the handrails. So in a way the park became the consistent venue in its aesthetic approach... and then you started adding an eclectic building into that, and you start knitting it together.''

> LLDC 1'' .... the ODA commissioned separate landscape teams that came with a lot of the venues,...''
> LLDC 2''Fairly disastrous actually, a total mismatch.''
> LLDC 1''So the whole thing became quite diluted and quite fragmented - the funny smarties and the slightly weird design around the stadium was one thing, the Velodrome had a completely different design team...''

The different values for multiple authorship expressed here seem to denote a difference in legitimate taste . Architecture is not required to conform to particular standards in materiality in colour, or form, it does not need to be visually coherent, 'mismatch' is positive characteristic, multiple authorship is valorised. Each building as an individual entity can be 'iconic'. Variety, eclecticism, and individual expression is valued, expected.

The landscape at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park on the other hand is required to function primarily as a setting, a continuous backdrop, subservient to buildings. Uniformity, restraint and extensiveness, rather than variety and distinctiveness, is valued. It was with regret that the new direction for landscape design in the North Park under Hopkins leadership could not be delivered in the South

> ''The South Park got tweaked as much as possible but in reality so much earthmoving had happened by that time, bridge abutments were going in, ... you're right .. the big move was in the north. The south pays some homage to that if you like but it can't do it on the same sort of scale.''

It seems then that the South Park 'got away' from the final design team, though for local people perhaps this is a fortunate, rather than regrettable circumstance. The value of uniformity/ consistency in landscape style is one of four expressed characteristics that from the interviews arguably constitute 'legitimate' landscape taste in a UK context. Reviews in the press on the opening of the South Park support this reading. Rowan Moore the architectural critic writing in the Observer in April 2014 (Moore, 2014) expresses his view that

"…. the best places are in the more serene north park. There is something noble about this big space, with the sporting monuments around it."

South Park, on the other hand has it all wrong. It is far from 'noble', in what appears to be a class based discourse, it seems he finds it a little vulgar.

"There is a frenzy of wacky light fittings, of playground installations, of seats, of tree species, sculptural lumps of granite, kiosks ……. the visual equivalent of several mobile ringtones going off at once."

The spatial analysis in the previous chapter, based on empirical research, found South Park represented 'better' park design in terms of functional factors likely to make it easy to use - accessibility, ease of visual surveillance, and provision of seating on main movement routes. Moore's critique is arguably founded entirely in issues of taste, a taste aligned most closely with

white British university graduates in the park preference survey - the legitimate taste of the powerful.

Other qualities theoretically identified as particularly British in Chapter 3 were evidenced in the elite interviews. Pragmatism/realism were regularly used to valorise particular choices, prioritising the tangible and the measurable, and framing decisions as not arbitrary but as irrefutable sense . Pragmatism was used, both to imply an objective functional performance of a particular design, and to the ability to construct an acceptable economic justification. Emphasis on artistic or symbolic values that are actually, as I have argued here, highly significant in spatial formation at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, would reveal the subjectivity and arbitrariness of decisions, and be more open to criticism. Practicality, simple efficiency of thinking, was valued, and frequently represented in constructions of arguments supporting the preferred masterplan and park design.

> ''There are lots of pieces of data on the table. The brief for the design is getting more and more complex. If you put the park in the middle you can solve the deepest park spaces, control the development .... We not only create a beautiful park, we can take care of these flood problems, have enough ability to offset our utility corridors, and do everything else we have to do.''

The reason that FOA (a Spanish / Iranian led architecture partnership) left the project, as one account recalled, was their failure to make a pragmatic circulation pattern from their artistically inspired muscle fibre design motif in Legacy.

Practicality and uniformity alone were not enough though. To be a showcase project for the UK on a global scale, the landscape must also be ''ambitious'', meaning impressive, through providing evidence of technical mastery and legitimate forms of cultural capital. The opportunity to create an ambitious landscape project in design terms was a core reason given for the initial central location of the park on the Lea River.

The developed design, which became ''bitty'' and ''diluted'' after FOA left, was problematised by some interviewees as ''polite'' but functional, not ambitious enough. The lack of evident ambition across a unified landscape was a problem so severe in this context, that it allowed / required the transformation of the design at a relatively late stage, after construction had already commenced . The requisite level of ambition was restored by Hopkins/ LDA / Hargreaves, by proposing creation of an extensive ecological landscape using the very latest ideas in landscape science but based on an historic English design language, focussed in the North Park.

> '' It's supposed to be designed, it's supposed to... its designed to work with the venues, with the surrounding buildings, and the views and vistas , in fact if anything,... precedent,.. if you want to use a historic... it's a picturesque landscape. It's a development of the English picturesque movement but with, with a Hargreaves pitch to it I suppose.''

However, ambition in landscape design must be tempered with restraint. Design shouldn't be too ostentatious or showy (perhaps too challenging to the dominant architectural spectacle).

Rather than mannered or It should appear effortless, natural. As the following quote from Hopkin's interview illustrates, by using perceived critique of designs elsewhere to distance the chosen approach from 'incorrect' design.

> ''Keeping it simple always was really important, and I didn't want this to be an over wrought design, and of course there is great pressure to, to make it an absolute icon of design. Well I think it is,... for very different reasons than other large scale projects of this nature. ''

The implied criticism of other 'large scale' presumably mega event or Olympic projects elsewhere, seems to be a way of constructing this landscape, self consciously designed to be emblematic of Britishness, in contradistinction to the foreign (Chambers, 1993). As the interview continues, Hopkins representation seems reminiscent of 18th Century English attacks on the landscapes of French formalism described in Chapter 3.

> ''Simon Barnes, who's the sports journalist for the Times, I took him around the park just before I left. Simon happens to be a naturalist as well, and he wrote in his article it, this park, was not what you might expect - an Olympic Park for generalissimos, grand boulevards and grand statements - and he said that, paradoxically the commitment to non human issues, which is the wildlife and the biodiversity - half of the park is habitat - that paradoxically, that makes the park more humane.''

The quotation illustrates the use of identifiably xenophobic ''symbolic violence'' (Bourdieu , 1999[1979]) to valorise the correct view, in this case a 'British' vision of beauty and morality found in wild nature, allied to a particular political system, and denigrate the incorrect' preference of formal or grand landscapes in imagined undemocratic foreign societies. The construction is present then not just in spatial practice, but in the cultural values expressed in national media and is therefore arguably a discourse understood in wider UK society.

A disagreement between interviewees over how well the Legacy landscape will conform to the ''rules of the game'' illustrates, that unsurprisingly, there are conflicting views as to where the boundaries between coherence, practicality, restraint and ambition lie.

> '' whilst I thought the landscape for the Games was wonderful, I'm wondering whether it's becoming too complex ..... I felt as a river park landscape, picturesque landscape, if you held to that philosophy, I'm not sure you needed to put all that stuff in it.''

9.8 Representations and Perceptions of the Local Community

In general, in the interviews, there is a sense of distance between the design elites who control space, and the wider community for whom the park was said , at least in part, to be intended. None of the designers interviewed talked about direct discussions with the community. Residents seem in most representations, a kind of statistically problematised abstract entity, rather than a familiar population. There was no discussion of formal or informal spokespersons, known personalities, to be referred to or quoted, even after a decade of claimed extensive engagement.

To ‘reach’ the local population, gestures have had to be made, along with improved physical connections, (some places are now ‘stitched’ into the post Games ‘island site’), so people can understand the space is for them. For instance, local ideas have been included in pieces of art, located somewhere in the park.

The main focus of all discussion is the resolution of technical matters, problem solving. Whether the park would be liked by local residents was never raised, rather presumed - once they visit, they will like it, or at least they should, as this is the legitimate, moral, informed response. The use that local people make of other parks in the locality, the issues that bring them to some parks, and not to others, what they would wish to see, and what they might like to change about the parks they can visit as discussed at length in the focus groups, and raised for consideration during the interviews, was neither known or represented as having been information available at any stage to the interviewees.

Rather than exploring the topic with local residents, expert views from New York and elsewhere, were used to explain to decision makers how people use parks, what makes parks a success. Within this framing, best practice has been implemented. Arguments used are supported by (some) research academics, and those who have created the park give lectures on its strengths and challenges, nationally and internationally. New standards have been set, and the park valorised in the professional press and national media. This supports a view that powerful groups reinforce legitimate taste. As expressed by one interviewee

> ‘’the vision was what a park ought to be, my sense, maybe I’m being completely unfair here what a park ought to be, ... this is the kind of park people should enjoy, you know what I mean.’’

There is a presumption within all the representations that the beauty of an ecological picturesque landscape is self evident, and will be appreciated by everyone, although some of the discussion around consultation and education might imply a level of doubt on that point. It may be though, that the concern was, while it would be thought beautiful, the scientific sophistication of the vision, or the work that went into achieving it, might not be universally understood. The lessons for others might not be learned. It is clear from the interviews, that the designers were concerned the full intellectual value of landscapes at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park should be known.

> ‘’And yeah I did presentations when I joined the ODA, I did presentations across the whole programme, because I knew that there would be people there who didn’t understand where we were heading, ... so I did a lot of presentations consistently through the project, to make people,... as people came in, so that they understood what we were trying to achieve, and to reduce risks. ‘’

> ‘’One of the key things the Legacy Company need to do is to is to tell that story to, to the public who come into the park, and to others who want to know why it’s this different, what’s, what’s so special about it, what precedents does it set? Certainly a lot of questions and intrigue from the people visiting the park currently about why it is the way it is.’’

Outreach is still going on to contact ''ethnic minority'' groups, meaning non white British groups, though in actuality, white British people are a minority of those who live in the park catchment. The question remains that if long term engagement and inclusion had been part of the process in the many years leading up to the construction of the project, why would the majority of local residents still need outreach after the park is open to feel included in the process?

There was a willingness expressed by the interviewees during my time with them to engage with this research subject, and awareness that UK minority groups might make less use of park spaces, perhaps for cultural reasons. In response to specific findings of ethnically / culturally based park landscape preferences however, interviewees appeared challenged, perhaps revealing the extent to which 'normative' (white Anglo) spatial practices are considered correct, legitimate.

The popularity of the geometric garden image from the park preference survey elicited this response at LLDC:

> '' nobody in their right mind would ever do a knot garden for all sorts of reasons. Partly stylistically and partly because you couldn't look after it. Partly because you just wouldn't do that.''

However other interviewees in the group held the view that the South Park during the games, and in Legacy was close(r) to a contemporary version of this type of controlled formal design, especially when compared with the landscape of the North Park.

Dogs are banned from some UK beaches during peak summer use, and with this frame, I asked if the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park had ever been/might be envisioned as a dog free space. Excluding dogs was equated by interviewees with excluding people, and therefore highly problematic, incompatible with their 'inclusive' view of open space management (though clearly dog owners can still use a dog free park). Arguments were made that while there would be ample provision for dog exercise in alternate locations in a coastal context, every part of a park in a 'packed piece of city' such as this would all have to be available for dog exercise year round, as alternatives would be unavailable. This, in spite of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park's context as one section within a 26 mile continuous Regional Park .

It is intended that the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park be managed as a space for dogs on leads, with no dogs in children's play areas, and it is intended that this will be 'policed' by park wardens. The focus groups reveal cynicism among local people, based on experience, that enforcement of considerate behaviour would actually take place. Royal Parks that completely exclude dogs from some areas with robust enforcement are preferred over local parks with similar 'dogs on leads' restrictions that are not effectively policed or enforced. Enforcement may well be excellent here, and may influence use, but could only be tested over a longer timeframe than is available for this investigation.

There are concerns for modesty that impact on some women's ability to participate fully in outdoor sports and games in a mixed gender space, and there was enthusiasm expressed in focus groups for day time single gender activities, particularly for the 'stay at home mums' from Pakistani and British Bangladeshi groups . Interviewees were asked if any opportunity had been

taken to design or consider designs for spaces that might accommodate some single gender use at certain times. It was discussed that indoor spaces had taken specific groups needs into account, and some outdoor facilities, such as a skate park, did offer 'girls only' sessions. It had not been part of the design brief for the park here, because

> '' that would be quite a hard thing to do in a public park, because by definition it would be open.''

Again this supports Davis's and others assertion that there is a particular ideological vision at work here of inclusion in public space, one which doesn't accommodate conflict avoidance, or recognise difference through parallel provision, a vision that has been connected to Richard Rogers' and the Urban Task Force's idealised space of conflict free, respectful integration (Davis, 2011; Hayes & Horne, 2011; Massey, 2005) . The risk with failing to provide facilities for people who would rather avoid conflict than tolerate it, is that they will simply not be present, will not bring their children, and will not benefit.

The separation and fragmentation of space, remarked on elsewhere as characteristic of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, would surely be able to accommodate creation of some discrete, flexibly managed park spaces, that might even occasionally accommodate single gender or other specific group uses, without interrupting general access to the rest of the park. Moreover, in other discussion, it was revealed that in fact, parts of the park had been designed to be cordoned off as ''separate rooms'', in the context of a revenue raising events programme.

9. 9 Conclusion: Whose Values?

Henri Lefebvre (Lefebvre, 1991[1974]) makes a distinction between society's 'lived' spatial practices, and those 'representations of space' - spaces as they are 'conceived' by spatial designers, planners, scientists. He asserts that the institutional interpreters of space imagine and promote a vision of space that is in line with the dominant views in a society, not cognisant of or interested in other possible interpretations. He claims that the designers and scientists imagine their visions of space when built, will ultimately be experienced and understood by everyone just as they have intended. Findings from the elite interviews, the built space of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park itself, and subsequent press reaction to them, provide evidence, I argue, that strongly supports this theoretical position, particularly when viewed in the context of the differentiated 'lived' spatial practices and preferences discussed by participants in the focus groups.

The accounts here also support a Bourdieusian view of continuous contest, of struggle for control, for power, between players in a subtly shifting field (Bourdieu, 1999[1979]). Cultural capital, social capital and symbolic capital are all deployed by individual actors to maintain control of spatial production, and prolong access to economic capital. The rules of the game are evidenced, consistent and theoretically in accordance with 'legitimate' British cultural values, but not distinctly articulated. The players are 'fish in water' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:127) playing the game deftly .

The main focus of all discussion by the designers interviewed is the difficult task of simultaneous resolution of multiple technical considerations, complex problem solving. The neutral unemotional representation of facts, of creating the built space as a practical, rational response to a set of objective problems, masks the process's substantial symbolic and culturally situated content - among other things, attachment to a specific, socially constructed Romantic vision of man's relationship with nature- a vision that is open to other interpretations. Whether the park would actually be liked by local residents has not been raised, rather presumed - best practice has been followed, challenges have been met, the park has opened on time and to great professional acclaim.

An 'empiricist' view of space, as part of a verifiable 'real world' of knowledge, space as something simply physically experienced, devoid of theoretical, symbolic or social meaning , is a view claimed to have been supported in Britain over centuries of cultural and ideological development. The British in particular value 'practical' knowledge, based on the assumed objectivity of physical experience, framed within a Western ideology of space as a universally objective backdrop to life (Massey, 2005; Chambers, 1993; Cosgrove, 1984). This is a view that is in no way contradicted by the representations here.

Chambers asserts that a focus on the technical, the practical, rather than symbolic, is not only characteristically British , it is an intrinsically 'conservative' cultural construct. An emphasis on the 'objective' makes it more difficult to see the framing/ construction of thought. Cultural constructs remain hidden, not taken as constructs at all, they are just a given, true, and so will not be questioned. That the landscape ideals of contemporary British spatial practice, as manifest in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, should still be so similar to those invented by the ruling elite roughly three hundred years ago, seems to validate this argument strongly. The landscape designed here was primarily intended to be an ambitious, British version of Olympic space, emblematic of contemporary British values - but while youthful, multicultural London was part of the brand sold to the Olympic Committee during the bid, the North Park in particular is arguably more structured by an idealised and imagined rural past than the spatial needs of the present city form or current residents. The centre piece, distant and still hard to reach for most, is a naturalised river in a floral meadow, an ecological picturesque landscape, symbolically reclaimed from the horrors of industry.

Despite having championed a Royal Park aesthetic, that might coincide more widely with local park preferences than the built scheme, interviews imply the first design team for the project valorised only some aspects of that park style. Describing reactions to the late introduction of a play space and cafe into the picturesque composition envisaged around the Velodrome in North Park, interviewees questioned the need for such programmed spaces. Good views and a big sky would have been enough - a landscape vision of sweeping vistas and naturalised riverside, sporting temples in a pastoral setting , a 'natural' visual spectacle with very little additional programme. A Royal Park as an ideal then, but one like Richmond Park perhaps, rather than the more gardenesque St James's Park or Kensington Gardens.

The preferences of those outside the institutionalised processes of taste formation or value exchange, the 'ordinary' people who will be making use of the spaces designed 'for them',

are unknown. While the South Park, by dint of timing pressures, and a perhaps commercially oriented brief, seems to provide a landscape, closer in its design style and spatial programme to the preferences and practices of the majority of surrounding residents, some interviewees expressed frustration that, due to the compressed timescales, they had been unable to deliver the South Park within the same ecological aesthetic and ideological frame as the North. The representations here indicate a view among at least some of the spatial producers, (one echoed by the media's 'connoisseurs' of spatial design), that the South Park, is an inferior space as a result.

Though credited by some interviewees with bringing more thinking about people into discussions at quite a late stage in the park's development, Hopkins has little to say himself about users needs. He states that his approach is effectively summarised as one where leaving out human interests and focussing on creating habitat for wildlife, creates space that is 'paradoxically more humane'. In its valorisation of 'natural' idealised rural spaces, the design here is represented as purposively distanced from, and morally superior to, 'foreign' space - it is not the kind of overtly controlled landscape, made elsewhere for ''Generalissimos''. This provides evidence that there is still a way of thinking among UK design professionals, about the form of landscape in particular configurations as constitutive of nation, of 'place', of Britishness, a construction that is set against the threat of the alien , and his or her foreign tastes or cultures. That this vision might be excluding to many British people is not considered. It is a morally and politically correct landscape, representing what people 'should' like. The legitimate taste.

There is resistance evident in the interviews to considering approaches to spatial design or management to suit ideals outside the existing 'legitimate taste' or values - for example for dog free space, or for single gender spaces. Rogers idealised vision of the equitable sharing of public spaces, unproblematically available and accessible to all. This ideal, so influential here (Davis, 2011; Evans, 2011) viewed in the light of these representations appears to have embedded in it a process of 'conditional belonging' where to be 'acceptable' you must mirror legitimate (white) Britain, even if that requires you to adopt values and behaviours that may negate your own values or histories. (Chambers, 1993)

Massey argues it is only ideology that separates society from space, (Massey, 2005). Lefebvre that society exudes the space of its dominant ideology (Lefebvre, 1991[1974]). These interviews support an argument that highly educated Anglo European people, the dominant groups in the UK, are producing spaces of inequality, formed in accordance with their own cultural preferences and practices, assuming their visions of beauty and understanding of space will have universal appeal. There is little consideration for the impact that these choices may have on the presence of those with other visions, values or beliefs. While aspiring to make spaces that are freely available to everyone, spatial producers overlook their own culturally situated values of nature, cities and public space. This has resulted here, at least in the North Park, in a space that is most suited to the tastes and values this study finds associated with white British people, and particularly white British graduates. It remains to be seen if the findings from the park preference survey, and the focus groups, which would predict less use of the North Park by people from BME groups, are reflected in the actual behaviour of visitors to the park.

10. 0 Observation

10.1 Introduction: Early Use Counts

The park preference survey and focus groups gave a strong indication that aesthetic and programmatic characteristics of the North Park would appeal to more white British people, than people from the other main British ethnic groups in the catchment of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. The same empirical evidence suggested that the South Park was likely to appeal more equally to residents across all ethnicities. The distance of park spaces, and complexity of access from the homes of many in the potential catchment has been identified as likely to result in some underrepresentation of BME groups, particularly British Bangladeshis. User counts, offer a way of investigating whether the group discussions and surveys are reflected in actual behaviours in park space.

The proportion of all park users who are local compared to people from beyond the park catchment area is unknown, as resources did not allow for surveying broadly, however it is reasonable to assume that both North & South Park spaces are as likely as each other to be used by similar numbers of local people and people beyond the catchment. Conversations overheard and visual notes indicate that many people visit both parts of the park, North and South. There were many local people using the park. All the people I spoke with were local, however I was only able to speak with relatively few. There were also many people who appeared to be tourists.

10.2 Fieldwork Planning

Five four hour visits to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park were completed between April and September 2014, after the opening of the South Park before the Easter holidays in April 2014. (The North Park opened in 2013). Four visits were made during school holidays, and one in school term time, three at weekends and two on weekdays. Most visits were made after lunch and into the early evening, but one weekend visit was made from mid morning through lunch time. As focus groups indicated that park use by some was highly weather dependent, visits were made only on fine days with sunshine and warm temperatures between 20 and 27 degrees celsius. The intention was to broadly assess the presence or absence of BME groups relative to the representation in the surrounding area under the most favourable circumstances for park use.

Notes were made throughout field visits, to add more qualitative information to quantitative aspects.

Resources available for user counts meant that it was not possible to speak with many of those counted, and thereby to allow them to self identify their ethnicity. Instead, imperfect and broad visual indicators of ethnicity were used, supplemented by notes made during counts (of languages spoken, accents heard, styles of dress etc). Ultimately, I used visual indicators and

what I could hear, in order to place users into two groups, based on whether I thought they would be most likely to claim a white ethncity, or other ethnicity within the UK census. Though this primarily racial grouping, and the method of counting generally is far from ideal, it does give an indication of whether the surrounding population is broadly represented, or not, at what could reasonably be considered peak use times - in the school holidays at weekends, and in good weather.

The park catchment population for a 3.2 km catchment, as used by the London Legacy Development Corporation is made up of 40 % people claiming a white ethnicity, and 60% of people claiming all other ethnicities. Within the 20 minute walk area identified in the spatial analysis, 41.4% of people claimed a white ethnicity. In general then, if park spaces appealed equally to users of all ethnicities, it might be expected that the ratio of white users to non-white users to would be roughly 2:3

While there is clearly a margin for error, significant discrepancies of more than 10% from the surrounding catchment population would arguably indicate under or overrepresentation, and demonstrate that more accurate assessment of use patterns on ethnic lines are a subject suitable for further well resourced research.

10.3 Counting Methods

At the busiest times, sample tariff counts of users passing a fixed point within a 10 minute time period were made, at locations on the main movement routes to children's play areas in North and South Park. Table 10.1 and pie charts (Fig 10.1) below record the results of this tally counting, indicating the counted visitors in each allocated grouping, and representation of these figures as proportions of those visitors who are believed likely to claim white ethnicities compared to those believed likely to claim another ethnicity. When the park was comparatively quiet, as it was during the mid week visit during school term time, counts were made by cycling through all public areas of the park sequentially, recording the total number of visible users, and adding totals. As well as tariff counting, photographic methods were used in two main public gathering areas - in and around the fountain play space in the South Park, and on the lawn spaces near the children's play area in the North Park. The main photographic count images were supported by tours of park spaces to make notes and additional photographs of visitors present, to allow a more supported assessment of likely claimed ethnicity. The counted samples from the photographic survey are illustrated in Figures 10.3 to 10.6.

10.4 Findings

The busiest areas are on the upper level movement routes, supporting empirical studies that inform the spatial analysis (Whyte, 2000[1980]). Areas at the lower levels, or on slopes, are significantly less well used. As would be expected, many people use the park in good weather at weekends and in the school holidays, less during the week, especially in school term time, and

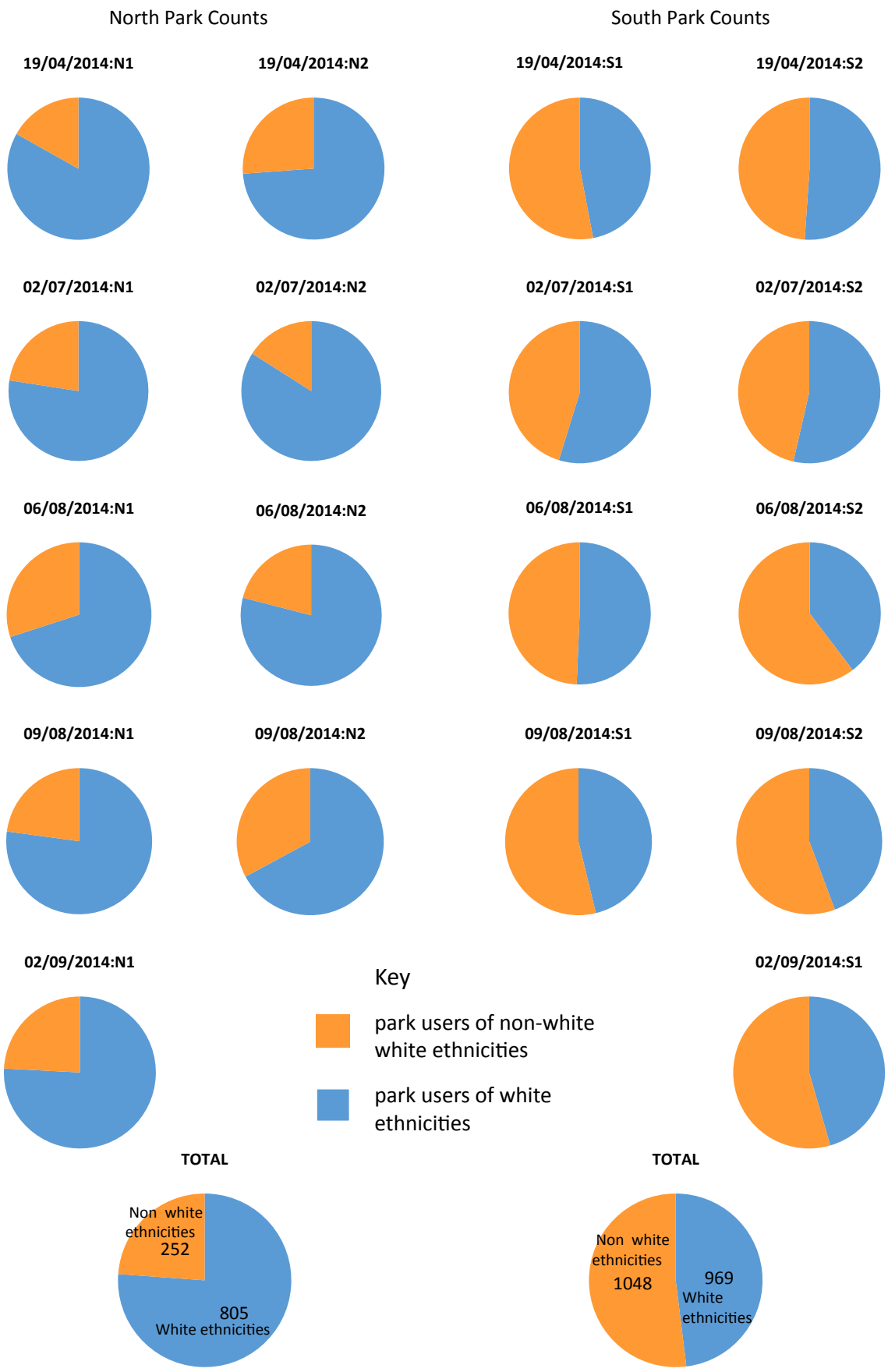


Fig 10.1 North Park and South Park Tally Counts, Summer 2014

less people use the park when the weather is cooler or changeable .

The park is very much seen as a resource for people with children, as the vast majority of groups passing tally counting points, or observed remaining in the park included children.

The tariff counts set out in the table below show some broad consistency in the differences in the ethnic mix of users between North and South Parks. The catchment area 'ethnic' mix for the park is 40% white ethnicities to 60% people of BME or 2 to 3. The North Park was used generally by a far higher proportion of people from white ethnicities, (the majority from overheard speech, white British ethnicity), than would be found in the catchment population, with counts ranging from between approximately 3 and 7 people of white ethnicity, to every 2 from BME groups. This is significantly different from the surrounding catchment population, and indicates that white people are generally over represented as users of this space.

As would be anticipated from the variation on ethnic lines in landscape preference seen in the survey, and in park use preferences and practices described in the focus group discussions, some non white ethnicities may be under-represented more than others. For example, there appeared to be a relatively high proportion of East Asian heritage park users among the non white users of North Park during several visits, close to 5% of all users recorded. While East Asian heritage is not recorded in the Census, 5% of people in the catchment area record their ethnicity as Asian Chinese or other Asian, rather than Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi Asian, so it is possible that people from a variety of East Asian backgrounds are neither over represented or under-represented as users of the North Park. This field note finding does indicate however that some non white groups are even more under represented as North Park users than the overall ratio recorded implies.

The South Park counts generally showed a ratio closer to, though not matching the catchment population, with slightly more than half the users on average being of non white ethnicities. Towards evening, at about 5.30 - 6pm, the proportion of BME groups to white groups in the South Park tended to increase . It might be that people who lived more locally were able to remain at the park until later, or it may indicate temporal differences in spatial practice on ethnic lines that were not picked up in the focus groups, and again would merit further research.

Fig 10.2 North Park Photographic Count, Easter 2014

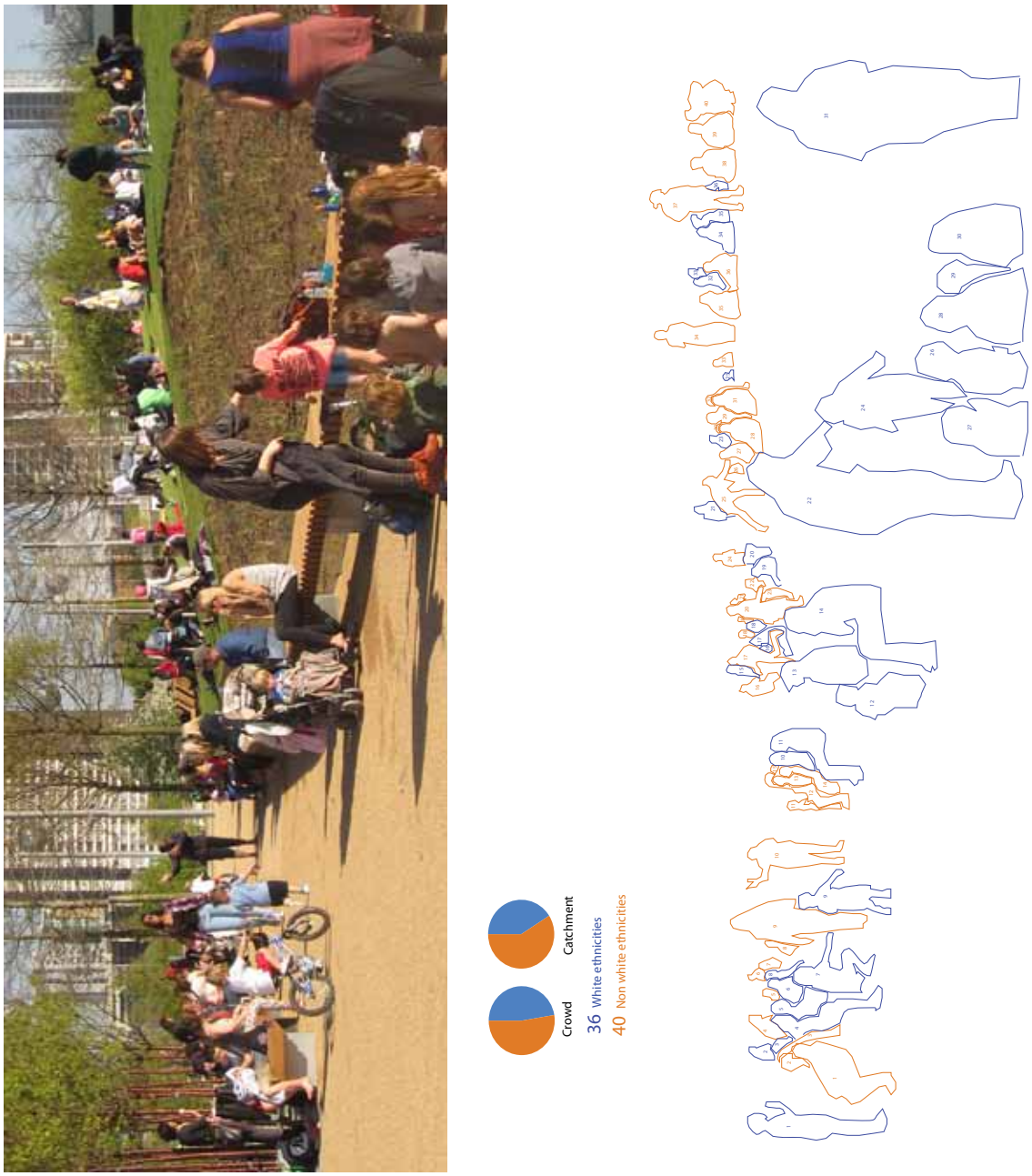


Fig 10. 3 South Park Photographic Count, Easter 2014

Fig 10.5 South Park Photographic Count, September 2014

Fig 10.4 North Park Photographic Count, September 2014

10.5 Conclusion. Whose Benefits?

The early user counts are broadly consistent with the findings of the park preference survey and the focus groups, and consistent with much of the research literature. Scenic, relatively unprogrammed 'wild space', styled to the ecological picturesque aesthetic is used far more by people from what have been assessed as white groups, than people from what were visually assessed to be non white BME groups. This 'wild space' is highly regulated, and so the disproportionate user counts add support to arguments that BME groups perception of safety in wild spaces is not the only consideration determining use or non use.

Regulated park space that conforms more to the typical 'gardenesque' urban park, which is accessible, has good visibility, plenty of seats in social arrangements, and plenty to do, a mix of paths, plants, lawns and trees, and an urban, 'horticultural' character, is used by people from a wider range of ethnic backgrounds.

The user counts provide further evidence in support of Byrne and Wolch's hypothesis, that ethno-racial formations do configure park spaces, and ethno-racially inscription of park spaces influence park use or non-use by people from different ethnic backgrounds (Byrne & Wolch, 2009).

11.0 Whose Values , Whose Benefits at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park

11.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study has been to investigate a gap identified in the literature exploring why people of ethnic minorities are under-represented as park users in the UK. The research gap is addressed by the core research question: "Could people of minority ethnicities be under-represented as users of British parks because of a failure by those producing and regulating park space to recognise that their own spatial practices and preferences are culturally based, not universally shared, particularly on ethnic dimensions?''

The answer to this core research question, based on this case study has to be yes. Culturally situated actions and assumptions of designers and decision makers who create and control park space are certainly part of the reason that people from BME groups do not make use of park spaces as much as white British people.

I have found, and evidenced in the differential patterns of use of the new park spaces at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park by people of different ethnicities, an instance of under-representation of people of BME groups that can reasonably be attributed to culturally situated spatial production. From the strength of this evidence, I argue that similar patterns of under-representation are likely to be found elsewhere in London and in other areas of the UK. Based on the evidence, in particular from the focus groups, I would expect to see the highest levels of underrepresentation of ethnic minority people as users of other parks with an ecological, particularly a 'wild' or sublime picturesque aesthetic, in parks that offer little in the way of 'programmed' spaces or other support for social and active use, prioritising visual enjoyment of landscape scenes; in parks that are, or appear to be unregulated, where oppressive or intimidating behaviours can pass unseen or unchallenged; and in parks that have a high prevalence of uncontrolled/ unleashed dogs. Some parks will combine some or all of these attributes.

I have found through literature review, from the park preference survey, and focus group discussions that people's preferences for landscape types are not completely idiosyncratic, or unidentifiable, and nor are they universal. There is substantive evidence here (and in previous research) to support a view that there are identifiable culturally based 'normative' preferences for parks held in different ethnic groups living within this park's catchment. There is a strong likelihood, based to some extent on the strength of the associations in the park preference survey, and based on the research included in the literature review, that ethnically based differences would and could be found elsewhere. Through early user counts, I have found a strong indication that people's behaviours do follow their stated stylistic preferences and discussed practices, and therefore a lack of awareness by spatial production experts of their own culturally situated thinking, and its exclusionary potential, mean park making practices can and do reinforce underlying societal inequality on ethnic lines, supporting the ''playing out of unequal social relations '' that I have argued and evidenced are an essential part of negotiating our rights to access public space (Massey 2005).

Through review of pertinent social and cultural theory, carrying out 'elite' interviews, spatial analysis, and linking findings to the park preference survey and focus group discussions, I have been able to demonstrate many ways in which hegemonic culturally based and ideological white British, or Anglo European 'ethnic' values for landscape are reflected in the production and management of this UK park. There is valorisation in the sample of 'elite' spatial practitioners in both aesthetic and moral terms of:

- an ecocentric rather than anthropocentric outlook
- of naturalistic spatial arrangements and plant forms, over more controlled, ornamental and abstract arrangements, or evidently horticultural techniques,
- an emphasis on visual refreshment, and quiet enjoyment of extensive 'simple' country- like open spaces, rather than sociability, activity and variety in the crowd;
- a valuing of ''place'' in terms of romanticised non human physical characteristics, imagining space as separate from people and social meanings;
- a down-playing of aesthetic decision making, and an emphasis on practicality, economics, science and reason.

The space produced, the uses conceived, and the ways in which the park space is managed, support most readily the normative behaviours and values of the culturally dominant group, and, through lending most support to some ways of being in space, discourage and disempower those whose preferences would differ from these norms.

I have found that even in a project intended to be a world class example of best practice for creating new urban space in the heart of multicultural London, significant and relevant culturally based differences between designers and the people living in this park's catchment are neither adequately recognised or seemingly considered at all, by those shaping the park spaces.

If this case represents typical park production and management practice in the UK, it is likely that BME groups will be less well provided for with the kind of accessible, attractive and appropriate park spaces they would most enjoy. While culturally normative levels of park use are likely to vary irrespective of external factors, without spaces that better fit with some groups needs and support their preferred spatial practices, it is impossible to determine normative use patterns that might otherwise exist. The implications for social justice are not minor. With health and mortality linked to having access to parks and green spaces, this could clearly be a matter of significant consequence (Mitchell & Popham, 2008; Van den Berg, et al., 2007)

This conclusion will review the findings from this case study, to expand on this answer, and reflect on the values and benefits evidenced. The subsequent chapter will reflect on what might be done by those producing and managing park spaces to address exclusionary practices, and bring park use in the UK closer to what might be considered normative levels for everyone.

11.2 Ethnicity and Cultural Values

Through birth, upbringing and ongoing socialisation in a particular setting we are all situated within some social milieu and frameworks of meaning. This thesis does not conceive of people's lives and decisions as being determined or defined by any single national collective or ethnically based identity, or that identities of individual or group are fixed and unchanging. The processes of formation of individual and collective identity as conceived here are relational and dynamic. However I assert that some culturally based norms can be identified and are sustained through processes of reproduction as ideological reference points within cultural groups at any given time. It is possible then, to conceive of meaningful cultural difference that is sustained, but not unchanging through time and space, by internal and external influence, by our own agency and by external structure; of an identity of the group we choose or are forced to belong to, that is fluid, contextual, and negotiated, and variable, from place to place, from person to person. Some ways of thinking, some social or spatial practices may be identifiable, widespread and shared across many cultures, others may be very localised, or 'subcultural'.

No culture is fixed or isolated from other, but at the same time, the legitimate taste and hegemonic discourse of the powerful in any society, or indeed the powerful within a group, will have influence over its members. I assert that the findings here strongly indicate normative ontological variation at a collective cultural level, with regard to both the role of parks in urban life, and to the relationships between people, urban life and 'nature'. It is this underlying world view that informs people's relationship with parks . I assert there are different cultural arbitraries, different legitimate tastes, (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990[1977]) relating to the use and meaning of park space and public space, existing in different ethnic groups in the UK that could be understood, and are represented by people, as being 'the usual' , or normative, for their ethnic cultural identity. These are the views around which any individual's own position as a claimed member of that group might be anchored or critiqued.

The findings across the range of methods employed in this case study support this formulation. I argue that each empirical element of this mixed methods case study triangulates with the findings of the others, and also with research findings outside this study, both in this geographical area, and further afield.

I do not claim however to have shown that views represented here are universal norms across people of all these claimed ethnicities throughout the rest of the UK, (though there are fair indications from other research of likely similarity in some cases). What I do claim, and what can be tested by further research, is that there will be views that are normative within culturally (not racially) based ethnic groups elsewhere, and that these can be determined in different locations using similar methods to those employed in my research.

Our arbitrary cultural capital is so ingrained we are often not aware of it except when we are out of context, when we may feel, as Pierre Bourdieu says, like fish out of water (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:127). The findings here I argue show that many British ethnic groups within the population subject to study, (that is the people living in the catchment of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park) feel like 'fish out of water' in local parks and other green spaces, more often than white British people do.

They are concretely and ideologically less supported by institutions, something expressed in physical space and management practices. This inequality, the expressed 'illegitimacy' of some tastes and practices, as evidenced in institutionally produced and managed physical environments, has the capacity both to support and exacerbate other inequalities, such as everyday racism, in the lives of individuals. The 'fish out of water' are less able to control interactions in parks in ways that meet their needs, as well as being less able to find the specific physical and social qualities they seek.

11.3 Ethnicity and Landscape Tastes

In the park preference survey, some images were selected far more than others as representing a park that would be visited most. Clear patterns of association can be seen between different demographic factors and the selection of particular images. These have been assumed to indicate stylistic preferences - landscape taste- but were not required to be based only on visual understanding of space. There was a clearly determined context within which the images were framed (the likelihood of personal use as a park), and beauty or otherwise was not included in the survey question posed. Any associations in the minds of participants between the images preferred, what they felt was being represented, and the reasons for their preferences were not explained through this method. Strong demographic associations with park selection were seen nonetheless, indicating the likelihood of common interpretations of park styles within a given ethnic group, that may or may not include perceptions of beauty.

Age seems to have some small influence, but gender , and whether or not the respondents have attended university are associated, more strongly than age, with choice or rejection of particular images. Studies of landscape preference included in the literature review also found that gender, and whether or not respondents have attended university are both significantly associated with the likely landscape preferences of respondents. The claimed ethnicity of the respondents however was found to have the greatest influence on the park image preferences, affecting the selection of seven out of nine images to a greater than 95% certainty that this association could be generalised to the wider population, and with a stronger effect on behaviour than for any of the other demographic attributes tested. This echoes the findings of other researchers (CABE Space, 2010, Payne et al 2002).

The image which showed the greatest variation in selection across different groupings is of Richmond Park, stylistically representing a classic 'picturesque' parkland landscape image. The photograph was purposely chosen to represent this landscape of uncut grass and mature trees in a bleak, wintry aspect, tending more towards the romantic and sublime aesthetic which relishes untamed nature, and a level of threat from its powerful forces, rather than the pastoral, green, pleasant aspect of the Brownian image, which was compositionally similar. Richmond Park was the most popular selection for university attendees/graduates claiming white British ethnicity, and second most popular selection for all white British respondents. It was among the least popular images selected by almost all other groups, and particularly among Bangladeshis. The likelihood that this association would not be found in the wider population is less than

1 in a million. The finding that a taste for wilder more romantic landscapes is not shared by people from all the UK's ethnic groups supports findings of previous studies in the UK included in the literature review (Bell, 2005; Rishbeth, 2004) , and is discussed in the book 'The Dynamic Landscape' that was so influential in the creation of this park (Hitchmough & Dunnett, 2008).

The least selected image across the entire sample is that of the Meadow/ Wasteland, representing the contemporary 'ecological picturesque' style, an aesthetic clearly highly influential in the design of North Park at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. It is the least frequently selected image overall, selected by only 15% of respondents, by 14% of women, by only 8% of people who have not attended university, 9% of people claiming British Caribbean ethnicity and 5% of people claiming British Bangladeshi ethnicity. It is however the equal in popularity to St James's park among white British people who have attended university, being selected by 50% of this group. The strength of this association is the strongest found in the data. When intersectionality between university education and ethnicity was investigated, the association between university education and a preference for wilder landscapes (including Richmond Park) was found to be significant only in white British participants, for whom there was a far stronger effect on behaviour than was seen across the whole sample. Again, this finding echoes other studies, in this case landscape preferences in white northern European ethnicities, where, as here, university attendance is associated with more frequent selection of images of a less 'manicured' or more 'romantic' landscapes, (Buijs, et al., 2009; Van den Berg & Van Winsum-Westra, 2010; Van den Berg, et al., 2006; de Groot & van den Born, 2003). The reasons for this difference were not explained by the focus group discussions. It may be that landscape taste is a form of cultural capital that is a signifier of 'distinction' (Bourdieu, 1999[1979]) for inclusion in the powerful sectors of UK society that is not accepted in people of other ethnic backgrounds, and so there is little point to its adoption over in-group norms. Perhaps landscape taste is not a meaningful class indicator for groups other than white British people, or possibly culturally based norms in respect to landscape taste are quite resistant to cross cultural influence.

This case study, allied with the findings of the European studies cited, supports a theory that the most powerful groups in Anglo European cultures have tended to valorise as 'legitimate' a 'romantic' or ecocentric view of landscape. A culturally situated taste for landscapes that seem to represent nature's powers, independent from man, places that are mainly empty of other people, and appear untouched, or even inhospitable. This kind of place is seen as spiritually refreshing. (MacNaghten & Urry, 1998; Appleton, 1975; Williams, 1975). It is an ontology that is not universally shared, even within the white majority culture .

The findings also indicate that landscape preferences, including those for 'ecological' landscapes, are learned, socially constructed , and neither universal nor instinctive, as has been claimed (Gobster, et al., 2007; Kaplan, 1987; Balling & Falk, 1982). The findings challenge an assumption made in both Community Green and Urban Green Nation that 'biodiversity' is an objective measure of park quality, if the purpose of parks is primarily to provide attractive outdoor space for people irrespective of background (CABE, 2010; CABE Space, 2010; Bramley, et al., 2009).

There is clearly individual variation shown in all the responses, however the findings from the park preference survey alone support a hypothesis that landscape preferences might well have

a role in the under-representation of people from minority ethnicities in UK parks. The findings from this case study also indicate strongly though that landscape style is not the only influence on park use.

The most consistently preferred image across all the different analyses is that of St James's Park, stylistically representing a Victorian park with some 'gardenesque' styling. It is among the most frequently selected park images across the whole sample, and only falls outside the top three for one group - white British participants who have attended University, for whom it drops to fourth place.

There is a park within the case study area, Victoria Park, that has significant underrepresentation of people in its catchment from BME groups, but is stylistically similar to St James's Park. Victoria Park has a catchment population of 35% from BME groups, and a user count including only 3% (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2012) . The unrepresentative visitor numbers would be impossible to explain, if stylistic preferences were being represented as the only culturally significant determining factor in park use.

11.4 Community Cultural Values

The focus groups were formed to add explanation to findings of the park preference survey. By forming focus groups rather than interviewing individuals, to discuss parks, beauty and nature, group norms could emerge. Individuals positions might be contested or supported, common or shared beliefs could be exposed and validated by the group, and potentially 'rogue' views could be identified through the group's use of 'symbolic violence' (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990[1977]) bringing the aberrant viewpoint back into line. This research strategy made for dynamic and interesting discussions, and appeared supportable as establishing what could be considered the normative values operating in the case study area in groups of people with different ethnic backgrounds.

11. 4.1 Areas of Agreement

Although the participants in this study were sampled to avoid any predictable bias toward park users, everyone who participated in the focus groups expressed that they strongly valued access to green park spaces, particularly as a space for children's play, irrespective of race or ethnicity. This is an important finding, bearing in mind negative views were represented about park spaces, and experiences. There is clearly value in some parks for most people. There were however indications of variation, allied with, and in some cases attributed to cultural heritage, in why park spaces were liked, and what they were most used for in different groups. These were consistent with the image selections in the park preference survey, and so arguably support a view they may be normative, not just for the focus group participants, but more broadly in that ethnic group in this sample population.

Generally all participants, parents or not, recognised the value of park spaces in providing space for active play for children in the city. All parents participating thought it was essential to take

their children to parks for play, even if local parks were imperfect, and almost all participants had had some positive experiences of outdoor play in their own childhoods. Participants also saw value in park spaces for adults, for social activity, including eating outside, and meeting with friends or family, and as places to exercise for health or recreation. Enjoyment of informal and unplanned socialising in park space was referenced by all groups with the exception of the white British group, who tended to describe using parks on an impromptu basis only with nuclear family, and orchestrating social park visits with friends. As young people though, parks had formed part of their informal social activity too.

11.4.2 Restorative Value

All but the British Caribbean group described a normative view that there was some restorative, 'spiritually refreshing' value to be found from simply being in a vegetated green setting in park space.

White British participants in particular looked for nature's restorative value in 'wild' expansive spaces, ideally in small groups. British Bangladeshi, British Somali and British Pakistani participants sought restorative tranquil green spaces in neighbourhood parks close to home. For mothers, this was a space where children might play, and they might gain respite, relax, enjoy greenery and freshness, and perhaps socialise with friends. Restorative experiences were easily and often shattered though, by the presence of uncontrolled dogs or by the intimidating and challenging unregulated behaviour of other park users, replacing beneficial relaxation with stress.

The dominant view in the British Caribbean group was that green space/ nature, at least in the UK, while a good resource, had no intrinsic restorative or spiritual value. For the British Caribbean group, parks were represented normatively as positive places for activity and sociability outside, for kids to play, for sport and games, for barbecues or hanging out with friends. Spaces which allowed for just walking, looking at plants, or at views but had no other 'offer' had little value.

11.4.3 Traditional Parks, Royal Parks and the Problem of Victoria Park

British Caribbean and white British parents particularly identified use of traditional urban parks (most represented by the image of St James's Park) first and foremost as spaces for active recreation to occupy their children. For both these groups, the best local parks for these groups, Victoria Park, London Fields, offered a lot to do, formal activities in 'programmed' spaces - play areas, sports spaces , not just green space. The amount of activated or programmed space offered by traditional large parks was also important for British Pakistani participants. When planning large family gatherings, there should be something of interest for all ages, like boating , floral gardens, play, as well as enough unprogrammed lawn space to be sure that fifty people could gather comfortably, to eat and enjoy informal activities such as ball games as a family group. British Pakistani participants generally preferred the controlled 'international' atmosphere of London's Royal Parks to other stylistically similar large park spaces available locally.

The park preference survey found the most consistently preferred image across all the different analyses was that of St James's Park, one of London's Royal Parks. This park was remodelled

in the 'romantic' style in the 1820s, with various minor additions since, and was included to represent a typical Victorian park with some 'gardenesque' styling. The 'traditional' London Royal Park offers a variety of spaces, activated programmed space, and unprogrammed lawns, sociable seating, facilities, play spaces and other attractions. In the Royal Parks, which are well and visibly staffed, there are controls operating over presence of dogs, and acceptable types of behaviour, that lend an assurance to at least some less socially powerful groups that they will have rights to use space without unchallenged interference by others. It is likely that knowledge of such spaces informed image selection in the survey, but the image itself was selected for use from other available views of this type of park for its specific content.

The chosen image contains an ornamental fountain in a naturalistic pond, fences indicating control, and a wide well mown litter free lawn space in the foreground, likely to extend beyond the picture space. There are clean surfaced paths, and places to sit off the grass. The image shows a place balancing evident human intervention, some spectacle, and naturalistic, though somewhat contrived vegetation. It is a city space that is urban, but can be imagined to reflect an idealised countryside. From the focus group evidence, it seems probable that different people found different qualities appealing in the same image.

Returning to Victoria Park, the traditional Victorian gardenesque park just to the west of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, findings from the focus groups may help explain the startling drop off in user numbers from 35% people from BME groups in the catchment to only 3% of park users as measured for the Heritage Lottery fund. A high percentage of residents in Victoria Park's catchment are British Bangladeshi. Although no specific study on Victoria Park, spatial or social, has been found to support assertions made here, from brief conversation with park managers, and from the focus group participants reports, there are very few British Bangladeshis using the park .

The focus groups found that people from a British Bangladeshi background ideally sought restorative, calm, orderly, sociable green spaces, free of dogs. For Muslims, dogs are unclean, and therefore their noses and mouthparts are to be avoided, whether dogs are friendly or otherwise. The focus groups indicate that Victoria Park is very much understood as an unregulated space, and in particular as a 'dog park', where dogs off leads are condoned, and can cause distress without sanction.

The wealth of anecdotal evidence from the focus groups of problems with uncontrolled dogs in Victoria Park shows current management practices are not supporting, (or not communicating how they support), use by a very significant percentage of people living in the park catchment. Secondly, a reputed lack of regulation of dogs and other behaviours is likely to be an additional deterrent to a group of people who from evidence presented here, and documented elsewhere, seem less likely to travel far from home to visit park spaces (Foster, 2008). A 3.2 km park catchment, earlier questioned in this case study , may also be an unrealistic measure of this park's likely catchment composition irrespective of other factors, with this group in mind.

11.4.4 Scenic Views and 'Wild' Space

As well as the 'traditional' urban park, British Pakistani and white British participants enjoyed visiting 'country park' spaces available in this part of London, for enjoyment of scenic landscape views, for family walks or bike rides, and contact with wildlife and nature. All of these were activities considered in these groups to have intrinsic value. British Pakistanis preferred cleaner unpolluted spaces, and were significantly deterred by general dog fouling, and by the constant interaction with uncontrolled dogs experienced in using such spaces locally.

British Bangladeshi and British Caribbean participants most typically viewed this type of 'wild space' as ugly and unattractive, both when represented by images of park spaces, or as experienced in the local area. For British Caribbean and British Bangladeshi participants these spaces were seen as typically neglected, unregulated, and associated in the Lea Valley in particular, with fear of personal attack. They were generally best avoided, however it is important to note that participant's negativity was not just associated with fear.

For most British Caribbean participants, wild spaces were uninteresting. They offered only walking and looking, few opportunities for positive social interactions, and few clean spaces for activities. Dead or brown vegetation lacked restorative greenness and 'freshness' for British Bangladeshi participants. For both groups the 'ecological aesthetic' was negatively associated with weeds, dirt and the presence of pests and vermin. A safe version of this type of space would still largely fail to offer the positive qualities for desirable park space wanted by these groups. It seems highly unlikely that either of these groups would be readily persuaded by consultants 'road shows' that spaces like this could have been in any way designed 'for them'.

This contrasted strongly with the positive associations that were evoked by the same images in white British or British Pakistani participants, of relative freedom and the chance for encounters with wildlife. University education within the British Caribbean group may have influenced some appreciation of scenic and 'pastoral' views as a restorative, supported by evidence of a similar stylistic trend (not statistically significant) within the park preference survey data. Even the university educated British Caribbean group members however, evidenced a pro- city ontology, valuing the presence of many people, and enjoying the relative luxury offered by modern civilisation, rather than romanticising isolation, or rural spaces and ways of life.

This finding regarding the attraction or otherwise of 'wild' space and country parks challenges the 'opportunity' hypothesis, discussed in the literature review, a theoretical position that asserts park use preferences of different ethnicities form in response to familiarity with the facilities that are most typically available. Some British Bangladeshi participants and British Caribbean participants had grown up and all still lived near to the Walthamstow Marshes and Lea Valley. As young people they had regularly walked through them en route to leisure activities, and been taken there by their schools for active recreation. They were still not attracted by these spaces, and found little of value there.

11.4.5 Fear in Park Space

While many parents discussed wanting greater control over their children's access to parks and outdoor play than they had experienced themselves, generally, participants from both of the British Asian ethnicities participating in focus groups expressed most fear for their children's and their own safety in park space. This resulted in higher reported levels of control of British Asian children's unsupervised play outside than for the other participants. Being able to see children while they played was very important and raised directly by British Pakistani and British Bangladeshi participants. Limited visibility due to planting, or the potential for unpleasant interactions with others, induced real anxiety.

Doreen Massey's assertion that the rights to public space are contested and competitive are borne out by the focus group discussions (Massey, 2005). There was much evidence from Islamic participants that neighbourhood interactions in park space could be difficult, and sometimes racist or Islamophobic. Dogs off leads, as well as being an unwanted intrusion, were sometimes actively used as tools of oppression against those who showed any fear or dislike of them.

Generally Islamic women represented themselves more often than other participants as largely helpless to control what happened around them or to them in park spaces. This belief is, I argue, exacerbated by an awareness that actions they find oppressive are tacitly sanctioned by institutions, like the local authorities and park managers, who for example allow spaces for people to be dominated by uncontrolled dogs off the lead, and by the media, who participants felt fuelled Islamophobic attitudes.

11.4. 6 Representations of Space and Spaces of Representation

Variable representations of the same physical space demonstrate that meanings are projected onto space. Interpretation of the physical environment is not objective, but socially constructed, informed by our different personal and culturally based ontologies, echoing a Lefebvrian view of 'spaces of representation' at variance from the official 'representations of space'. The view of space as objectively perceived, purely physical, inert and culturally neutral, distinct from society, that Massey and others have argued is typically Western, and that has been largely typical of the research into park use reviewed here, is I argue, shown to be false, and another cultural arbitrary (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990).

11.5 Park Making Practices

11.5.1 The Rules of the Game

I have argued that the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park can provide an insight into what world leading and nationally selected experts , the UK's spatial elites, consider will make the 'best' open spaces, spaces that follow and at the same time help to establish the legitimate 'rules of the game' for park and green space production in the UK now. Determined from the interviews, (a construction subsequently supported by press reviews) the most valorised landscape spaces

- are extensive, expansive, with picturesque views and not too much other 'stuff' in them,
- are neither over wrought nor ostentatious, tasteless qualities associated with foreign and undemocratic societies
- create a 'simple' unified setting, and use subtle, unobtrusive materials and detailing, consistent throughout, to create a setting for diverse, imposing buildings and other architectural 'follies',
- emulate / focus on visual aspects of romanticised nature, and are managed to an ecological or naturalistic aesthetic,
- demonstrate technical / scientific prowess
- don not require much public funding for the long term

The North Park at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic park fits entirely within this ideal, and has been highly praised and is widely published. The South Park, intended to be a particular type of 'festival' and commercial landscape space, does not. It has been harshly critiqued as a result.

Functional aspects of spatial design shown empirically to impact on use, such as multiple direct physical connections into the surrounding area, and good visual access into and across spaces, have not been prioritised in key locations, indicating that other priorities hold greater sway. The other determinant of this park space's final configuration was the requirement for it to be perceived as 'ambitious'. Romantically re-imagining a despoiled landscape of industry, visually restored to the moral virtue of nature, through the application of artistry and 'cutting edge' horticultural science has delivered a specific version of ambition at a global scale, that could be realised within the UK's 'rules of the game'.

I argue that the requirement for a spectacular demonstration of technical mastery is what has driven the location of the park into the most inaccessible place in the centre of the valley. There it can be of least daily benefit to local residents, and can have the least impact as a project to address urban severance caused by transport infrastructure on the sites peripheries. Some of the parks originally stated objectives have clearly not been met through this project, though some of those interviewed suggested this was never a realistic aspiration.

It is clear that while political and economic agendas, and pre existing spatial aspirations are very influential in spatial production, this case study demonstrates that the passions and interests of individual spatial producers and advisors who frame representations of a parks potential to funders and other decision makers can significantly determine priorities in park production. Individuals form allegiances and use many strategies to achieve success in the field, persuasively representing and ultimately determining in this case, park location and access, aesthetics, and programme. Professional spatial designers and decision makers can very much influence use or non use of park spaces by different groups.

11.5.2 Whose Benefits?

The Queen Elizabeth Olympic park has been primarily devised as a tool in urban regeneration. Its success will be measured to some extent in its ability to transform land values and area 'branding'. The London 2012 Olympics was delivered on time and to general acclaim. Demand for housing in London continues to fuel house price rises and demand for buildable land, and property developers are submitting plans every month for housing and new 'creative industries' uses on the formerly blighted industrial land within the LLDC's authority boundary . The park is just one of many new attractions making this part of London a desirable setting for housing development. The new residents attracted to it, and able to afford to live here, and new companies and institutions locating here, are likely to raise the average levels of the indices of deprivation in the Olympic Boroughs, providing measures to evidence improved quality of life achieved through the project, though not necessarily benefitting the people who previously lived in the area. In many ways the project has delivered what it was intended to do, and having a significant role in its creation will be very much a benefit for its spatial producers, delivered as increased capital of all forms.

The new facilities and environmental improvements of the park will best serve the residents of new apartments, and as discussed, cannot really impact significantly on daily lives of the majority of the pre-existing population living in park's catchment area. The distance and difficulty of accessing new park spaces at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park on foot from surrounding housing areas beyond the Olympic site boundary is likely to affect those with the least economic capital most, as they have limited resources to pay for any form of transport to take them nearer to the park.

In the UK, disproportionately high numbers of the poorest people are from black and minority ethnic groups, and this area of London is no exception (MacRury & Poynter, 2009). The design decisions affecting access are therefore likely to result in some level of under-representation of people from BME groups as park users, reflecting the uneven distribution of economic resources along ethnic lines in the park catchment. From the focus groups, and from other research in east London (Foster, 2008) , there is also reason to think that British Bangladeshi people are less likely to use park spaces that are distant from their homes than other groups. Locating the park centrally in the 2012 Olympic site, and failing to address urban severance may result in much less benefit to British Bangladeshi people than might otherwise have been the case.

11.5.3 Whose Values?

The British in particular have been claimed to value 'practical' knowledge, based on the assumed objectivity of physical experience, framed within a Western ideology of space as a universally objective backdrop to life (Massey, 2005; Chambers, 1993; Cosgrove, 1984). The 'elite' interviewees representations focus on good sense, technical and practical matters, an approach that intrinsically masks, or at the very least obscures, substantial symbolic and culturally situated content in the production of this park space - in the case of the North Park a, technically complex, socially constructed Romantic vision of the possibility of man's spiritual refreshment in wild nature. A river landscape of reeds and water birds, meadows and wildflowers, restored from

polluting industry, a vision of 'nature' that can still be produced for admiration, without irony, at the centre of a global media mega event, and tabula rasa urban redevelopment on a grand scale.

Beyond the aesthetic content, there is a strong, culturally situated and moralistic ideological component, that has significant potential to exclude, about how British space should be made, what it should represent, and how it should be used. The landscape designed here I have argued, because of its Olympic context, was primarily intended to be emblematic of contemporary British values. In its valorisation of idealised 'natural' spaces, the approach represented is purposively distanced from, and framed as morally superior to, 'foreign' more anthropocentric spaces, those created elsewhere in response to the same mega-event format . There is evidence in some extracts from the interviews of a way of thinking about the form of landscape in particular configurations as constitutive of nation, of 'place', a construction of Britishness, that is set in opposition to the threat of the alien , to foreign tastes or cultures. There was almost tangible resistance to considering ways of being in space, or forming space, outside 'legitimate tastes' or values. This was evidenced in some interviewees reaction to the idea there could be dog free space, or even temporally constructed single gender spaces at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. To do so would arguably threaten a particular version of inclusion in public space credited to the 'Urban Task Force', an ideal vision of the equitable sharing of such spaces, unproblematically available and accessible to all (Davis, 2011; Evans, 2011; Massey, 2007; Massey, 2005; Urban Task Force, 2005; DETR, 1999). It would be excluding within this framing of free access, to create any space for women only, or space for people who don't want to share parks with dogs. When viewed in the light of the focus group representations, this idealistic vision appears to have embedded in it a process of 'conditional belonging' where to be 'acceptable' you are required to adopt the practices and values of legitimate (white) Britain, irrespective of your own beliefs and values, or any legal rights to equality and cultural difference.

11.5.4 Powerless Consumers in Spatial Production

I have shown significant differences between the spatial practices and preferences of many local people, and the tastes and ideologies informing much of the built space at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park along ethnic lines, which, at least with regard to the use of the ecological aesthetic, might have been predicted from previous research.

The findings here indicate that understanding the spatial practices and preferences of local people has not ever really been a material consideration in the formation of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

The parks' users, who would seem logically to be its ultimate consumers, have clearly not been influential in the design of this park space.

There appear to be three main reasons for this, one may be specific to its Olympic context, the other two I argue are likely to be more generalised across park and open space production in the UK.

From the interviews, due to its Olympic function, and consequent international interest, this

park, even in Legacy, has been seen primarily as a national representation rather than a local one, meaning local views might arguably have less impact or significance here than elsewhere. Sufficient ambition of vision has been a key influence on the eventual built form, the deciding factor I found to be responsible for both siting the main green space of the park on the river at the most inaccessible location in the valley, and for creating the North Park to an ecological aesthetic, a design style likely to be least in tune with the preferences of the majority of local residents.

However, it is clear from the interviews, that greater or more thorough engagement with local people over stylistic or programmatic aspects of the project brief would not typically be included in projects at this scale. The representations of spatial producers here were of a very thoroughly consulted project, with uncharacteristically extensive opportunities for people to participate in design processes. The academic critique of the consultation undertaken, as insufficiently open ended, primarily aimed at informing rather than listening, inadequately or unrepresentatively documented, flawed in structure, and unlikely to result in any meaningful opportunities for local people to influence spatial production (Davis, 2011; Hayes & Horne, 2011), was not recognisable in interviewees representations.

The second reason for spatial producers failing to engage fully with the potential for culturally based spatial preferences I argue, can be found in the theoretical construction of Lefebvre's distinction between 'representations of space' - spaces as they are 'conceived' by spatial designers, planners and, scientists, and society's 'lived' spatial practices. The spatial production experts interviewed here do seem to sincerely imagine their vision of space will ultimately be experienced and understood as they see it, as genuinely beautiful, a place to enjoy, a place for everyone. Most discussion of the aesthetic and symbolic content of their designs in the interviews is perfunctory, matter of fact, represented as obvious, a given. The main focus of expert representations was the difficult task of simultaneously resolving multiple technical considerations, bringing people to support the vision through a variety of strategies, demonstrating alignment of multiple goals, and eventually seeing the project implemented. The built space is imagined as ultimately unquestionably attractive, technically exceptional, a concrete expression of practical and rational responses to a set of objective problems.

It may be that, as Bourdieu proposes, fish swimming in water are unaware of the water, or put another way, being in the dominant group of a society surrounded by others like yourself creates the impression that dominant norms are natural, universal truths (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Bourdieu, 1977). Certainly, writers that are still valorised in the landscape profession imagine a universal shared perception of beauty in nature that is instinctive, even evolutionary rather than socially constructed. Or, drawing from a different theoretical perspective, this is a case of the 'absence at the centre' of white Western representations of the world, where the dominant white cultural constructions are unrecognised as anything other than truth, without limits, except as these are perceived in opposition to others (Pajaczkowska & Young, 1992). There is evidence to support both of these theoretical positions here.

The third factor I argue to be influential in the failure of spatial producers to engage with local people's spatial preferences and practices relates to the specific institutional context of spatial

production. It is a context that allows the dominant / legitimate tastes to be reproduced, and flourish independently of the preferences of the products 'consumers'. In other forms of cultural production, the exchange value of cultural items for economic capital or symbolic capital will be determined by consumers themselves, at least to some extent, albeit subject to manipulation by markets. For landscape architecture and most spatial production however, this value exchange relationship between producer, and end user is absent. Who is or isn't present in park space takes significant investment to record accurately, and is simply not used as a measure of park quality.

At the same time, park users have no input into the exchange of capitals. Spatial producers exchange their cultural capital for symbolic capital gained in institutionalised forms, as professional awards and media recognition. The consumer exchanging their economic capital for the designers' cultural capital, paying for the design services, is institutional too, represented by officers in local authorities, or government bodies, often taking advice from expert consultants. John Hopkins, though a leading landscape architect, and highly influential in the eventual spatial form at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, was not among the park's design teams. He was appointed to be the client. The company who led the design process to meet his brief was one he had been a partner in, until his appointment to the client role.

While relationships are rarely so close, often the institutional consumers of park space are trained in the same educational establishments, and consequently in the same values, as the cultural producers. The preferences of those outside the institutionalised processes of taste formation or value exchange, the 'ordinary' people who will be making use of the spaces designed 'for them', therefore have very little scope to impact directly or meaningfully through exchange value on the spaces they are provided with, or use, in the current system.

11.6 Impacts

No spatial practices or preferences have been taken here to be intrinsically normative, and statistical variation in use of parks would therefore be expected as part of cultural variation. Findings indicate that some group's under-representation relative to white British park users is, at least partially, a result of choice rather than exclusion. Absence can be to due factors beyond the control of park designers or managers. For example Britain's comparatively cold or wet weather conditions were cited more frequently as a deterrent factor influencing use for some groups more than others (though all the focus group participants described being motivated to greater park use on fine days). Some groups seem less inclined,(though are perhaps are more constrained in their ability), to travel far from home to explore what more distant park spaces might offer. In three focus groups, participants claimed to not like nature or the outdoors. One was challenged (in Leyton), two were not. (in Hackney and Poplar). These statements in themselves call into question studies that claim, or have been understood to claim, that a preference for nature, without further definition, is a universal, innate evolutionary human characteristic, or that nature and green space is a universal restorative (Gobster, et al., 2007; Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Burgess, Harrison and Limb, 1988, Appleton 1975, Kaplan, et al., 1972).

The evidence from both literature review and empirical research findings though strongly indicate that under-representation of ethnic minorities as park users is not wholly due to preferences or practices that are normative to any given ethnicity, and that exclusionary processes are at work.

The primarily ecological picturesque aesthetic, focus on scenic views, and relative lack of activated programmed space in the North Park chimes most with the preferences expressed by white British graduates, in the park preference survey . The ecological aesthetic as discussed, was not popular with other groups, and vehemently disliked by British Bangladeshi and several British Caribbean participants in the focus groups. However, the very well maintained and highly controlled framing of the ecological spaces at the North Park , its' evident maintenance, cleanliness, and the presence of park wardens and other staff does fit with normative preferences expressed by British Pakistani focus group participants. The play area design however, with its tall vegetation, hidden spaces, and lack of boundary fencing may limit North Park's regular appeal to parents from South Asian groups including British Pakistanis, found to be the most concerned for children's safety in public space. The dogs on leads policy if it is unknown and/or or unenforced could also influence use.

South Park has plenty to do, particularly for children. It offers lots of opportunities to socialise, and has green and planted quiet spaces to relax, gardens and flowers. There are plenty of places to sit, on or off the grass, and excellent visibility. It also is clean, well maintained, and visibly staffed. The aesthetic of South Park, while contemporary and spectacular, is closest to a traditional park in the gardenesque style, the most popular in the park preference survey. It has an ordered approach to spatial arrangements, interspersed with a romantic approach to planting. These factors combined mean, that although it has not followed 'the rules of the game' defined in the interviews, it meets with the preferences of most people participating in the park preference survey, as well as many of the needs of the people who took part in focus groups, irrespective of ethnicity.

Early user counts in North and South Park throughout the British summer of 2014 support findings of the spatial analysis, and the user profiles that were predicted as most likely from park preference survey and focus groups. The North Park, designed to an ecological picturesque aesthetic, with limited social seating on main movement routes, few activated spaces, and poor visibility across the play space, is less busy than the South Park per square metre, and is a disproportionately white space, when users are compared to the catchment population. The South Park, with its more gardenesque styling, sociable seating, visually accessible play spaces, and plenty to do has a user demographic that is far more representative of the multicultural catchment population, at least in the crude terms of proportions of white to non- white ethnicities that could be recorded here.

11.7 Why Ethnic Minorities Are Under-Represented as Users of British Parks.

The values and preferences expressed for park spaces in the focus groups call into question the universal appeal of the principles of design for many typical UK park spaces, not just those of the

Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Park spaces typically prioritise values which I have established are not universal. They lend themselves well to particular activities, but not others, for example often providing well for enjoying scenic views, and giving a great deal of space over to simply looking or strolling, but arguably providing less well for sociability (beyond the privatised spaces of the park cafe), or for preparing your own food. Seating tends to be provided as bench seats, where only two or three people can sit together, not for large social groups. Barbecues are often banned. Dog free spaces tend to be small in comparison to overall park area, or non-existent, and formal plantings are increasingly rare.

It seems then, quite clearly, that parks, which are often funded primarily through public money, are being designed and managed in ways benefitting white British people more than many other British nationals along ethnic lines, through unintended, but previously indicated, processes of exclusion. British people of different ethnicities have different preferred practices and preferences, and different values for park space. While normative levels of use for different cultural groups are likely to vary irrespective of exclusion, it would be hard to determine what level of park use would be normative in parks for any group whose spatial preferences and practices are not spatially accommodated yet. Favouring certain spatial practices institutionally can work to support the widespread hierarchical domination of unregulated park spaces by some who find it easier to fit. Legitimating certain uses and tastes lets those with different values know their views are not socially upheld, and so can tacitly support racist and xenophobic behaviours. Even without acts of intentional oppression, many people have either to endure culturally challenging interactions or simply not visit the park.

Discussion in the focus groups of the use or avoidance of other parks in East London has provided the basis for proposing a model to explain widespread but variable under-representation of ethnic minority users in British parks as an interaction between three main factors. These factors will all vary from park to park, and will have differing impacts for different groups, because they assume the integration of the spatial and the social. The factors determining use or non use of park spaces by different groups are:

- **Contested rights to park space**, reflecting both the locally specific and more generalised social hierarchies of power. At a structural level, contested rights to space limit access to/ proximity of parks for less powerful groups. At a local level, contested rights are acted out in park space itself, and manifested in acts of oppression, threat of oppression, and in unwitting incivilities. Ignorance, intolerance, racism and xenophobia, gender heirarchies, homophobia and many other forms of social power play operate to control and limit use of space for some groups through contest.

- **Institutionally approved hegemonic values and practices as expressed in the physical spaces and management of the park**; usually these will physically provide for majority, or institutionally established 'legitimate' preferences and practices, and are able to be influenced by spatial designers and park managers. Physical provision and preferred management practices can and do tacitly support claims of greater rights to space by some groups , supporting racist and other types of social exclusion on the ground.

- **Exclusionary effects for those who do not share 'legitimate' values,** tastes and behaviours in their preferred spatial practices. This factor operates both through lack of provision of preferred facilities, decreasing the amount of attractive park space, and through implicit marking of illegitimacy, thereby limiting rights to claim or control park space. I argue this operates along ethnic/ sub cultural rather than racial lines, and relates to choice and preference. I have found that different ethnicities have different preferences for space, and are likely therefore to be differently affected by local provision.

The interaction of these three factors provides an explanation both for the general tendency towards BME underrepresentation, and the local variation that is seen from place to place.

The findings here not only point to the significant role of white Anglo European ethno-racial formations in configuring park spaces, that I have shown influence park use and non-use by people from different ethnic /cultural backgrounds. They also provide an insight into actions that can be taken to meaningfully address some of the shortcomings in contemporary park provision and spatial production practices, that could begin to provide more of the kinds of spaces that people want. If parks were shaped more by the values of their potential users, it might then be possible to establish what levels of park use might actually be normative for different groups.

People from BME groups in the UK are significantly more likely than white British people to live in areas of deprivation, and to have less access to green space (CABE, 2010; CABE Space, 2010). There is evidence that residents of urban neighbourhoods with high indices of deprivation, and limited access to parks and green spaces display more symptoms of chronic stress and poor health, and a lower life expectancy, independent of their individual characteristics (Van den Berg, et al., 2007; Mitchell & Popham, 2008). Ensuring that UK parks, like this new purpose made 'community parkland' , built in deprived areas aim to meet the needs of all British ethnicities in their catchment should therefore be a priority.

12.0 Parks for People: Cultural Reflexivity in Park Design and Management

12. 1 Introduction

This final chapter seeks to identify actions that could be taken by spatial producers and managers to address the exclusionary processes in current practices uncovered through this case study research. This study has found several ways in which cultural inequality is expressed and sustained in physical park space, and park management practices, and reflected in the use or non use of park spaces by different people on ethnic lines. As proposed by Jason Byrne and Jennifer Wolch (2009) the 'ethno racial' formation of space is at least partially responsible for who uses or doesn't use park space. The UK's hegemonic Romantic ontologies of nature, the city and the country, relative blindness to cultural content of spatial production practices, and increasingly, particular and partial visions of 'sustainability' expressed in green space, encourage provision of less of the sorts of park spaces some groups would prefer, even in the places where they would be most able to use them. Institutional support for certain practices and preferences can and does interact with societal racism and xenophobia, working to further discourage use of park spaces by some groups.

Researchers have made recommendations in previous studies to address their findings of minority ethnicity under-representation in parks, which, while supportable in principle, I have critiqued here for being insufficiently situated in their research. For example the '' Community Green'' report's authors (CABE Space, 2010) found differential use of parks on ethnic lines, although proximity to generic green space was found to be equally valued by all. The findings of their study were based on parks reported to be equidistant from home for all participants. Though perception of park quality varied on ethnic lines, (though not when judged by groups of mixed ethnicity or by the researchers themselves), nevertheless, researchers concluded distance must be the major factor affecting use, and that green space closer to home, for example in social housing areas, should be improved, to encourage active use, and bring the health benefits of using outdoor space to people of ethnic minorities. Edwin Gomez's study of Puerto Rican Park users in Massachusetts (Gomez 1999) concluded (like Rishbeth 2004 and others) that park space should inculcate a greater sense of belonging by catering to ethnic minorities in terms of their leisure preferences and language needs, in order to increase the frequency of their park visits, though he presents no evidence there might be increased park use because of the recommended approaches. In fact the park he found most used by the Puerto Ricans who participated in his study was furthest from where they lived and had (unlike their local park) not been programmatically adapted to what had been assumed/claimed to be 'Puerto Rican' park preferences.

The model I propose, to explain widespread but variable ethnic minority under-representation in UK parks, drawing on the empirical findings here, is a model based on the interaction of three factors which will vary from park to park, from group to group, and over time. These factors are:

- Contested rights to use public space, reflecting both the locally specific and more generalised social hierarchies of power, that are acted out in public space and are manifested in acts of oppression, threat of oppression, and in unwitting incivilities.

- Institutionally approved hegemonic values and practices as expressed in the physical spaces and management of the park; usually these will physically provide for majority preferences and practices more than others, and thereby tacitly support claims of greater rights to space by some groups.

- Exclusionary effects for those who do not share 'legitimate' values, tastes and behaviours in their preferred spatial practices, through lack of provision of preferred facilities, and through implicit marking of illegitimacy, thereby limiting rights to claim or control park space.

While urban planning can and should work to address the structural inequality that limits the provision of parks in deprived areas, this chapter is focussed more on what can be done within the parks and greenspaces themselves. Action to address all three factors above will have some impact in rebalancing power relations and providing more equitably for people's needs along ethnic lines, however acting in one area alone is unlikely to be as effective than consideration of the integrated effects of all three.

12.2 Addressing Vulnerability in Unregulated Public Space.

The issue of territorial domination of park spaces in accordance with local and wider societal power hierarchies is well documented here and in other studies and is not limited only to, but does include vulnerability to oppressive behaviours through race or ethnicity (CABE Space, 2010; Back, 2005; Bell, 2005; Madge, 1997; MacNaghten & Urry, 1998; Marne, 1996). Greater regulation of space might be seen as necessarily leading to the loss of 'counter-spaces' in cities (Lefebvre 1991:381), and can, without adequate consideration, mean greater exclusion for members of those groups who are framed as threatening, like groups of teenagers, especially young black and increasingly young Islamic men, or members of the street population, factors that should be considered if spaces aim to be truly equitable and public.

In an ideal world public spaces would of course be equally open to all, places where citizens meet and interact respectfully, but the reality of East London's park spaces, like most others, is not ideal, and as the focus group participants described eloquently, parks which should be places of relaxation and restoration, can often be spaces of stress, intimidation and fear. Many people who feel themselves to be vulnerable in unregulated park spaces travel, if they have the resources, to make use of more controlled spaces, like the warden patrolled Royal Parks, or access supervised Coram's Fields, both cited by participants in this study. It seems likely then, that the presence of park wardens (as at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park), or other means of regulation in more East London park spaces and/or at some times, would increase frequency of use by people from some BME groups, particularly Islamic ethnicities.

Staffing parks is costly, and despite many calls for investment in park wardens , finding revenue for staffing has been the largest obstacle to greater regulation of park space in the UK for some time (CABE Space, 2005), but there is scope for greater voluntary sector or housing agency involvement at a local level. The 'Community Green' report's recommendation for improved

quality of space close to home (CABE, 2010), if combined with some regulation, could reduce the fear of local play spaces and small park spaces that is widely reported, and address stylistic and social open space needs of those groups, such as the British Bangladeshi or British Somalian participants here, who expressed a desire for large green garden like spaces for frequent use close to home - dog free spaces that are safe, tranquil, and suited to sociability, food growing and children's play. Regulating a large number of very local spaces full time would be hard to fund if paid park wardens were the only option, but this is not the case. Improving both the quality and supervision of large numbers of small spaces could be achieved through building the capacity of communities to recognise and take joint action to address oppressive actions or actors, and help 'self regulate' space. Housing providers through investing in a staff resource across a property portfolio, perhaps community gardeners or play workers, can provide a presence in a number of park spaces across a wide area, but at specific times. Actions like these are possible, and would be likely to have significant benefit, especially for those groups like British Bangladeshi people in East London, who seem more reluctant or constrained than others to travel far to access park space.

12.3 Countering Evidence of Institutional Support for Greater Rights to Park Space for Some Cultural Groups .

"how things are represented and the 'machineries' and regimes of representation do play a constitutive, and not merely a reflexive, after-the event role." (Hall, 1992:254)

Symbolic values matter. Actions and concrete representations that are symbolic of equality, valuing and accepting the presence of different cultures within Britain, can be a step towards addressing perceptions of institutional racism. Gomez and Rishbeth's recommendations cited above, which were to provide for some locally preferred activities or signage meeting local language needs (based on the specific cultural contexts of park catchment populations), would act to challenge any presumption of institutional support solely for national majority use by representing and legitimating the presence of multiple cultures in those physical spaces. The types of culturally relevant interventions that, from this study, would be likely to have impact in East London, are discussed in the next section.

In general terms though, by making visible, representing the presence, needs and values of people from ethnic minorities, not only in park space itself , but also in promotional materials in events programming and the like, institutions could (and do) present some challenge, at least on a symbolic level, to assertions of tacit institutional support for xenophobic and racist attitudes.

However, for gestures of this sort to go further than potentially superficial symbolism, they must be underpinned by explicit recognition of the presence of culturally situated assumptions, tastes, and preferences in all cultures, including white Anglo-European, and the recognition that some legally upheld cultural preferences can be spatially or at least temporally incompatible. Recognising that, and considering how conflicting needs can be accommodated, or managed, within a multicultural area if not within a single park, would on the evidence of this study, mean

significant cultural change for producers and managers of UK park space. Spatial producers and managers need to be willing to challenge their own tastes, prejudices, passions or ambitions, and design and manage space in ways that are reflexive. Importantly understanding what is required in each instance needs to be based in valid methods of establishing local needs .

For park spaces to provide equitably for all the people living nearby, they should be designed and managed with real input from them, and with impact measured in evidence of use over time. People are not inarticulate about their preferences or needs. Good data can help inform decision making and inclusion needs to be embedded in meaningful processes of participation and consultation. Ward level neighbourhood statistics for the UK readily allow the identification of the largest local populations in a park catchment by ethnicity. Importantly, reaching a representative sample from all sections of a residential population requires targeted rather than random sampling. Even academic studies carried out in the UK looking into parks and under-representation of BME groups have failed to secure participation from large enough numbers of people from some ethnicities to do other than amalgamate results by racial groupings. For example ''Community Green'' (CABE Space, 2010) amalgamated results from African heritage and Caribbean heritage people into one 'ethnic' group, though this could be in no way be argued to be culturally meaningful. There is considerable cultural variation within racial or continental groupings, as is evidenced here, between for example 'British Asians', that can significantly impact park space preferences. Quota sampling, and working with gatekeeper organisations to target particular under-represented groups, perhaps following an initial randomly generated sampling would help to ensure consultation was carried out with participants that were actually representative of the catchment population.

Landscape styles have been shown to be important, as are the programmed activities supported by park infrastructure. The use of images, as in the park preference survey, allowing people to indicate preferences for what might be done or can be found elsewhere, thereby seeking quantitative indications of support for a particular design style, is a relatively typical consultation practice, at least for small scale projects. It is less used for larger scale developments like the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park or Heritage/ Big Lottery Fund financed overhauls of existing urban parks, where experts views and representations of best practice are more typical. Image based research can be fun for participants, and does provide an indication of what might be preferred locally, as has been shown here, though there are caveats. Understanding what people see as valuable or attractive in any particular image is likely to remain unknown using this method alone. This study provides evidence to support the view that any one physical space or image of it can have multiple interpretations, in which different elements are valued linked to demographic factors, and particularly to ethnicity .

Public meetings are not used in social research as a way of gaining understanding of peoples values, preferences, or experiences, nor are they typically used in politics, or even market research as a way to understand what people think. They are an effective way to transmit information, from an informed speaker to an uninformed crowd, but not the other way around, and public meetings are seldom representative of local populations. They are generally attended only by those who believe their participation can have an impact (Williamson, 2014) . Despite the evident weaknesses of this format however, public meetings remain one of the main forms

of ''consultation'' about development, including parks and green spaces, used in the UK.

Focus groups on the other hand are a widely used social research method, increasingly used by politicians in public policy development, and by businesses for product testing, yet they are not typical of consultation methods used for spatial production. The creation of focus groups here was a rich source of information on local preferences and practices in park space, and added understanding to selections made in the park preference survey. Triangulation of findings between different focus groups provided strong indications for some ethnicities that views represented were likely to be meaningful norms, at least within this catchment population. Focus groups then could be very useful in developing project briefs prior to any design or refurbishment of large parks, particularly if groups were selected to represent not only ethnicity, but other significant demographies, being mindful of intersectionality.

While focus group methodology's strengths lie in accessing opinions more readily, and perhaps more representatively than can be achieved in a typical public meeting, transparency or accountability may be more problematic using this method alone. Public meetings can at least publicise what might be going on, and have the advantage of taking place in 'public', though this can actually be something of an illusion. Juliet Davis's critique of Olympic consultation processes was that it separated meetings attended by 'non affiliated' residents from those with stakeholder, interest or expert groups, and also met with some local groups on specific issues in private. As who said what was not adequately recorded, and meetings were separate, there was no opportunity for participants themselves (or indeed those managing the consultation) to identify common issues between local residents and other stakeholders, and no opportunity for external groups to oversee or critique recording of such meetings (Davis, 2011:198,199).

Fundamentally, consultation can only be meaningful if those carrying it out apply well designed, appropriate, considered methods, are not attached to any preconceived outcome, and are genuinely interested in the results.

It seems likely that for much spatial production, this would be a departure from current practice.

12.4 Accommodating Multiple Normative Cultural Preferences and Practices.

Within this case study area, it is possible based on the evidence of the park preference survey and focus groups, to make recommendations regarding ways in which both the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park itself and East London's park design and management practices more generally could better accommodate the arguably normative cultural preferences and practices of the largest identifiable cultural groups here.

Concerns over aesthetics, and programmed uses will be addressed in this section. However what comes through very strongly from all the groups is that there is one normative cultural assumption of many white British people and park managers that really needs to be questioned. This is the assumption that parks and country parks are always appropriate spaces for walking dogs, and especially places where dogs can be let off the lead. Dog fouling, and fear of dogs

generally are issues that have resulted in large campaigns in the mainstream press and by lobby groups in the UK, and led to wide regulation of dog access to children's play areas and to Britain's beaches since at least the 1980s, (see for example National Playing Fields Association, 1994) . There continue to be many people of all ethnicities who would prefer not to encounter dog faeces or uncontrolled dogs in public space at all. However, through failure to regulate dogs in London parks, or perhaps failure to sufficiently promote and enforce existing regulation, dogs are arguably being given far greater rights to most urban park space than many people.

Yet dog ownership is not a majority practice. Less than one in ten London households own a dog (BBC News, 2007). It is astonishing then that so little is provided in the way of dog free park space in London. This is especially true in Boroughs like Tower Hamlets or Newham bordering the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, where approximately one third of residents are Muslim (Office for National Statistics, 2012), a religion for whom close contact with dogs is potentially 'unclean'. Nor are dogs off the lead compatible with the preservation of nature or habitat. In the countryside there is typically restriction on where dogs can be exercised off the lead because of their tendency to disturb nests, damage habitat and harass other animals, (Scottish Wildlife Trust, 2009; Hampshire County Council, 2006) and in urban parks dogs are responsible for significant damage to many trees (London Tree Officers Association, 2010). Pet dogs are also incompatible with 'sustainability', another key criterion of recent thinking about parks and open spaces (Assadourian, 2014). Even so, most London parks including 'country parks' offer only relatively small dog free areas, and in the focus group participants' experience there is very little enforcement of dogs on leads policies. Dogs are allowed to roam free across the majority of park space. More equitable options might include establishing both large dog parks, and large dog free parks in areas of plentiful open space provision like the Lea Valley or Epping Forest. The introduction of time of day, day of week, and seasonal restrictions when no dogs can be off the lead, might be appropriate in areas of more limited space. In large parks it seems reasonable to bring at least to equity the area of park space that is available for people who do not want to interact with dogs to provision for those who do. The representations of the focus groups indicate that Victoria Park, in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, is likely to see a very significant rise in use by BME groups if this sort of regulation were introduced.

Returning to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, while the South Park aligns quite well already with many of the arguably normative preferences of most of the focus groups, it would be possible to do more to attract a wider ethnic mix to North Park without changing the spatial configuration substantially, or lessening habitat value. Many of the images of the park used in its publicity emphasise wilder areas, and arguably LLDC could make more in promotions of the more maintained spaces that surround them. Publicising that dogs are required to be on leads, and that this is being enforced by park wardens; making provision for barbecues and providing better facilities for picnics; installing more off lawn sociable seating at the upper levels along main movement routes; considering provision of more sociable seating within the children's play area, particularly if visibility between spaces was improved, are all actions that would align the space more closely with many of the preferences expressed by British Pakistani and British West Indian participants.

Without relocating the park, its general appeal to British Bangladeshis, is likely to remain more

limited, due to distance from home, however there may still be opportunities to provide for this groups by making a space of unique attractiveness for this part of London. Due to its unusual ground form and the presence of infrastructure, there are spaces at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park that are not widely visible from other areas, and could be access controlled with little impact on the rest of the park, such as the wetland bowl immediately north of the Channel Tunnel Rail link. Occasional or even regularly timetabled 'women only' days, or 'women only' physical activities, perhaps provided at times when children are in school, (giving stay-at-home mothers greater freedom to participate), if supported by appropriate and directed publicity, could meet a demand that was expressed in the focus groups, and is suggested in other research (CABE Space, 2010; Foster, 2008; Morris, 2003). Such 'hidden' and disconnected spaces could, at least for a time, become a private outdoor space, similar to the Women's Pond at Hampstead Heath, where Islamic women and girls could 'uncover' and be sociable in the sunshine, or wear clothing more appropriate for activities like climbing, or learning to cycle, without experiencing the concerns over modesty that can inhibit their participation in similar activities in mixed gender spaces.

In East London spaces more widely, similar recommendations to address the culturally differentiated preferences identified here, focussed on creating and promoting active sociable spaces, perhaps for barbecues or children's play, incorporating areas with a more maintained or horticultural look and feel, greater regulation, particularly of dogs as discussed above, and taking opportunities to promote single gender events or activities could all broaden the appeal and use of many park spaces locally, including Epping Forest and Lea Valley Regional Park.

12.5 The Importance Of Cultural Consciousness In Promoting Equitable Provision Of Spatial Resources In Multicultural Cities.

I have referred several times to evidence that residents of urban neighbourhoods with poor living conditions and few environmental amenities for 'restoration' display more symptoms of chronic stress and poor health, independent of any individual characteristics, and that access to quality green space is linked with better health outcomes and lower mortality rates in urban environments (Van den Berg, et al., 2007, Steptoe & Feldman, 2001). I have not found studies directly investigating restorative effects for park space and ethnicity, and certainly participants in this study did not universally recognise feelings of increased calm or other physical change associated with simply being in or looking at green space. Research has also shown that what people believe about green space has an impact on whether or not access to nature is "restorative", (Gaterslaben & Andrews, 2013; Van den Berg, et al., 2007; Ulrich, 1986) and this study provides evidence that people's beliefs about nature , green spaces and the purpose of parks do vary on ethnic lines.

Studies do allow however for several interpretations of the mechanisms that underlie the relationship that has been shown to exist between access to green space and health, and these do not only include the restorative quality of green space per se, but also health benefits of exercise, benefits of social contacts outside the home, better air quality or less noise in greener environments.

Tendencies to universalise for example a 'restorative' value for nature in any configuration, or the perception of scenic beauty, or values for wilderness are widespread in the landscape profession, which has a far stronger technical than academic base in the UK, and such generalisation, and uncritical thinking has been shown here to have the potential to exclude.

In general, there are actions that can be taken, that I believe can really remove existing barriers to equitable use of park space for many people from British minority ethnic backgrounds, and would be likely to result in increased frequency of visits to park spaces. All of them require an acceptance that equitable provision does not yet exist, and that hegemonic views in spatial production do not represent universal truths. They are partial and culturally situated. Responding to place is not just a physical act, it is a social one - space is culturally constructed, and cultural context varies.

This study shows that in the increasingly multicultural context of our cities, cultural consciousness in production of urban park space really matters. If access to green space can have the profound impacts on urban lives that have been claimed, it could even be a matter of life and death.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Park Preference Survey Participant Information Sheet

CITY UNIVERSITY LONDON

Social Research Project
Parks and Ethnic Identity

This questionnaire is part of a research study from City University, hoping to find out why people of different ethnicities visit parks more or less often than each other. The questionnaire will ask you about your ethnicity/ cultural background, as well as for other information. None of your information will be given to anyone else. It is just for this study. Then it will ask you for your views on some pictures of parks. It is hoped that the research will mean better parks for everyone.

Can you please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire?

About you.

What is your home post code or neighbourhood?.....

PLEASE CIRCLE ANY/ ALL THAT BEST DESCRIBE YOU, OR WRITE YOUR OWN DESCRIPTION

Are you -

Male / Female Under 18 18-30 30-50 50-65 65+

Did you go to school in Britain? Yes No Partly Mostly

Did / do you go to University? Yes no

Are you working raising family not working studying other

Would you say you are (You can circle more than one)

British European American African Asian Australasian Caribbean Other

White Mixed Race Black Not White Other.....

How do you describe your cultural background / heritage ?

.....

Do you speak any language at home apart from English? Yes No

If Yes, what language(s) do you use at home.....

NOW TURN OVER AND PICK THE PARKS YOU THINK YOU'D LIKE TO VISIT MOST
IF THEY WERE NO MORE THAN 10 MINUTES WALK FROM YOUR HOME
(you can pick more than one)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Would you be able to/interested to take part in this study again? If so please write your contact name and email address here

.....

Appendix 2: Pre-approved Interview Questions for Jason Prior

Background to the Interview:

My name is Bridget Snaith. I am a Landscape Architect and social scientist. I am currently researching for a PhD at City University's Dept of Sociology. I am investigating whether the influence of cultural background of spatial designers on the formation of public park spaces, has any impact on the underrepresentation of BME groups as park users in the UK. I am also trying to understand the other influences on city spaces, to establish the power designers really have to influence and shape space, what other social 'institutions values and priorities are influential.

To date I have interviewed in person: Eleanor Fawcett, LLDC, Phil Askew, LLDC, Paul Brickell, LLDC, Vicki Austin, LLDC, Ralph Ward former advisor to ODPM, and reviewed interviews prepared by the Landscape Institute as part of the 'Learning Legacy' including interviews with John Hopkins and Phil Askew, and with Tom Smith of AECOM

In preparation for this discussion, I have also watched Aecom's youtube interview with Jason Prior & Bill Hanway about masterplanning an Olympics, and also the 'Big City Big Ideas' lecture in Toronto in April this year

I have surveyed 250 local residents of varied ethnicities regarding their preferred park/ landscape 'style' with options varying from formal geometric designs to 'naturalistic' or ecological,- from marsh to knot garden, to ascertain if there are different culturally based landscape 'tastes' with interesting results, and subsequently held 6 focus groups with people of the major ethnicities resident in the catchment of the QEOP (bangladeshi, pakistani, indian, afrocaribbean, african (somalian),british white) whereI have asked them about their ideas of beauty and beautiful places, experience of playing outdoors as kids/parental attitudes to outdoor life, what parks are for, personal experience of and use of parks, knowledge of the city, freedom of movement in the city etc)

I have also reviewed many publications from the development of the London Olympics, and academic research literature on parks and ethnicity primarily from US & UK as well as unpublished visitor statistics from HLF.

Proposed Questions

From the discussions I've had to date, other people involved in the process have said a lot of the key design decisions about the relationship between built and public space elements and their connection with the existing areas around the Olympic site were decided back in 2003 at the initial competition stage, so the focus of most of what I want to talk with you about is from before 2006/7 to try to understand more about the background to those moves.

1. I'm interested in hearing more about how the original 2003 team came together in the first place - how and why did you choose each other to make a bid?

2. The EDAW consortium's winning ideas/principles - what would you characterise as the key elements of the winning design from your perspective, or perhaps what was the 'angle' you chose to propose, that was different from other teams, that won you the competition?

3. Were there any of those elements/principles you felt were essential to the scheme/ could not be lost without fundamentally compromising it, or any you felt especially compelled to fight for?-

4. Can you talk a bit about any tensions that might have existed between a design

focussed on winning the Olympic bid, - and what might have been 'right' if the project could have been funded without the need for the Olympics - I know your team also developed plans for the area if the bid was unsuccessful

5. After winning the 2003 competition, the consortium developed the winning designs through to planning permission before the bid was won , I'm interested in hearing about who, and what in terms of agencies or individuals you feel were key in influencing the design up to the decision to host the Olympics in London- say for example did any borough's political goals impact on the location of any elements , were there any really key players who you felt had to be persuaded most of all?

6. Did any really new ideas get incorporated as you were coming closer to the Olympic award decision?

7. Stitching together communities across the Lea Valley is often mentioned in representations of the design principles. As built now, and drawn in legacy, the main public realm element, the park, is linear north south, quite tight to the Lea river, and central to the valley space, whereas one might expect from the language that 'stitching' would go across the valley, for the park to reach right across in places East to West - for example where the Regents canal joins lea navigation at old ford there's the potential to connect the park to a strategic east west walking/cycling route and between the waterways; or perhaps one might anticipate landbridges or some kind of similar challenge to the major infrastructure barriers that disconnect the valley from its surroundings, like the A12 to the north and west, or the railways to the east? Can you talk a little about this?

8. LLDC have said there wasn't really a process for outreach to the surrounding residential community before 2007, but this seems a little at odds with something you say in a lecture you gave In Toronto in April this year. You say ''it was amazing, at all the public meetings, for a truly urban population, the amount we heard about ''we just want to see the countryside on our doorstep, we want to engage with nature we just want to understand how this environment works'' How much scope do you feel there was for communities to directly influence key aspects of the design in your view?

9. Did the diversity of cultures in communities around the park influence its design? was there a sense that they might have particular needs ?

Appendix 3 Focus Group Consent Form

CITY UNIVERSITY LONDON

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPATION : CONSENT FORM

Parks and Ethnic Identity Social Research Project

City University requires researchers to ensure all participants in research projects have given their consent to participate willingly in the research, understand what the research is about, and know the discussions of the group will be recorded for analysis later.

In this case, the study is for a PhD, investigating why people of different ethnicities visit parks more or less often than each other. It is a case study, working with people living and working around the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, and also those who have designed the park, looking at how cultural background might influence both design, and use of parks. It is hoped that the research will mean better parks for everyone.

No information gathered here will be given to anyone else, it is just for use in this research project, and will remain anonymous in any published work.

Preferred name for use in the group (First name?).....

Please place a tick in the boxes next to the following statements to confirm you have read them, understand them, and consent to participating in the focus group in accordance with them.

I understand that the discussion I am taking part in is for a research project about ethnicity and park use, and not for any other purpose ☐

I understand that I do not have to participate in the group, and I confirm that I am choosing to do so freely ☐

I understand that the discussion will be recorded on a voice recorder, to allow the researcher to consider what has been said in more depth after the discussion. ☐

I understand that my full name and address are not required for the research, and have not been/will not need to be supplied to the researcher, ☐

I understand that I will not be named in any published work , and that my views/any quotations used in publications will not allow me to be identified. ☐

I understand that I can choose to speak or not during the discussion, and that I can ask (before February 2014) that any contributions I have made to the discussion be disregarded should I later decide I do not wish them to be included. ☐

I can contact the researcher at [redacted] (or via the person who arranged my participation in the group) to ask for further information, or to withdraw my consent for participation as above. ☐

SIGNED.....DATE .....

Appendix 4: Focus Group Participant Information Sheet

CITY UNIVERSITY LONDON

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPATION : PARTICIPANT INFORMATION
Parks and Ethnic Identity Social Research Project

This questionnaire is part of a research study from City University, investigating why people of different ethnicities visit parks more or less often than each other. It is hoped that the research will mean better parks for everyone. No information gathered here will be given to anyone else, it is just for use in this research project, and will remain anonymous in any published work.

DATE....7th Nov 2013.....
Preferred name for use in the group (First name?).....

Please circle any of the available answers that apply to you.
You can select more than one, and/ or write your own answer

1. Are you - Male / Female Under 18 18-30 31-50 51-65 65+

2. Did / do you go to University? Yes no
In the UK? Yes no.....If no, where?.....

3. Are you
paid employment raising children not in paid employment studying caring for family

other.....

4. Would you say you have a cultural background that is (You can circle more than one)
British European American African Asian Australasian Caribbean Other

5. How do you describe your ethnic identity/ cultural background?

.....

6. Do you speak any language at home apart from English? Yes No

If yes, what is the language you also speak.....

7. What is your home post code or neighbourhood?.....

Are the people who live in your neighbourhood
- very mixed culturally with no single cultural group in the majority.....
- mostly similar to you culturally.....
- mostly different to you culturally.....
- particularly from one cultural group.....can you say which?.....

8. Did you go to school in Britain? Yes No Partly Mostly
was your education at a school where pupils paid fees? Yes. partly no

9. Did your parents go to school in Britain? Yes No Partly Mostly

Thank you.

Appendix 5: Focus Group Primary Questions

Primary Questions for Focus Group

Can you talk about a place you have been that you found very beautiful or special

Is there a garden, a park or a landscape that might be considered special to lots of people who share your ethnic or cultural background, that they might have pictures of or really like to visit?

Can you talk about any particular memories from your childhood of being in an outdoor place?

What are parks for?

Who do you go to the park with? Do you go to parks alone?

What was your parents attitude to you being outdoors when you were a child?

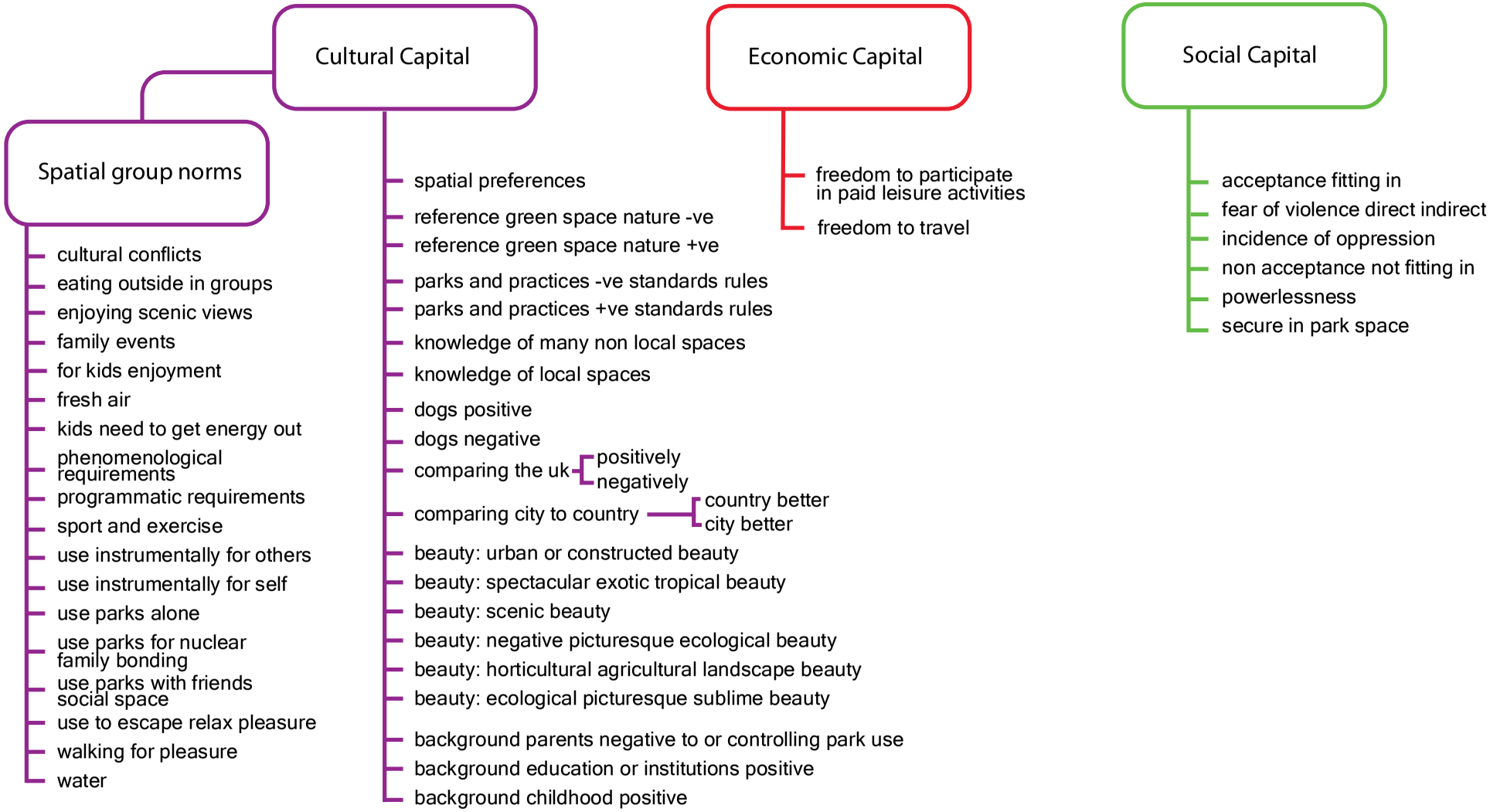
What do you like about going to the park,

Is there anything you don't like?

What do you do for leisure?

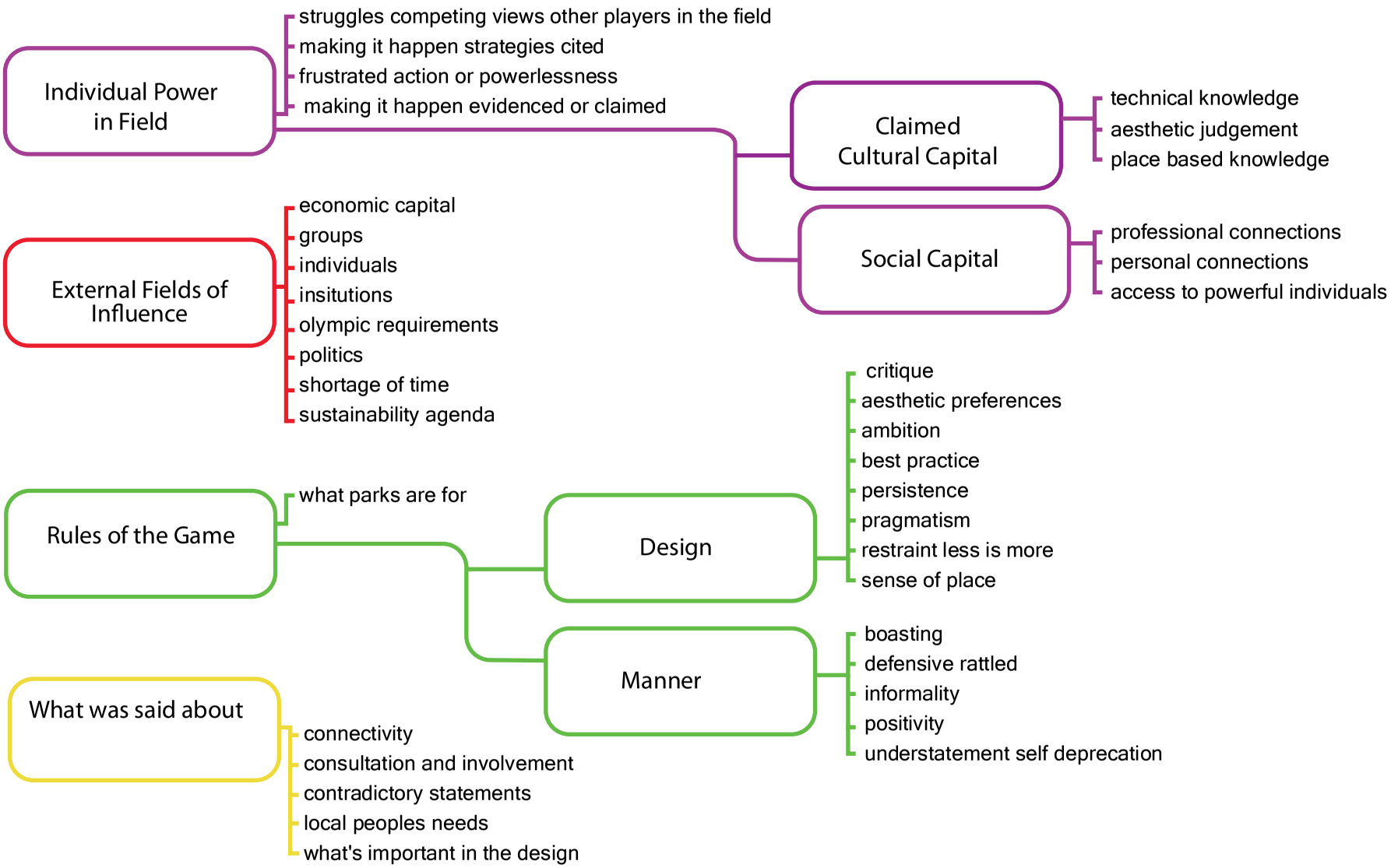
Appendix 6: Focus Group Coding Frame

Focus Groups Thematic Coding 'Nodes'



Appendix 7: Elite Interview Coding Frame

'Elite'Interviews Thematic Coding 'Nodes'



Appendix 8: Park User Tally Counts

North Park			Note	South Park			
	assessed would likely claim white	assessed would likely claim non white			assessed would likely claim white	assessed would likely claim non white	
19/04/2014:N1	74	15	10 mins easter weekend 11 am	19/04/2014:S1	86	97	10 mins easter weekend 1.30pm
19/04/2014:N2	127	45	10 mins noon	19/04/2014:S2	93	89	10 mins 2.30pm
02/07/2014:N1	182	53	all spaces 1-1.30 (inc school group in play area)	02/07/2014:S1	126	104	all spaces Wednesday 2 -2.20
02/07/2014:N2	42	8	tally 10 mins 1.30 -1.40 Wednesday	02/07/2014:S2	82	71	fountain 2.30-2.45
06/08/2014:N1	56	24	tally 10 mins 3.50-4.00 (Wednesday)	06/08/2014:S1	192	187	all spaces Wednesday 3pm -3.30
06/08/2014:N2	64	17	tally 10 mins 4.30-5.10	06/08/2014:S2	98	149	all spaces Wednesday 5.30-6.00
09/08/2014:N1	54	16	10 mins 2pm	09/08/2014:S1	73	85	10 mins 12 noon
09/08/2014:N2	49	24	tally 10 mins 3.30-5.30	09/08/2014:S2	62	78	10 mins 1.30pm
02/09/2014:N1	157	50	45 mins 2pm - 2.45pm (Tuesday holidays)	02/09/2014:S1	157	188	long tally count 3.45 - 4.30
TOTAL	**805**	**252**		**TOTAL**	**969**	**1048**	

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