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Tourism and the development of 'creative' urban areas: evidence from four non-central areas in London.

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TOURISM AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF
'CREATIVE' URBAN AREAS.
EVIDENCE FROM FOUR NON-CENTRAL
AREAS IN LONDON.

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PhD
2010

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
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ABSTRACT

The economic importance of creative industries is widely acknowledged, but their relationship with tourism has to date received little attention. The present research explores the role creative industry clusters play in the development of urban tourism, aiming to enrich debates on urban tourism, creative clusters and urban form. The research pays particular attention to the role of creative production in the tourist experience, the characteristics of visitors to areas with a high concentration of creative industries, and the relationship between the urban form and tourism. In order to investigate these processes, four non-central London creative areas (Spitalfields, Hoxton/Shoreditch, London Fields and Deptford) were chosen as case studies.

A qualitative methodology based on face-to-face interviews and sketched mental maps was deemed the most appropriate to attain the research aims. A total of 132 face-to-face interviews with visitors were conducted in the four case studies. In addition, maps sketched by visitors provided a useful and new approach to the study of tourist experiences. Interviews with visitors and mental maps were supplemented with in-depth interviews with key informants such as local creative entrepreneurs. All interviews were transcribed, printed on paper and, together with mental maps, coded by hand according to themes and sub-themes.

The research findings highlight similarities and differences between the four areas, allowing reflection upon the ways in which creative clusters may facilitate the development of urban tourism. One of the consequences of the high concentration of creative industries appeared to be the attraction of a critical mass of visitors who are either employed in the creative industries themselves or are particularly interested in the arts or other creative products, such as fashion, design and architecture. In the case of creative professionals, their visit may also be closely related to their job, as they often visit creative areas in order to be up to date with

the latest trends, or to soak up the creative atmosphere and be inspired for their own creativity. In addition, these cultural intermediaries often act as models of fashion and style, thus becoming a tourist attraction themselves. In this sense, tourism in creative areas can be seen as a form of co-creation, since consumers co-create the value that can be derived from the experience (White et al., 2009) and *others* represent an important aspect of the visitor experience. Following the analysis of qualitative evidence collected, five typologies of visitors to these areas were established: trendsetters, detached fashion critics, cool seekers, cultural browsers and accidental creative tourists. These types of visitors are characterised by different levels of interest in creative products and desire to be a pioneer (in discovering new trend or new places). Their varying perceptions of the areas' qualities helped to develop a model which represents how different groups of visitors may perceive a creative area over time.

The idea of *cool* appeared as a key concept to understand the qualities which are valued and sought after in a creative area. *Coolness* emerged as a fundamental quality, linked to its bohemian character and to its distinction from mainstream cultural activities and tourist attractions. Perceived authenticity also appeared as an important asset in attracting visitors, who seemed to associate it with anything which did not appear as conceived or produced specifically for the visitor. Also the areas' physical space emerged as an important factor in the visitor experience and in their appeal. In particular, the small size of the shops, the heterogeneity of urban environment and the presence of rundown buildings and public spaces contribute to the perception of authenticity, artiness and coolness, and thus to the area attractiveness. Everyday activities (e.g. grocery shops) are also important markers of authenticity, contributing to overseas and domestic tourists' perception of these areas as 'real London' (Londoners by contrast see them as 'unique'). The recommendations for tourism development policy in creative urban areas therefore call for a soft approach to planning, which would allow cultural diversity to thrive and keep independent businesses and everyday activities alive, and avoiding excessive theming and the creation of tourism bubbles.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DCMS British Department of Culture, Media and Sport

GDP Gross Domestic Product

GVA Gross Value Added

SIC Standard Industrial Classification

TALC Tourism Area Life Cycle

UK United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

UN United Nations

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

VFR Visiting Friends and Relations

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1. INTRODUCTION

The present study aims to explore the concept of creative areas in London and the role such areas play in the development of urban tourism. It intends to contribute to the body of existing research on tourism development in London, starting to explore the complex relationship between London's success as a cultural tourism destination and its role as a creative capital. The present chapter explains the rationale for the study, outlines the problems that were investigated, and describes the structure of the thesis.

London has been able to innovate and reinvent itself over the centuries in a way that only few cities in the world have been able to match. Service industries have successfully replaced manufacturing as the main source of employment, while daring contemporary buildings now coexist with Roman walls and Georgian houses. With a size and an economy which are comparable to those of many European countries, the UK capital is not only renowned as a global centre for international business, but also as a leading cultural and creative capital (Evans, 2006). For instance, there are 400 music venues and 215 theatres and concert halls, more than New York and Paris put together (LDA, 2008). Having a surface area which is for one third made of green spaces, London is also greener than any other city of similar size in the world (National Statistics 2007b). Largely thanks to international migration, its population has been growing in recent years, and almost a third of London's residents are from non-white groups (National Statistics, 2007b). These are only some of the factors that contribute the 26 million overnight visits each year, making London one of the world's leading tourism destinations (VisitLondon, 2007).

London Tourism

Historically, tourism did not play a major role in London's economy (Tyler, 2009). An important change happened in the 1970s, when the number of visitors doubled within a decade (Tyler, 2009) and the British government started to recognise its importance within the national economy. At the end of the 1980s the first Tourism Strategy and Action Plan for London was developed by the Joint London Tourism Forum (London Tourist Board, 1997).

Although responsible for 12 per cent of London's GDP (VisitLondon, 2007) and 10 per cent of its total employment (Visit London, 2002), today the tourism sector represents, to some extent, an area of concern (Tyler, 2009). Firstly, it heavily relies on overseas visitors and is, as a consequence, very exposed to external events such as political instabilities, health hazards and currency fluctuations (Ladkin et al., 2007). Also, due to the constant expansion of global tourism, London's apparent growth in overseas visits means that London's market share of international tourists compared to other destinations is in fact decreasing (LDA, 2002). Secondly, the appeal of the capital for domestic visitors has been weakening in the past ten years, with domestic visits dropping from 18.5 million in 2000 to 10.9 million in 2006 (Visit London, 2008). A number of factors may explain this under-performance, including the perception of London as an expensive destination and the increasing availability of affordable flights to the continent (LDA, 2002). In addition, Britons' image of London as a place to live is generally declining, due to its high cost of living, low perceived safety and an unemployment rate which is the highest in the UK (National Statistics, 2007). The average weekly household income per person is over a fifth higher in London than the national average (National Statistics, 2007b). However, social-economic polarisation means that while a quarter of households are earning over £1,000 per week, 14 per cent have an income of less than £150 per week (National Statistics, 2007b).

Central London is the prime area for tourism, with over 56 per cent of paid tourist accommodation located in the central Boroughs of Westminster, Camden and Kensington and Chelsea (VisitLondon, 2007). Also visits to tourist attractions

amount to 36 million in Central London, whereas in other sub-regions analogous figures are much lower (i.e. 2.8 million for South London, 5.4 million for East London and 0.4 for North London) (London Councils, 2006). London Development Agency (LDA) and VisitLondon (the tourism marketing agency for London) see the spreading of tourism across London as a priority: this is reflected in the increased attention paid by tourism policy documents to previously neglected forms of tourism such as VFR (visiting friends and relations) and Londoners visiting London (see, for instance, VisitLondon, 2005). However, also the scope for the development of 'traditional' forms of tourism in non-central areas is large, considering that London is currently affected by a problem of hotels' under-supply, with the result of high prices of accommodation.

A number of other - more complex - factors can be seen as key for the development of tourism in areas other than the three central boroughs (and the City of London). These include, for instance, increased mobility: immigration, emigration and, consequently, the growing importance of VFR visitors (usually staying in non-paid, and non-central accommodation), as well as of short-time London residents who often visit the city in a tourist-like manner. The unprecedented expansion of the tourism industry worldwide also means that tourists are now more experienced and look for new, more authentic destinations (Maitland and Newman, 2009). A polycentric city such as London offers therefore a wealth of options for the off-the-beaten track visitor, including emerging types of tourism precincts such as, for example, ethnic quarters, gay districts, student quarters and creative areas.

Interest in Creative Areas

When the present study was first conceived in the spring of 2006, the development of new tourism areas in London was selected as a general research topic. In a second stage (autumn 2006), the more specific theme of tourism development in creative urban areas emerged as the most interesting. As a result, the final research's aim and research questions (outlined below) were selected. The topic of tourism to creative urban areas was chosen for a number of reasons.

Firstly, the author's personal interest in the role of cultural activities and institutions in the development of less affluent urban areas or towns. It seemed useful to link the idea of creative clusters and their potential for urban regeneration with tourism development. The idea of business clusters has been to the forefront in economics studies for more than a century and, more recently, urban planners and researchers in urban development have applied this concept to sectors such as the creative and cultural industries and the arts, maintaining the contribution of cultural/creative quarters to the regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods (for instance, Bianchini, 1999, Landry, 2000, Montgomery, 2003, Mommaas, 2004). However, whereas creative industry clusters have been extensively studied in economic terms, their role in creating a certain atmosphere and attracting visitors appeared to be under-researched. Therefore it was decided to look precisely into this aspect, with particular attention to the role of creative areas in the development of tourism and the relationship between the urban form and the different types of space users (visitors in particular).

Secondly, the study was motivated by the belief that London, thanks to its twofold role as a world tourism city (Maitland and Newman, 2009) *and* as a creative and culture capital (Evans, 2006), provides the ideal conditions for the investigation of this topic. Zukin (1995: 151) points out that 'the really basic requirement of a culture capital is to have a large concentration of cultural producers. If vision is a source of power in the symbolic economy, it is impossible to ignore the collective power of cultural producers'. Similarly, for a city to be labelled creative capital, it should have the largest concentration of creative industries in the country (including a strong cultural sector and opportunities for cultural consumption), a critical-mass of creative producers, and the creative industry must play an important role in its economy.

In the case of London all these conditions are met: the capital has the largest number of creative industries in the UK, and, although only hosting 12% of its population, it features 40% of the UK's arts infrastructure, 90% of music business activity, 70% of film and television production and 85% of fashion designers (Landry, 2005). In their turn, the creative industries represent the second most

important sector of the economy after business services and, with 680,000 people employed in the creative sector, nearly 20% of the workforce (Landry, 2005). Also *creative intensity*, the proportion of people employed in the creative sector who actually perform a specialist creative job, is highest in London (48% compared with 30% elsewhere in the UK) (Evans, 2006). In addition, London is also leading in terms of creative consumption, exhibitions, education, and research and development. Interestingly for the present research, Evans' extensive study on creative spaces in London (2006) also highlighted the strong concentration of creative industries in certain areas of the city.

Objectives of the research and choice of Case Studies

In order to investigate the role played by London's creative business clusters in the development of urban tourism, three sets of research questions were identified:

- What are the characteristics of tourists visiting these areas? Can they be described as creative themselves?
- What is the relationship between cultural production and consumption in developing tourism in creative areas? What is the role played by the cultural and creative industries in this development?
- How does the configuration of urban space affect the development of tourism in creative areas?

In order to address these research questions, four creative, non-central areas of London were chosen as case studies. 'Non-central areas of London' means areas which belong to one of the twelve inner London boroughs (as opposed to outer London ones), but which do not lie within the central London sub-area (comprised of Westminster, Camden, Kensington and Chelsea, and the City of London). It should be noted at this point that, historically, central London and the West and North/West regions have been home to some of London's highest concentrations of creative industries (including cultural industries, as specified by DCMS, 1998). However, while the west/central area is a hub for corporate and institutional creative industries, the City Fringe (inner East London region) is the heart of the independent arts and micro-enterprises (Evans, 2006), featuring one of the

strongest concentrations of artists, designer-makers and new media practitioners, as well as growing design and architecture sectors. In addition, as the relevant chapters illustrate (8-11), the East inner London region is especially interesting because it contains areas that are both ‘creative’ and deprived. For these reasons, considering the author’s specific interest in the role of creative institutions and activities in urban regeneration, it was decided to choose as case studies four east London areas which combine concentrations of both creative industries and deprivation: Spitalfields, Hoxton/Shoreditch, London Fields and Deptford. All of them are vibrant neighbourhoods with developed or developing arts and entertainment sectors, yet places where poverty and wealth manage to coexist.

The Spitalfields area is, among these four case studies, the one that is already at a relatively advanced stage of tourism development. Of the other three cases, Hoxton/Shoreditch is the most popular with Londoners, due to its vivid nightlife, whereas London Fields and Deptford are still at a very early stage of their development. Marketing research undertaken by the tourism marketing agency for East London (Tabje, 2006) pointed out that Deptford’s main image is of a run-down area with no appeal and that awareness is generally very low. These same negative perceptions were found for the entire Borough of Hackney (of which London Fields is part) with the exception of Hoxton/Shoreditch, which is seen as a new and trendy area, although not family friendly. On the contrary, Spitalfields appears to be well-known by British visitors and to have a positive image mainly linked to its market, restaurants and bars (Tabje, 2006).

Chapters Overview

Literature Review (Chapters 2, 3 and 4)

The study begins with a review of the relevant literature, which has been organised in three chapters. Chapter 2 introduces some key concepts such as creativity, agglomeration theory and creative quarters, and outlines a theoretical framework for the study of creative urban areas. Chapter 3 focuses on culture-led urban regeneration, with particular attention to the UK. The role of the creative industries in urban development and the main issues related to gentrification are illustrated here. The chapter ends with the discussion of some recent trends in city

marketing and the risk of cultural commodification. Chapter 4 completes the theoretical framework for the present study by reviewing the most relevant theories to understand current trends in urban tourism, the consumption of urban places, and the development of trendy urban areas.

Methodology and Methods (Chapters 5 and 6)

Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 illustrate the methodology adopted for the present study, and describe in details the methods used for the collection and analysis of data. Firstly, the philosophical standpoint of the researcher (social constructivism) and its impact on the research design are explained. Then, the choice of a qualitative approach based on case studies is justified. Following this general introduction on the methodological approach, the choice of specific case studies is explained and methods adopted (face-to-face interviews and mental mapping) are explained in more details. The practical aspects of the fieldwork, including difficulties encountered and personal reflections on the experience are also described. Finally, the methods of data analysis are discussed.

Findings, Discussion and Conclusions (Chapters 7 to 13)

The outcomes of the study are organised in six chapters. Following an introductory section (Ch. 7), an individual chapter is dedicated to each case study, following the chronological order in which the fieldwork was conducted. Spitalfields is first (Ch. 8), then Hoxton/Shoreditch (Ch. 9), London Fields (Ch. 10) and finally Deptford (Ch. 11). Following the four individual analyses, the findings are drawn together, compared and discussed in Chapter 12. Conclusions (ch. 13), set out what has been learned from this research, and how far it has met its aims. The discussion ends with reflections on the methodology and recommendations for future research.

2. CULTURAL, CREATIVE AND TOURIST CLUSTERS

Literature Review: an introduction

This is the first of four chapters aiming to provide a context and theoretical framework for the present study. The first three will review the most relevant contributions that other authors have offered on the researched topic. Following such review, the most important epistemological issues relating to this study will be discussed, leading to the design of an appropriate methodology (chapter 5).

With regards to the literature review, an important point should be noted: the review of most relevant research and theoretical writings available around the subject of study was conducted throughout the whole research process. Most notably, a major part of the literature review took place in three phases: 1) at the beginning of the study, in order to develop a foundation for primary research; 2) after the fieldwork for the first case study was concluded and the first preliminary findings outlined; and 3) before the writing up stage, when a last round of review was carried out in order to update the literature review with most recent work in the field.

The literature reviewed and themes identified are organised in three chapters. The present chapter constitutes a framework for the understanding of some key concepts such as creativity, business clusters and creative quarters. At the start, the history of the word creativity is briefly recalled (p. 22), and its meaning described. This is important since the term is essential to the research yet is quite elusive. Then, the concept of ‘business cluster’ is discussed (p. 28) and the main advantages of business agglomeration reviewed. Finally, the concepts of creative (and cultural) cluster or quarter, and of tourism cluster, are examined, and definitions to be used for the present study outlined.

The Concept of Creativity: history and current meanings

'Are you a God? Would you create me new?'

Shakespeare, *The Comedy of Errors* (III.2.39; c.1594)

The word creativity is a fairly recent term, dating from less than a century ago. However, its origins can be tracked back in history, being related to the ancient and mythic concepts of divine creation, meaning to generate something from nothing. According to Pope (2005), only in the last three centuries has the concept of creation been related to products of the human mind, linked to the human ability of producing mental images and thus associated with the concept of 'imagination'. Until the eighteenth century, the verb 'to create' and its derivatives were only used in relation to divine activity.

Kearney (1988) describes how, with the Romantic age, the occidental view of imagination shifted from a mimetic to an expressivist one: the former, pre-romantic, portrays imagination as a mirror of reality, whereas the latter sees it rather like a lamp that radiates its own light from and within the self (Kearney, 1998). This philosophical shift shows consistency with the enhancement of the artist's role in society during the late Romantic age, and suggests a possible explanation for the verb *create*'s changing connotation from divine to human activity. For instance, Charles Baudelaire, in 1859, celebrated imagination as 'the queen of the faculties... which decomposes all creation and creates a new world' (Kearney, 1998: 4).

However, it is not before mid-nineteenth century that the adjective 'creative' (formerly used only in expressions such as God's creative power) started being firmly associated with an elevated view of 'Art' (Pope, 2005). Robertson, in 1859, declared in his *Sermons*: 'The mason makes, the architect creates' (in Pope, 2005: 39); and the hero of George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* (II.3; 1876): 'A creative artist is no more a mere musician than a great statesman is a mere politician' (cited in Pope, 2005: 39). In that time the distinction between 'fine' and 'applied' arts was becoming stronger, and it is precisely then that the concept of *creativity* developed as associated to the so-called high Arts (painting, literature, opera as opposed to

crafts, folk music, etc.). A residual idea of creation as divine activity, combined with the Romantic concept of the artist as genius, contributed to the development and success of words such as ‘creative (artist)’ and ‘(artistic) creation’. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the diffusion of these terms led to their use also in different contexts from the ones more closely related to the Arts. This could be seen also as a consequence of the increasing number of disciplines (like mathematics, for example) starting to be seen as forms of art, and therefore as potentially creative. Take as an example this extract from French mathematician Henri Poincare’s writings dating 1908:

‘What is mathematical creation? It does not consist in making new combinations with mathematical entities already known. Anyone could do that (...). To create consists precisely in not making useless combinations and in making those which are useful and which are only a small minority. Invention is (...)is this special aesthetic sensibility which plays the role of the delicate sieve of which I spoke, and that sufficiently explains why the one lacking it will never be a real creator’ (Vernon, 1970: 80 and 86).

Still today most definitions of creativity emphasize novel combinations or unusual associations of ideas and the fact that they must as well have social or theoretical value, or make an emotional impact on other people (Vernon, 1970). As Pope (2005) interestingly notes, originality, which is a necessary component of a creative product, can have two diametrically opposed senses. Original can in fact mean ancient, former and authentic, as well as fresh, new and unexpected. Creativity, Pope argues, encompasses both these meanings, being at the same time old and new: ‘historically informed and theoretically aware, sensitive to ancient precedent as well as modern preference’ (p. 58).

In the twentieth century, with the weakening of existing barriers between high and popular culture, the final shift from ‘divine creativity’ to ‘anyone’s creativity’ took place. By the 1930s, the concept of something *creative* was widely spread, referring to the creative person as well as to the creative thought or the creative product/outcome. In 1933 the noun creativity appeared for the first time in an English dictionary.

Looking at some contemporary sources, different definitions of *creativity* can be found, all having in common the idea of something *new*. Csikszentmihalyi, for example, defines something *creative* as ‘an act, idea, or product that changes an existing domain, or that transforms an existing domain into a new one’ (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996: 28). According to Majaro (1992), *creativity* is the thinking process that helps us to generate ideas, and for Hubbard (2006: 240) ‘creativity involves looking at old problems in new ways’. In Bertone’s opinion, *creativity* is the capability to think out of scheme, achieving new and functional conclusions, suited to solve a problem or catch an opportunity (Bertone, 1993). Chartrand (1990: 2) argues that ‘creativity occurs when an individual steps beyond traditional ways of doing, knowing and making’. In conclusion, the characteristics of a creative product/activity appear to be *novelty* (because originally linked to the concept of divine creation); *authenticity* (not being a copy); *originality* (meaning novelty plus authenticity); being related to *imagination*; and adding something *useful/positive* to the existing world. In the modern view, a creative product or activity should also be peculiar to the artist, whereas not necessarily so in the post-modern view. The United Nations’ Creative Economy Report (UN, 2008), for instance, suggested the existence of three types of creativity: artistic, scientific and economic, all of them mutually interrelated and all involving, to some extent, technological creativity.

The creative industries

The first studies on the so called creative and cultural industries and their role in economic development (such as Mulgan and Worpole, 1985) were undertaken in the UK in the early 1980s (Montgomery, 2005; 2007b). However, the *creative industries* sector was officially recognised for the first time only in 1998, when the British Department of Culture, Media and Sport categorized them for the first time by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes. According to the DCMS definition (today still widely recognized in the UK as the official one), creative industries are ‘...those activities which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property’ (DCMS, 2001: 5). Namely, creative industries include: advertising, architecture, the art and antiques market, crafts, design, designer fashion, film and video, interactive leisure software, music,

the performing arts, publishing, software and computer services, television and radio. This mapping document, which represents the first comprehensive analysis of the economic contribution of creative activities to the overall economic health of the country (UNESCO, 2006), was part of a wider programme specifically aimed to encourage the development of this growing sector. As a matter of fact, as recognised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), ‘creative industries are becoming increasingly important components of modern post-industrial knowledge-based economies. Not only are they thought to account for higher than average growth and job creation, they are also vehicles of cultural identity that play an important role in fostering cultural diversity’ (UNESCO, 2006b: 3). For instance, in the UK, between 1997 and 2006 the creative industries grew by 4% of GVA (Gross Value Added) and 2% of employment per annum, compared to a 3% and 2% respectively of the whole economy (DCMS, 2009). According to UN (2008), the world trade in creative goods and services ‘increased at an unprecedented average annual rate of 8.7 percent’ between 2000 and 2005, and ‘this positive trend occurred in all regions and groups of countries and is expected to continue into the next decade’ (p. IV).

However, the DCMS definition of creative industries is not without controversy. As several authors have pointed out (for instance, Hubbard, 2006; Jarvis et al, 2008), according to this definition almost any product or activity could be considered creative. In addition, the DCMS definition seems to focus on the industries’ input, like individual creativity and personal talent, whereas more recent academic definitions stress in particular the outcome of this process. Montgomery (2003:298), for example, calls creative those industries which are ‘involved in the creation and communication of meaning and entertainment’. Also Caves (2000) shows a very similar approach to creative industries when he defines them as those ‘supplying goods and services that we broadly associate with cultural, artistic, or simply entertainment value’ (in Rutten, 2006: 15). However, for research purposes, the latter definitions seem to lack rigour and applicability, whereas the DCMS classification, although broad in terms of scope, offers the advantage of providing an accurate categorisation. An interesting approach (and particularly appropriate for the purposes of the present study) is the one adopted by a number of academic researchers (e.g. Drake, 2003; Scott, 2000; Hubbard, 2006) who have narrowed the

potential reach of the term ‘creative industries’ adding the aesthetic and symbolic dimensions to the ‘official’ definition. For instance, Scott (2000: 30) defines the creative industries as activities where the input mainly consists in individual skill and talent and the output in ‘artefacts imbued with imaginative aesthetic and semiotic content’. A similar approach is the one underpinning Hitters and Richards’ definition, according to which creative industries ‘incorporate all branches of industry and trade that rely on imaginative creation and cultural innovation aimed at the production, distribution and consumption of symbolic goods’ (2002: 235).

The term ‘culture industries’ has a longer history than ‘creative industries’, originating back in 1947 when Horkheimer and Adorno (1947 [2002]) used it ironically to refer to industrially produced cultural products such as film, publishing and recorded music (Galloway and Dunlop, 2007; Montgomery, 2007b). Today the cultural industries are still not univocally defined, and they are often considered as part of a broader category of the creative industries (e.g. UNESCO, 2006b). Rutten (2006), for instance, identifies three main branches of the creative industry: arts, craft and cultural heritage; media and entertainment industry; creative, business-to-business services. The first category, which includes visual and performing arts, literature, cultural heritage and crafts, is mostly funded through government subsidies and is made up by small scale, labour intensive businesses. The second, made up of the music, film and video industry, broadcasting, print, musical theatre, popular concerts and amusement parks, belongs instead to the consumer market and is characterised by a large scale, labour and capital intensive production. Finally, the third branch is made up of business-to-business activities, which include design and fashion, advertising, marketing and architecture (Rutten, 2006).

Similarly, UNESCO defines *cultural activities, goods and services* as

‘those activities, goods and services, which at the time they are considered as a specific attribute, use or purpose, embody or convey cultural expressions, irrespective of the commercial value they may have. Cultural activities may be an end in themselves, or they may contribute to the production of cultural goods and services’ (UNESCO, 2005: 5).

It follows that ‘cultural industries refers to industries which combine the creation, production and commercialization of creative contents which are intangible and

cultural in nature. The contents are typically protected by copyright and they can take the form of a good or a service. Cultural industries generally include printing, publishing and multimedia, audiovisual, phonographic and cinematographic productions as well as crafts and design' (UNESCO, 2006b: *on-line*). Finally, 'the term creative industries encompasses a *broad*er range of activities which include the cultural industries plus all cultural or artistic production, whether live or produced as an individual unit. The creative industries are those in which the product or service contains a substantial element of artistic or creative endeavour and include activities such as architecture and advertising' (UNESCO, 2006b: *on-line*, emphasis added). The definitional framework adopted by UNESCO, however, fails to provide a tool to clearly distinguish between cultural and creative industries, with the former being described as intangible and cultural in nature, and the latter encompassing all the cultural industries plus all cultural and creative production. An interesting and clearer way of distinguish creative from cultural industries is instead the one proposed by Cunningham (2001). According to him, the difference is a matter of technologic development: whereas the cultural industries emerged from early twentieth century's technologies, the creative industries are a product of the new economy of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

Several authors (for instance, Meethan and Beer, 2005; Hutton, 2004) have highlighted a number of specific qualities that characterise cultural and creative industries. Cunningham (2002), for example, points out that the key of this sector lies in interactivity, convergence, customisation, collaboration and networks. According to him, creative industries have a less national dimension than is typical, for instance, among public broadcasting systems and flagship arts companies. In contrast with these, creative industries are at the same time more global *and* more local, having a characteristic organisational mode made of micro-firms to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) relating to large established distribution/circulation organisations. Also, several empirical studies highlighted that it is an industry that tends to attract younger people and especially high skilled professionals (e.g. Meethan and Beer, 2005). Other characteristics that distinguish creative industries include being volatile, highly dependent on project based economic activity and business cycles, and exhibiting weak vertical and horizontal integration (Evans, 2006b). The sector is based on innovation, mobility and flexibility and heavily

relies on extensive networking (Meethan & Beer, 2005), face-to-face contact (Rutten, 2006) and partnerships. For this reason, creative industries have a greater need for geographic clustering, and they generally aggregate in creative quarters of large cities (Evans, 2006b). Sassen (1996: 195) points at world cities such as London and New York as ‘crucial cogs in the new global... system’. As Hall (among others, see also Jacobs, 1961, 1984) emphasised in his extensive account of urban history, great cities are at the core of human civilization because their size and complexity make them natural sites for the *innovative milieu* (Hall, 1998). Cities, Hall argued, are cultural hubs which attract a creative mass and provide the most fertile environments for arts and innovation to flourish (1998).

The next section on business clusters will constitute the introduction to a more in-depth discussion of creative and cultural industry clusters in cities (see page 34) and, finally, of tourism clusters (see page 41). The next chapter will then explore the potential contribution of creative and cultural industries (and their clusters) to the development of urban areas, and the role they have play in public policy and regeneration.

Business clusters

The notion of ‘business cluster’ has raised interest in economics literature for more than a century. Already in the beginning of the Twentieth Century, Alfred Marshall, founder of the English neoclassical school of economics and pioneer of the microeconomic theory, dedicated extended research to industrial districts and to how they relate to manufacturing in the modern age of capital (Koepp, 2002). Marshall (1930) pointed out some of the advantages of business agglomeration, which included sharing of knowledge (of the product, the manufacturing process and innovations) and labour skills (Law, 2002). Although it does not lie within the aims of the present research to deeply analyse the economic advantages of spatial business agglomeration, it is nonetheless important to understand the main dynamics related to this phenomenon, with particular attention to clustering within the creative, cultural and tourism sectors. Such a discussion will constitute a foundation for the study of specific creative clusters in London, and most notably for the analysis of the consequences of creative business agglomeration in terms of place attractiveness, atmosphere production and tourism development.

While the term ‘business cluster’ is relatively new, spatial agglomerations of businesses and networks in particular fields have always existed: take as an example artisans’ guilds in the Middle Age. Putnam’s work about Italian industrial development over the centuries (1993), for instance, shows how mutual aid structures, deeply embedded in the social structure of Northern Italy, have helped foster industrial and financial progress, in contrast with the feudal, hierarchical structure of the less developed Southern regions (Landry 2000). Also in the UK, in the nineteenth century, industries tended to localise in particular regions: see for instance the cotton cluster in Lancashire, wool in Oxfordshire or clothing in East London. In the mid-twentieth century, with the internationalisation of many companies and the fast development of communication technologies, the importance of manufacturing clusters appeared to weaken (Law, 2002).

The French urbanist Virilio (1991) played a fundamental role in developing a theoretical discussion on the increasingly important role of virtual networks within the contemporary society. According to Virilio, the development of technology led to the decline of the physical to the extent that space is no longer a resource but rather a burden (Hubbard, 2006). Also Castells’ urban sociology work (e.g. 1996; 1997; 1989) famously points out how current societies, and cities’ socio-spatial form in particular, are shaped by their reliance on information and communication technologies. According to Castells, the new global economy

‘is an economy with the capacity to work as a unit in real time on a planetary scale’ (1996: 92) and ‘while organizations are located in places, and their components are place-dependent, the organizational logic is placeless, being fundamentally dependent on the space of flows that characterizes information networks (...) The more organizations depend, ultimately, upon flows and networks, the less they are influenced by the social context associated with the places of their location’ (1989: 169). However, by the end of the century it became clear that business spatial agglomeration was anything but disappearing (for instance, Scott and Storper, 2003). New types of clustering were even noted, like for example the ones in high technology activities (e.g. Silicon Valley), tourism (e. g. Costa del Sol in Spain) and finance (e. g. City of London). Porter (1998: 77) interestingly pointed out a paradox emerging from clusters: ‘competitive advantages in a global economy

lie in local things- knowledge and relationships that distant rivals cannot match'. According to Ormerod et al. (2006) the cluster is still the most efficient place in which a firm of the relevant type can locate, and 'there is so far no evidence that allows an estimate of the density at which agglomeration effects would tail off and crowding costs would outweigh such benefits' (p. 31). It is especially intriguing to note, for example, that even within the sectors that create the very technologies which allow distant work (such as information technology, media and telecommunications) industries have been shown to benefit from face-to-face contact, networking and geographical clustering (see, for examples, Neff, 2005 on the new media industry in New York; Saxenian, 1994 on Silicon Valley).

Harvard Business School's Michael Porter, with his influential book *The Competitive Advantage of Nations* (1991), played a major role in diffusing the term *business cluster*. Although his early work was mainly focuses on nations as a whole, it also deals with smaller areas stressing the economic benefits of agglomeration (see below). Porter (1991) points out the existence of two different types of cluster: vertical clusters, made up of industries that are linked through buyer-seller relationships, and horizontal clusters, which include industries that may share a common market for their products, use a common technology or labour force skills, or require similar natural resources. More recently, Porter defined 'industrial clusters' as 'critical masses -in one place- of unusual competitive success in particular fields' or 'geographic concentrations of interconnected companies and institutions in a particular field' (Porter, 1998: 78). This latter definition of cluster has now become the most wide-used in urban studies literature (e.g. Novelli, 2006, Montgomery, 2003). However, Porter's definition remains mainly 'spatial', a limitation that led other authors to develop new definitions which usefully include also other aspects such as benefits and relationship between firms. Knoke and Kuklinski (1983: 12), for example, describe clusters as 'a specific type of relation linking a set of persons, objects or events'. Montgomery calls cluster 'a grouping of industries linked together through customer, supplier and other relationships which enhance competitive advantage (2003: 298). Also Rosenfelds (1997: 10) stresses the importance of social interaction and cooperation when he defines an industry cluster as 'a geographically bounded concentration of similar, related or complementary businesses, with active channels for business transactions, communications and

dialogue, that share specialized infrastructure, labor markets and services, and that are faced with common opportunities and threats’.

Other authors stress the importance of networking within clusters: Law (2002: 11), for instance, defines a business cluster as ‘a localized network of specialized activities through which goods, services and knowledge are exchanged. The relationship between firms is complementary, competitive and cooperative. Unlike a sector, the actors are drawn from varied activities, suppliers, customers, private services and the public sector, and therefore the cluster and its size may be invisible as it is hidden in terms of the standard industrial classification’. Networks can, in their turn, be defined as ‘a specific type of relation linking a set of persons, objects and events’ (Knoke and Kuklinski, 1983: 12). Porter himself (1998) recognises the importance of networking and, when he talks about complementarities within clusters, affirms that ‘a host of linkages among cluster member results in a whole greater than the sum of its parts’ (p. 81). To explain this concept he uses the example of a tourism cluster, in which ‘the quality of the visitor’s experience depends not only on the appeal of the primary attraction but also on the quality and efficiency of complementary businesses such as hotels, restaurants, shopping outlets, and transportation facilities’ (p. 81). Tourism clusters will be considered more in depth in the next section (page 41). According to Porter (1998: 80) clusters affect competition in a number of ways, that can be classified in three broad ‘categories’: productivity enhancement, innovation and formation of new businesses. Each category’s characteristics are summarised in Table 2.1 page 32).

Table 2.1- Porter's (1998) categories of industrial clustering affects on competition.

<i>Productivity enhancement</i>
<p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better access to employees and suppliers; - Access to specialised information; - Complementarities: for instance when products complement one another meeting consumers' needs (like in the tourism example cited above), or when firms coordinate their activities to maximise collective productivity. <p>Other forms of complementarities include collective marketing, reputation and image (often buyers prefer to buy from a renowned area for a specific product, where they can find a wider choice of products and compare prices).</p>
<i>Innovation related benefits</i>
<p>Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - having a better view on competitors and on the sector in general; - closer suppliers: this allows higher capacity and flexibility to act (innovate) and lower costs of experimentation;
<i>New business formation</i>
<p>Comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lower barriers to entry (due to lower risks, availability of customers and human resources, etc.); - higher development of new supplying firms (due to the high concentration of potential customers); - facilitated perception of what is needed in the market (gaps in products or services, potential niches, etc.);

Other advantages of business clustering (referred to as *economies of agglomeration* in economics literature), according to Novelli et al. (2006), include: knowledge transfer, preservation of community values, lifestyle improvement and economically friendlier products and services. Some commentators (for instance Omerod et al., 2006) pointed out the possibility of *economies of scale* (cost savings per unit obtained by producing on a larger scale, see for instance Young Kim, 1985) and *economies of scope* (cost savings obtained by producing multiple products using the same facilities; see for instance Panzar and Willig, 1981). In addition, and

especially interesting from the point of view of this research, some have highlighted the presence of informal contacts between local actors that create a certain atmosphere (e.g. Scott, 1999; Brown et al, 2000; Hitters and Richards, 2002;). Face-to-face interaction is also enhanced as an important benefit of agglomeration by several authors (for instance, Doeringer and Terkla, 1995, Rosenfeld, 1997) and regarded as a critical factor in cluster development (particularly in the case of small, specialised firms). However, clusters theory and the Porter's approach in particular, have also encountered some criticisms. Martin and Sunley (2001) for instance point out that most firms have horizontal (competitive) and vertical (co-operative) links with other geographically adjacent companies, especially since the concept of 'proximate' is very loosely defined. Another problem that emerges from the literature is the lack of evidence of clusters' effectiveness in raising competitiveness, productivity, profitability and innovativeness (Nordin, 2003). However, as discussed above, some recent studies (e.g. Ormerod, 2006) have shown the viability and effectiveness of physical agglomeration.

The issue that has mostly raised discussion amongst commentators regards the efficacy of public policies encouraging business clusters. According to Porter's agglomeration theory (1998), business clusters originate spontaneously generally thanks to historical circumstances, such as a high demand for a particular product or the availability of a specific resource. For this reason, Nordin (2003: 34) maintained that 'clusters cannot be created, particularly not by governments. Industry clustering is a dynamic process that must be cultivated over a long period. Clusters generally develop according to a bottom-up perspective and cannot be created by policy alone'. In addition, Rosenfeld (1997) suggests that over-specialisation can be dangerous, as the whole region (or area) becomes dependent on only one sector risking the ruin in case of failure. This is the case, for example, of the coal mining industry in Wales whose failure in the late 1970s left the area in a state of serious decline and with a transformed landscape (Wanhill, 2000). Glasmeier and Harrison (1997) maintain that cluster development is more appropriate in areas where there is already an existing, diverse economic base, which can support new markets and diversification. They also claim that industry clusters are only capable of responding to small, incremental changes in technology and market demand and that they can be resistant to new information inconsistent with their previous

successful experiences. However, while most commentators agree on the fact that clusters cannot be created from scratch, according to many (e.g. Porter, 1998; Montgomery, 2004; Brown et al, 2000) it is possible and useful, for local authorities, to encourage potential clusters or support established ones, in order to take advantage of the benefits of agglomeration and trigger economic development. In the following sections some specific clusters, which appear to be especially relevant for the purposes of this research, will be explored more in depth.

Creative and Cultural Clusters

As seen earlier in this chapter terms ‘creative industries’ and ‘cultural industries’ are often seen by academics and policy makers as parallel concepts, and described with varying definitions that alternatively overlap or include one another. For the purposes of this study the DCMS definition (see page 24) of creative industries was adopted, with the cultural sector accordingly considered as part of them. This definition was chosen, despite its limitations, because of its punctual applicability in a research context. In fact, it provides a full list of specific industries to be included, and it is the one normally applied within policy documents and official statistics in the UK.

Similarly to creative industries, the terms cultural quarters, creative clusters, creative places and cultural districts are used by different authors (e.g. Bell & Jayne, 2004; Montgomery, 2003), sometimes interchangeably and with overlapping interpretations (Evans et al., 2005). Kong (2009) points out that, whereas research conducted in continental Europe tends to favour the term ‘cultural clusters’, studies stemming from the United States, UK and Australia seem to prefer the term ‘creative clusters’. Following Porter’s definition (1998), for the purposes of this study creative clusters are defined as geographic concentrations of interconnected creative companies and institutions. Wynne (1992), on the other hand, defined a cultural quarter as ‘that geographical area that contains the highest concentration of culture and entertainment in a city or town’ (p.19). Although the latter was considered a valuable approach, three main reasons made this definition seem inappropriate for the present study. Firstly, here the presence of an entertainment sector could not be included in the definition, since an analysis of the development

of cultural and leisure consumption in creative areas was one of the research objectives. Secondly, using the term ‘cultural’ rather than the broader term ‘creative’ excludes from the definition a number of industries such as fashion and design, deemed important for the present study. Finally, Wynne’s definition is relative rather than absolute, since it implies that each town has a cultural quarter, whereas for this research stress was placed on the fact that in some areas in London the concentration of creative industries is particularly high.

Interestingly, creative clusters seem to have a number of specific characteristics, if compared with other sectors’ clusters. According to Evans (2006b), the former are volatile, highly dependent on project based economic activity and business cycles, linked to uncertain shifts in consumption patterns, fashion and taste, exhibiting weak vertical and horizontal integration and highly dependent on social networks. Neff (2005), in her study on the location of social networks in the digital media industry in New York, concludes that place has become more, not less, important to cultural production over time, and that networking activities are concentrated in specific areas of the city. Furthermore, according to several commentators (for example, Porter 1998, Hitters and Richards 2002) creative and cultural industries are especially inclined on clustering, for the need of both creative exchange and economies of scope due to the difficulty of substituting capital for labour in these sectors.

Interestingly, Schoales (2006) argues that culture, fashion, and financial investment clusters are characterised by a different pattern of innovation than most other technology clusters. For him these clusters, which can be found in the largest cities of industrially advanced countries, present some of the most-pronounced cluster-specific traits, and can be therefore considered ‘alpha clusters’ (p. 162). As stated by Hutton (2004) in his analysis of the New Economy spatiality,

‘the growth of creative, knowledge-based and technology-intensive industries within certain precincts of the inner city constitute important aspects of the spatiality of the New Economy. These new industry clusters are shaped by the convergence of culture and urban development, by the increasing significance of technology in value added production, and by the competitive advantage of the inner city for creative industries (Hutton, 2004: 90).

The city's metropolitan core represents the perfect 'creative habitat' for these new industry clusters (Florida and Gertler, 2003), 'offering a critical mass of human capital, amenity attributes, and environmental conditions' (Hutton, 2004: 90). As Scott (2001: 9) noted, the creative sector 'refers not only to agglomerations of technologically dynamic firms, but also to places where qualities such as cultural insight, imagination, and originality are actively generated from within the local system of production'. In a later paper (2005) Hutton also questions whether these new economy industrial clusters represent a form of reindustrialisation of the inner city or, conversely, the 'latest phase in the evolution of the urban services economy' (Hutton, 2005: 1819). A specificity of inner-city new economy (notably creative) clusters is their tendency to locate in post-fordist, ex industrial infrastructures (e.g. Hamnett, 2003, Drake, 2003, Hutton, 2005). The re-appropriation of ex industrial buildings as studio space by creative producers and their refurbishment, adaptation and redevelopment for cultural/creative production and consumption has been widely studied in regeneration literature (see Zukin, 1982) and will be further discussed in the next chapter.

Helbrecht (2004) suggests that the look and feel of a place can, in an urban context, play a role in the production of knowledge (2004). This fact seems particularly relevant for the present research, since one of the objectives has been to analyse the mutual relationships between space, creative production and consumption. Similarly, Drake (2003) tried to investigate the relationship between creative production (particularly in terms of inspiration) and the physical look of the environment where micro creative industries are located. According to his qualitative study, whereas for some artists locality is perceived as having little or no impact on individual creativity, for many the physical environment represents an important source of inspiration. In particular, Drake suggests four types of locality-based stimuli for aesthetic creativity: visual raw materials and stimuli, intensive social and cultural networks, brand based on reputation and tradition and communities of creative workers (Drake, 2003).

A useful concept within the context of creative clusters is 'the creative field' idea, developed by Scott (2000) following Bourdieu (1993). By this term, Scott refers to

the advantages in terms of creativity and innovation derived from the spatial agglomeration of creative activities. In particular, Scott refers to the 'industrial atmosphere' (p. 809), which includes place attributes, strong presence of creative firms as well as specialised schools and organisations, which all contribute to the reinforcement of a cultural framework. Face-to-face contacts between creative entrepreneurs produce a particular scene (Silver et al., 2006), a 'communication ecology' (Bathelt and Graf, 2008: 1947) or local buzz (Storper and Venables, 2004), mainly consisting in information, new knowledge and updates, as well as gossip and 'trade folklore' (Bathelt and Graf, 2008: 1947). Even more importantly for the present study, according to Baerenholdt & Haldrup (2006) proximity to a pool of shared consumers represents an important co-location factor for creative retailers, which becomes at the same time an opportunity for knowledge acquisition and sharing. Consumption venues such as cafes, nightclubs and galleries are also important in the creation of this atmosphere (Neff, 2005) as well as the presence of retail outlets which create 'street level activity and animation' (Brown et al., 2000: 444).

Precisely for the importance of this buzz or atmosphere, cultural activity and the presence of a distribution-consumption value chain seem to be essential prerequisites of cultural quarters (Zukin, 1995; Hitters & Richards, 2002; Montgomery, 2003). According to Roberts (2006), the concept of cultural clusters is explicitly based on the idea of a link between creative industries and leisure consumption, and in the presence of consumption seems to lie, according to some authors (e.g. Roberts, 2006; Montgomery, 2003), the difference between a creative district and a cultural quarter. This means that, for a cultural quarter to thrive, not only culture should be produced in the area, but people should also be able to consume it on the spot: for instance, go to shows, visit galleries and buy cultural products. This point clearly emerges from Zukin's work, notably when she describes the characteristics of a culture capital (Zukin, 1995). Talking about New York, Zukin affirms that a culture capital must be a place where art is actually produced as well as sold and consumed. The transformation of urban space into 'cultural space' depends on developing the two sides of cultural capital:

'It requires not only the material capital of cheap space and attractive buildings, an arts labor force, and investment in culture industries, but also the

symbolic capital of vision... It is also critical to have a large infrastructure of men and women whose job is to translate the work of producers for a larger public' (Zukin, 1995:150).

Following Zukin, Russo and Arias Sans (2009) maintain that one of the key factors to understand urban cultural areas is precisely the reflexivity between producers and consumers, because, as noted by Zukin (1995: 826), 'urban lifestyles are not only the result, but also the raw materials of the symbolic economy's growth'. The cultural industry is therefore a dominant component of urban economies (Scott, 2000) and cultural consumption landscapes constitute the visible outcome that can be found in specific places of the city (Russo & Arias Sans, 2009). While many authors have stressed the importance of consumption within cultural quarters, it should be noted that in terms of attractiveness from a visitors economy point of view, production constitutes an equally fundamental component. Sassen and Roost (1999), for example, note that the success of Times Square in New York lies to a great extent in the fact that people can experience entertainment while being produced (as well as consume it).

According to Hitters and Richards (2002), it is precisely this need to combine these two functions that stimulates cultural producers to cluster in order to be more visible and to distribute their products. However, according to Mommaas' assessment of cultural cluster policies in the Netherlands (2004), in the case of government-planned cultural clusters the consumption component clearly prevails on production, and even those few quarters that are production-oriented, the clustering process has not developed to the point of allowing an important sharing of information and markets.

Montgomery (2003), in his interesting account of the necessary pre-requisites of cultural quarters, mentions, beside the presence of cultural consumption, other characteristics that an area should possess to become a cultural quarter (namely, to be successfully identified or developed as such by public policy). These characteristics can be retraced as part of three broad categories:

- Economic, cultural and social activities that are carried on;
- Historical and cultural meaning (or sense of place).

- Built form and relationship between buildings and spaces;

The area's activity include diversity of primary and secondary land uses, extent and variety of venues and events, presence of an evening economy, strength of small-firm economy (including creative businesses) and access to education providers (Montgomery, 2003). The importance of small-firms appears also from Scott's definition of cultural quarters as districts where 'much of the work of conception and production of cultural products is carried out by small artisanal and neo-artisanal firms, that is, by firms whose basic labor progresses range from handicraft skills (...) to high-order conceptual activities combined with modern digital technologies' (2000: 205). Meaning-related pre-requisite of cultural quarters include the presence of important meeting and gathering spaces, a sense of history and progress, a strong area identity, high levels of information about what goes on, and general appreciation of design and style (Montgomery, 2003).

As for the built form, Montgomery particularly refers to Jacobs' (1961) and Lynch's (1981) theories about urban space. More precisely, following Jacobs (1961), Montgomery points out the importance of the public realm, meaning that an important proportion of activity should occur in the streets, as well as the city diversity: mixture of uses, intensity of the built form (tight relationship between heights of buildings and width of streets and routes), and mixture of building types, ages, sizes and conditions. On the subject of diversity of space uses, Evans (2004) interestingly notes that, while this diversity constitutes an important factor of established cultural districts, the planned development of these areas often leads to 'the sanitization of these interstitial zones between the core business districts, *beaux quartiers* and retail and entertainment zones, with the result that diversity of use and activity (...) is narrowed' (p. 72). Similarly, Fainstein (2005) points out that top-down approaches to the development of diverse neighbourhoods have to date inevitably attracted accusations of inauthenticity, leaving planners with the dilemma of whether to leave the market to take its course or 'impose a oxymoronic diverse order' (p. 6). This observation leads to the most discussed subject in cultural quarters' literature: the viability and sustainability of policy planned cultural and creative clusters. Most authors (for example Mommaas 2004, Zukin 2004, Montgomery 2003) distinguish between two kinds of creative districts: unplanned,

spontaneous aggregations of creative and cultural activities, or planned creative areas created within an urban regeneration strategy. A great part of current research and debate in the field aims to assess the use of cultural clusters as a mean of economic and social development.

The development of cultural quarters has become, in the past twenty years, a popular means of culture-led regeneration policy, with the objective of attracting investments and tourism to previously deprived areas (e.g. Zukin, 2004). In the UK, for instance, the first examples of cultural quarter based regeneration policies date back in the late 1980s, early examples being the Sheffield Cultural Industries Quarter and the Manchester Northern Quarter (Montgomery, 2003). Mommaas (2004) identifies three ways in which cultural quarters can be created: the most 'spontaneous' one is when informal groups of cultural producers occupy a particular area over time turning its space into cultural sites. In other cases, cultural managers consciously decide, with the objective of strengthening their market, to congregate in a particular space with the precise idea of creating a cultural district. The third – and somehow least spontaneous- way of creating a cultural quarters is, when the project 'comes to life from the drawing board of urban planners' (Mommaas, 2004: 508). It must be said, however, that in between these cases there are an infinite number of shades and degrees of public intervention: for example when policy makers decide to encourage cultural consumption and production in areas that have long been 'creative', or when an already creative district starts to be branded as cultural quarter, or again when economic incentives to creative industries in a particular quarter lead to the development of a cultural space.

With regards to the degree of public intervention that should be advocated there is no consensus in cultural policy literature. Several commentators (for example Landry, 2006) appear to be very enthusiastic and some even suggest stronger public intervention (e.g. Mommaas, 2000). On the contrary many others, like for instance Kunzmann (2004) and Griffiths (2005), suggest a bottom-up approach condemning clustering policy as technocratic and even counter-productive.

Tourism clusters

As mentioned above Porter (1998) considers tourism destinations as the best example of complementarities within a cluster. Gunn (1994) affirms that attractions are the main driver for tourism and maintains that businesses in such clusters not only benefit from tourism, but also from local trade (Gunn, 1994). On the other hand, some commentators argue that the tourism industry is free from agglomeration economies (for instance, Gordon, 1994), or even that tourism is a branch of the economy that avoids agglomerations (Christaller, 1963).

One problem when discussing tourism clustering is the fact that the tourism industry is characterized by an intangible and extremely varied product. For this reason, whether it can actually be considered one industry remains contested (e.g. Ioannides and Debbage, 1998). According to Law (2002) the specificity of tourism is that it 'is an industry defined by the consumers' (p. 14) and, as Nordin (2003) points out, the tourist personally takes part in the production process and becomes part of the product. In addition, the tourism offer combines many products belonging to different domains: some, compete against each other, for example seaside resorts, whereas others are complementary - a hotel and an airline, for instance. This characteristic, however, should not prevent the identification of tourism clusters, since as seen above the actors of a cluster are varied and include suppliers, customers, private services and the public sector. Certainly tourism precincts, defined as distinctive geographic areas 'characterised by a concentration of tourist-related land uses, activities and visitation' (Hayllar and Griffin, 2005) appear to have many of the characteristics mentioned above as typical of a business cluster. Ashworth and Tunbridge(1990), for example, explain the clustering of hotels in historic cities as a function of proximity to heritage attractions. However, studies on tourism clustering often focus on single business types (e. g. hotels or museums: Pearce, 1998), thus confirming the tendency to consider tourism as made up of many independent sectors. In addition, there seems to be little agreement among commentators as to whether geographic concentrations of tourism activities (such as tourism districts and resorts) benefit from the same agglomeration advantages as clusters of other sectors (such as manufacturing).

Law (2002), for instance, maintained that the tourism industry at a destination constitutes an industrial cluster, thus benefiting from agglomeration advantages. The size and critical mass of a cluster is especially important as it activates virtuous circles in the destination: a larger resort develops a greater array of services, with the consequence of attracting more visitors and attracting more public funds and private investment (Law, 2002). According to Law this process is particularly evident in the case of urban destinations, in which the number of existing attractions seem to encourage always new streams of private and public investments and the creation of place marketing and management bodies that promote the destination's development. An example of this process (which seems especially relevant to the present study) is the promotion of ethnic working-class districts in cities for tourism consumption with the deliberate aim of achieving urban regeneration (Shaw et al. 2004).

According to Novelli et al. (2006: 1143) in the tourism sector the main advantage of agglomeration is that clusters and networks highlight the concentration of certain activities in one destination or region. This allows the co-operation of individual businesses that would normally work in isolation, thus building a successful tourism product (Novelli et al., 2006). The tourism sector is characterized by what Michael (2003: 188) calls 'diagonal clustering', meaning a situation in which co-location benefits not only cluster members but also the tourist experience. However, it has to be noted that also manufacturing industry clusters provide a certain level of benefit for the customers (in terms of quality, choice, etc.). However, as Russo (2002) noted in the case of Venice, a concentration of tourism resources enhances the tourist experience and reduces information barriers, but it also increases the potential conflicts with other sectors other than tourism. Russo also noted that in Venice competition among tourism businesses is still more profitable than strategic cooperation: for instance a package including a Gondola tour is still more profitable to tour operators than offering an alternative itinerary or a different offer aimed at a niche market (Russo, 2002). Similarly, Gordon and Goodall (2000) point out that in the tourism sector agglomerations may encounter disadvantages, as for example the 'free riders' problem¹. Also, in the case of entertainment districts problems may

¹ free riders are those (companies and/or people) who consume more than their fair share of a common resource, or contribute less than a fair share of the costs of its production (Cornes and Sandler, 1986).

include increased crime, noise, congestion, illegal activities and other undesired behaviours such as public urination (Berkley and Thayer, 2000). On the other hand, when the activity is properly regulated ‘there is the possibility of more virtuous circles, with quality based rivalry between strong competitors, attraction of staff seeking development of their talents, and the emergence of a discriminating clientele’ (Gordon and Goodall, 2000: 297).

Conclusion

This chapter aimed to provide a sound foundation for the present research, by providing definitions of key terms such as business clusters, creative industries and creative clusters, as well as by reviewing theories around the idea of agglomeration of creative and leisure businesses. At the start, the history of the word creativity was briefly outlined (p. 22), and its meaning described as being linked to the creation of something new and useful, as well as to originality and authenticity. When we speak about creative industries, however, it is necessary to narrow the definition of creativity to avoid the *impasse* of including any industry with an original output (which would, potentially, include *any* industrial sector). For the purposes of this research, the DCMS (1998) definition was adopted. This choice offered two main advantages: the fact that all policy documents relating to this topic in the UK (and many other countries) adopt this definition, and the availability of a complete list of industries to be included. In addition, the symbolic and aesthetic dimensions of the creative industries’ output were acknowledged as fundamental features of the sector, and linked to these industries’ role as key actors in the development of contemporary cities’. Following a discussion on creative industries and business clusters, a definition of creative clusters was specifically conceived for the present research. Creative clusters, will be here defined as ‘geographic concentrations of interconnected creative companies and institutions’.

3. CULTURE AND URBAN PLANNING

The topic of the present chapter reflects the core focus of this study, and for this reason it was also the first subject to be reviewed. The first section starts by defining some key concepts such as regeneration and decline, and continues with a brief history of the global processes that led to the decline of many formerly industrial cities. Then, the main issues related to the use of cultural activities as means to trigger physical, social and economic development are reviewed. Considering the aim of this research, particular consideration is given in this chapter to the relationship between creative industries and development, and a specific section is dedicated to the idea of a ‘creative city’. In that section, great attention is given to the work of Jane Jacobs, whose ideas have been particularly inspirational for this author. A detailed section is also dedicated to the concept of gentrification. This was considered a very important topic for two reasons: firstly, it emerged as a very strong theme in many of the interviews conducted during fieldwork. Secondly, the risk of gentrification is one of the arguments often brought forward against the development of cultural and leisure activities in depressed urban areas. Therefore, it was deemed worth of an detailed discussion, including definitions, a brief historical overview and a review of main debates and related research. Another argument that is often used against the planned development of entertainment and cultural consumption to trigger regeneration is the commodification of culture and the production of inauthentic tourism zones. The last section discusses this problem with particular focus on city marketing and on the risk of reproducing the same touristic products in a number of places with consequent loss of sense of place and authenticity.

From Decline to Regeneration

Over the past twenty years discourses about cultural policies, cultural tourism and creativity have thrived, bringing nearer, for the first time, research on urban planning, tourism and cultural industries. The need to regenerate depressed urban areas has become a major concern for governments and local authorities, and many have turned to creative/cultural industries and activities as means to achieve economic, physical and social improvements.

The concept of regeneration (often seen as a synonymous with ‘revitalization’ or ‘renaissance’) refers to the enhancement, after a period of decline, ‘of specific sections of the city through a cycle of economic revitalization, upgrading of the housing stock, the improvement of the quality of life of the local population and the attraction of new residents’ (Van der Borg and Russo 2008: 4). The British department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS, 2004: 10) defined regeneration as ‘the positive transformation of a place –whether residential, commercial or open space- that has previously displayed symptoms of physical, social and/or economic decline’. The key point about regeneration is, therefore, a previous stage of decline, meaning ‘a continuous reduction of employment as well as an enduring loss of population; both processes are interrelating and are accompanied by rising social and physical problems’ (Lang, 2005: 3). Since the late 1970s, urban regeneration strategies have been to a great extent employed to counter the decline caused by the process of deindustrialization.

From the 1960s and the 1970s globalisation processes resulted in industries focussing their production in rural areas and less industrialised countries. This transformation of the manufacturing sector (often referred to as the shift from Fordist to post-Fordist ways of production and consumption) had fundamental economic, social and spatial consequences for Western world cities, and for the UK in particular. Maitland (1997: 89) describes this drastic change by summarizing its features into four main points:

- Decline in manufacturing employment, only partially replaced by an increase in the service sector employment;

- 'Counter-urbanisation': activities shifted from cities to smaller towns and rural areas, leaving many urban areas (including some city centres) under-occupied and lifeless;
- A new 'geography of corporate function', with large cooperates having their head quarters in a large city, routine manufacturing in a low cost site and research and development in a location offering highly qualified labour and good links to research institutions such as university regions (e.g. the Cambridge area in the UK);
- A trend of workforce reduction, re-engineering of private and public organizations and a job economy based on short-term contracts and so-called flexibility.

This change led, in some cities, to the development of a new 'elite economy' (Clark, 2002: 497), characterised by the emergence of a critical mass of 'informational' professionals (Castells, 1989), highly educated workers whose jobs mainly deal with intangible goods. However, whereas some cities successfully transformed their economies into service sector based ones, many others were heavily afflicted by rising unemployment, deprivation and urban decay (e.g. Smith & Williams 1986, Bianchini 1994a). In addition, even in those areas where the service sector thrived, corollary of the global economic transformation was a polarization in urban labour markets between high and low paid service jobs (Bianchini 1994a). Urban space was also strongly affected by the shift to a post-industrial era: the abandonment of many industrial structures, together with the phenomenon of suburbanization (Smith in Smith & Williams, 1986), transformed into deserted and depressed spaces those inner-cities that were not able to transform themselves into service centres.

In some cities the transformation was so radical that, according to Zukin, urban landscapes of production became landscapes of consumption (Zukin 1991). This assumption is probably not valid for many cities where production is still the key to economic productivity (Jayne, 2004), yet many cities and towns tried to reconstruct themselves primarily as centres of consumption and to reposition themselves according to the global economy (Lash and Urry, 1994). According to Lash and Urry (1994), various factors determined the success of cities in shifting from manufacturing to service sector. These include people-related, economy-related and place-related characteristics. People-related factors are, for instance, the social composition of the population, the ability of some groups to impose their habitus,

their capacity for conservation or transformation of buildings and the existence of local tradition of entrepreneurship. The economy-related characteristics are: strategies of leisure-related companies, demands of the existing manufacturing industry for services for themselves and the development of the different service activities. Finally, from the place point of view, there are the existing and potential images of the place, the availability of disused buildings in particular architectural styles to be converted into new service-based uses and the existence of a hegemonic project sustained locally which may entail this particular transformation. As Lash and Urry (1994) note, it is important to keep in mind that different types of services exist and it is a mistake to talk about them as if they were homogeneous. Banking and finance, for instance, employ a high proportion of professionals, whereas tourism and leisure produce a majority of lower level jobs. The cultural industries have been especially valued as sector to develop in de-industrialized cities because of their high growth and possible employment impacts. In addition, as they deal in imagery and symbols they shape the perception of the place where they are situated (Landry, 2006).

The 1970s' crisis of the manufacturing sector, the consequent urban decline and the governments' attempt to shift to a service-based economy were amongst the factors that led, in the Eighties, to a change in the attitude of policy-makers, who started, for the first time, to consider culture as a mean of urban and economic regeneration. 'From being a marginal concern tied to the arts funding system, the cultural or 'creative' industries have become highly visible and explicitly linked to economic development' (Brown et al. 2000: 437). Before the 1970s culture was considered a separate or opposed realm from economic activity (Bianchini, 1994a), therefore a luxury only affordable in times of economic wealth (Rutten, 2006). During the 1970s culture started to be part of urban policy, but mostly as a response to social and political concerns (Bianchini, 1994a). However, by the mid 1980s, the emphasis on social participation and community development decreased, giving way to a new approach that saw cultural policies as tools for economic development. In the last twenty years in particular, 'culture' has become a ubiquitous word in public policy and the development of the creative sector an imperative for local authorities¹. Most notably, this approach is now becoming globalised (Miles and Paddison, 2007) and

¹ see for instance DCMS 1998, 1999, 2001, 2004, 2009; UNESCO 2006b, UN 2008.

culture based strategies are being adopted by international organisations (see for instance UN, 2008) as well as by developing countries (O' Connor and Kong, 2009) as means to achieve economic and social development.

Culture and Urban Development

According to Griffith (1993) three factors initially led to the adoption of culture-led development strategies. The first is the belief in their potential in creating jobs and generating spending, especially in the new post-industrial economy. The second factor is 'that they are congruent with the consumption preferences of the culturally dominant and politically influential 'service class'' (p. 41). The third is that the growing competition between cities has led to a higher need for promoting particular qualities and strengths of individual localities. Other reasons should be however added to this list, such as for example the fact that cultural policies were generally less expensive than other development policies, this being an especially valued characteristics in a time when cities were struggling with deprivation, economic decline and social problems. Moreover culture-led development projects often gave the chance to reuse former industrial sites conferring them a new dignity as heritage landmarks or cultural venues.

According to Bianchini (1994b) in culture-led regeneration policies there is often a separation between consumption oriented and production oriented strategies: 'the first develop and promote urban cultural attractions and activities as magnets for tourism, retailing, hotel and catering' (p. 203); the second support local cultural industries, aiming to create skilled jobs in high value-added sectors of the economy. Recent studies (e.g. Montgomery, 2003) have shown that the most thriving cases are the ones that have successfully combined the two approaches. A common characteristic of most culture-led regeneration strategies is that they aim, among other things, to encourage tourism development activating virtuous circles of image improvement, residents' pride and investments. However, as Smith (2006b) pointed out, regeneration is a slow process and tourism is often a late addition to a strategy, especially in cities where there has been industrial decline. The local economy has first to be strengthened, and infrastructures, like transport and accommodation, need to be developed. Often, public policy fails instead to take into account a city's or an

area's potential, for instance in terms of place attractiveness, actual presence of a critical mass of cultural and creative entrepreneurs, and competition. As discussed in the final section of this chapter, many cities have tried to emulate successful cases of culture-driven development programmes without considering place specificities. Landry (2006) listed ten types of culture-led public policies that have been used in European cities as regeneration tools, which have been summarised in Table 3.1 page 49):

Table 3.1- Types of culture-led public policies that have been used in UK cities as regeneration tools (adapted from Landry, 2006, with examples added by the author)

Culture-led public policies type	Examples
1) Transformation of old industrial buildings into arts or cultural venues;	Tate Modern Gallery in Southwark, London, the Custard Factory in Birmingham, the Baltic in Gateshead (Evans and Shaw, 2004) ;
2) Development of cultural quarters	Temple Bar in Dublin (Rains, 1999), Spitalfields in London (Briggs, 2000) or Manchester's music quarter (Brown <i>et al.</i> , 1999).
3) incentives to creative industries;	Hackney Enterprise Workshop in the London Borough of Hackney (Wynne, 1992) ;
4) Incentives to artists and art organizations, through cheap leases, space concessions, etc.	Acme Studios in London uses vacant properties in derelict areas since 1972 to provide low-cost accommodation and studio space for professional and start-up visual artists (Evans and Shaw, 2004);
5) Organization of cultural events and festivals to enhance image and attract tourism.	UK examples include Glasgow European City of Culture in 1990, The XVII Commonwealth Games in Manchester (2002), Liverpool Capital of Culture 2008; and the Olympic Games to be held in London in 2012. However, the most renowned European example is probably the case of Barcelona which redeveloped specific areas of the city thanks to some mega events as the World Fairs of 1888 and 1929, the Olympics in 1992 and the (less successful) Universal Forum of Cultures in 2004 (among others, Smith, 2006b).
6) Development of cultural	Glasgow, the first city in Europe to develop a strategic

strategy plans to encourage developers to invest in cultural and environmental improvements;	plan, or Manchester with its 'Our creative city', published in 2002 as part of the more general 'Master Plan';
7) Public works and refurbishments aimed to improve the infrastructure's aesthetic quality;	Spialfields in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Glasgow city centre, Cardiff's waterfront;
8) Projects and initiatives for the community aimed to improve social confidence;	In Manchester, the Wythenshawe Forum Art Project was aimed to revitalize one of the poorest areas of the city through the involvement of residents in creating a public work of art and a mosaic (Landry, 2006);
9) Creation of funding mechanisms and schemes to support the arts,	Lottery in the UK (or, in the US, the Percent for Art Scheme), although not created for this specific purpose;
10) place marketing campaigns	Glasgow's Miles Better campaign in the 1980s was especially successful in increasing residents' pride.

Despite the wide use of culture-driven regeneration and development programmes, evidence of long-term benefits of such policies remain, to date, fairly limited (Miles and Paddison, 2007). For this reason, the British Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) commissioned, in 2004, a review of evidence to support culture-led regeneration policies (Evans and Shaw, 2004). According to this study, three types of impact measurements of cultural policies can be found: environmental (physical), economic and social. Environmental impacts include (among others) the re-use of redundant buildings, environmental improvements (including construction of new buildings), and development of mixed-used spaces. A celebrated example is the case of Gateshead (UK), where new developments (e.g. Sage music venue) and the re-use of industrial buildings as cultural venues (e.g. Baltic centre) contributed to the city's physical regeneration. In terms of economic impacts, evidence is to a great extent limited to tourism development and growth of local employment, failing to highlight achieved benefits in terms of different social groups (Evans and Shaw, 2004). However, there is also evidence that culture can contribute to the attraction of investment (thanks to private investments leveraged by public ones), to

the increase of resident and visitor spend, to the retention of talent, to the development of new businesses, and to the encouragement of private-public partnerships. Social improvements, on the other hand, include increased local pride and place image, greater individual aspiration, increased organisational capacity, development of volunteering, higher education attainment (and reduced misbehaviour at school) and increased social capital (Evans and Shaw, 2004). For instance, the Breightmet Arts organisation in Bolton (Greater Manchester) between 1999 and 2002 coordinated over sixty projects involving local people (including thirty-six local artists), with very positive results in terms of social-cohesion, personal self-image, reduced stress and work organisational skills (Evans and Shaw, 2004). However, according to several authors (for instance, Miles and Paddison, 2007; Pratt, 2009b), despite the acknowledged potential of cultural policies in producing economic investment, their role in social development (such as the inclusion of diverse groups) and their long-term sustainability are yet to be proven. For instance, with regards to one of the most celebrated European cases of culture-led regeneration, Glasgow, critics have pointed out the divide between the physically regenerated city centre and the dilapidated peripheries as a result of the 1990 European City of Culture's transformations (Mooney and Danson, 1997). In addition, Mooney (2008) questioned public agencies' claims that Glasgow has seen an economic renaissance following the event, showing evidence that this prosperity 'is something that has surely bypassed a substantial proportion of Glasgow's population' (p. 335). In addition, it has been noted that development programmes based on cultural (or creative) industries and activities often fail to bring out local history and talent, and the symbolic value of place (Evans, 2004). Another critique frequently made to cultural policies aimed at creating wealth through the attraction of visitors and private investment is the risk of gentrification, which in many cases can lead to social marginalisation of the poor and rapid changes in the local population (with the less affluent being pushed out from the area).

Cultural policy in the UK

UK is probably the European country where cultural policies have been most widely developed and studied. This is mainly due to the rapid de-industrialisation that affected UK cities and to its particularly severe consequences. In addition, local

and central governments had especially high expectations towards the role culture can play in economic development (Oakley, 2004). Although culture-led regeneration policies at that time already existed, this emphasis on culture and creativity became particularly evident after the election of the New Labour party in 1997 and their rebranding of the UK as Cool Britannia (Miles, 2005). At that time, the Department of Culture Media and Sport was created in its current form, and a Creative Industries Task Force was set in order to define and classify the creative industries (see previous chapter for details). In the same period, an Urban Task Force led by the architect Lord Rogers was constituted, and their report (Urban task Force, 1999) found that British cities were behind their European counterparts in Holland, Germany and Scandinavia in terms of quality of urban life and built environment (Miles and Paddison, 2007). Contingently, since the 1990s, the National Lottery has provided considerable funds through bodies like the Arts Council of England (£2.1 billion), the Millennium commission (£2.3 billion) and the Heritage Lottery Fund (£2.8 billion) (DCMS, 2004). Other funds like the European Regional Development Fund have been used by local authorities and other developers to undertake large-scale development programmes (DCMS, 2004). Since 1997, Regional Development Agencies have been established to promote economic development and, between 2000 and 2004, Neighbourhood Renewal Programmes have carried out strategies to address local priorities and to deal with social issues in the most deprived neighbourhoods (DCMS, 2004). London, Manchester, Glasgow, Bristol, Leeds, Cardiff, Sheffield and Birmingham are the cities that have most benefited from these culture-led development programmes (DCMS, 2004). An example of these projects is the development of the Southwark area in London, started with the opening, in 2000, of the Tate Modern Gallery in a disused power station. The economic benefit of this flagship is estimated to be around £100 million, with the creation of 3,000 new jobs (467 directly related to the gallery) and a 23% increase in local hotels and catering businesses over the last three years (DCMS, 2004). As Miles (2005) noted, the key of the Tate Modern's success lies in its role as a new social space and not in its art collection, which reflects to a great extent a rather specialised cultural interest (contemporary art). Yet, as remarked by Smith (2006a: 97) 'residents of the London borough of Southwark may not entirely concur that this new 'tourist bubble' (Judd, 1999) contained within a narrow riverside strip constitutes 'regeneration'.

Also the organization of cultural and sports events has been widely used in the UK as a regeneration tool. For instance, twelve British cities competed in 2003 to win the title of European capital of Culture 2008. All these cities, which include Liverpool (final winner), Newcastle-Gateshead, Cardiff, Belfast and Birmingham, saw the event as a chance to support or to trigger a wider strategic plan involving tourism development, local pride and image enhancement. The much awaited London Olympic Games in 2012 are centred on a development plan for East London, which was the most industrial part of the metropolis and strongly suffered from deindustrialization and consequent urban decline. According to Smith (2006a) the role played by tourism in this regeneration programme is still not clear. However, the aim is certainly not to increase the overall number of London tourists, but rather to disperse existing visitors to more peripheral parts of East and South East London and in the rest of the UK, a goal that has been long chased by VisitLondon and VisitBritain (Smith, 2006a).

The Creative City

In the past decade the development of a strong creative sector has been regarded, in the UK and in other countries, as key to a healthy economic and social growth (see previous chapter). Although the potential of a sector that mainly deals with symbols had been highly appreciated since the 1990s (particularly in a time of decline of the manufacturing industry), two books that came out between 2000 and 2002 seem to have provided policymakers with the theoretical foundation for the approach they were pursuing. The first one is *The Creative City* (2000) by British academic and private consultant Charles Landry²; the second (which had even more resonance world-wide) is *The rise of the creative class: And how it is transforming work, leisure, community, and everyday life* (2002) by American regional economist Richard Florida.

The central idea of Landry's book is that creativity is the most important resource of contemporary cities, and that governments should facilitate its development through a flexible organisational structure, more creative policy agendas, open physical

² A first shorter version of this book was written and published in 1995 by C. Landry and F. Bianchini (Landry and Bianchini, 1995).

space and the attraction of creative industries and human talent. Landry calls such a nurturing environment ‘the creative city’, which he defines as one that ‘provides the conditions within which it is possible to think, plan and act with imagination’ (Landry, 2006: 19).

According to Florida’s book (2002), on the other hand, the driving force behind a city’s success and development is the ability to attract members of what he calls ‘creative class’, a wide group of urban talented professionals working in a broad set of fields ranging from performing arts to biotechnologies. Florida’s theory is based on the development of a set of ‘creativity indices’ (including the number of creative workers, diversity and openness to difference, presence of high-tech firms and others), which can be used by local authorities to calculate the level of creativity of their region and act consequently. Florida’s work has been very influential in public policy and research relating to culture and urban development. However, many have also been critical of his approach (e.g. Jacobs, 2005; Peck, 2005, Roberts, 2006). For instance, it seems rather uncertain that such a vast set of people could actually be considered a class in a sociologic sense, as they do not necessarily share the same social and economic conditions. In addition, the creative class would constitute thirty percent of urban residents and, as Jacobs (2005) noted, ‘it’s hard to distinguish them from our old friends from the 1980s, the yuppies’ (2005: *online*). Another problem with Florida’s indices is their application to other contexts than the American one (where they were developed). His rankings of most creative European cities, for instance, list London way below Manchester and Leicester, and fail to mention innovative cities such as Helsinki at all (Montgomery, 2005). This could be the result of using statistical measures to find correlations between phenomena that are mainly qualitative, such as creativity, tolerance and innovation (Jacobs, 2005). Also, according to Montgomery (2005) Florida fails to relate the emergence of leading cities in the creative economy to pre-established traditions of wealth creation and innovation.

The most interesting aspect of Florida’s theory is the idea that a diverse, vibrant and open environment attracts the most innovative people, becoming a key factor of economic development. This concept, however, is not new; as illustrated in the previous chapter several authors have highlighted the role of vibrant urban contexts

for the development of ideas and talent (for example, Hall, 1998; Jacobs, 1961). Clark et al. (2002) interestingly notes that quality of life is not just a consequence of production; on the contrary, the lifestyles of social actors are becoming increasingly important in driving other urban social processes. As district theorist Jane Jacobs many years earlier noted, 'lively, diverse, intense cities contains the seeds of their own regeneration' (1961: 462).

In this context, Jacobs' work appears especially relevant, because it pointed out, for the first time, the importance of physical space for creativity and innovation. With *The Life and Death of Great American Cities* (1961), Jane Jacobs revolutionised the modern conception of urban planning (Sorkin, 2006), maintaining that planners, not considering the city as a living being, had killed its very essence through an urban renewal made of separation of uses and segregation of people. According to Jacobs, a safe and liveable city should be densely populated, display old next to new buildings and rich next to poor ones. It should allow people to live in the same area where they work, avoiding zoning. Walking should be encouraged (although cars should not be banned), pavements should be large enough to let children play, and streets should be short, so that people have the chance to turn corners and experience always new paths (Jacobs, 1961).

Most importantly for the present research, however, in *The Economy of Cities* (1969) Jacobs links her innovative urban theories to some new economic concepts. There she argues that cities, thanks to the process of import replacement³, are the prime units of economic activity and, moreover, that small businesses and not giant firms are the real source of a city's development. In Jacob's opinion, whereas big companies are most economically efficient, it is in the small businesses' new products' development that innovation and creativity lie, and this is what leads to economic growth. With her famous example of how brassiere manufacturing was first developed by an artisanal dressmaker in New York, Jacobs explains how new work is created adding new goods and services and leading to exponential specialisation of labour. Innovation, according to Jacobs, fails to thrive within large organisations because of their strong division of labour: new product (and thus new work) creation, which is only developed by the Research & Development

³ With the term import replacement Jacobs refers to the ability of towns to substitute products that were previously imported from more developed cities with goods that are locally produced.

departments, is generally very limited in comparison with the firm's total work, and it often turns out to be irrelevant or even hostile to the interests of the organisation as a whole. Large, successful enterprises are results of economic creativity in the past, but they do not forecast the future (Jacobs, 1969).

An example of this process is provided, still according to Jacobs (1969), by the history of two cities such as Manchester and Birmingham. During the nineteenth century the former, with its thriving textile mills and large industries, appeared to be the most advanced and promising of all cities, while the latter was still basing its economy on small household trades employing less than twelve people. However, when industrial production developed everywhere, Manchester was not able to cope with the market loss and did not develop anything new to compensate, whereas the economy of Birmingham remained solid. This constitutes a very interesting example; however, time proved Jacob's conjecture wrong, as Manchester has now overtaken Birmingham in terms of productivity. As noted above for the case of Florida, it seems that very often urban theories developed in the US fail to fully represent and explain the European condition, and they can be only partially applied to European cases. As a matter of fact, many contemporary European cities would probably represent Jacobs' ideal in terms of diversity (of population, social classes, age and size of buildings). However, in contrast with the ideas she expressed in her last book (1984), the gap between rich and poor does not seem to have substantially narrowed (see for instance the case of London, and the case studies of the present research in particular). This Manchester/Birmingham example probably highlights some of the main flaws of Jacobs influential theories. Firstly, the fact that they are based on little empirical research. Most of her work (1961, 1970, 1984) is in fact based on her own experience as a resident of Greenwich Village in New York. Secondly, as several critics have noted (e.g. Hill, 1988), her theories lack academic documentation. It must be said, however, that Jacobs theories have been nonetheless a milestone in contemporary urban planning, and that later experience and empirical work have confirmed many of her conjectures. For instance, recent research on cultural quarters (for instance, Montgomery 2003; as well as the present study) and on creative cities (Florida, 2002) provided empirical evidence to many of her theoretical thoughts on the development potential of diversity and small craft based enterprises where informal networks, mixed use and 'atmosphere' are important.

More specifically, one of Jacob's ideas that is particularly relevant to the present study relates to her theory on efficiency and development, which, according to her, cannot go together. A city with a highly efficient economy (meaning a city able to make the most wealth out of its resources) cannot excel at the development of new products, and vice versa. Very interestingly, Jacobs (1969) explained that this is valid also for the physical arrangements of places. The most economically efficient means of construction (for architects and construction companies) would be the production of monotonous, identical buildings. Similarly, superblocs would be more efficient than small blocks, because fewer crossings and streets would allow traffic to flow more easily and a more efficient distribution of people. However, as exposed in her earlier work (1960), Jacobs maintained that for cities and enterprises to flourish four conditions should be simultaneously met: variety of primary uses (residential, commercial, etc.) so that people flow with different schedules and purposes, small and short blocks, mix building of different ages, sizes and conditions, and high concentration of people. Thus, following Jacobs theories, the ideal environment for creative city growth and innovation would be an economy made of many small firms, which, incidentally, would thrive in a physical space comprised of many small blocks, diverse building shapes and uses, and large pavements with numerous crossings and nodes. On the other hand, the ultimate cost/production efficient economy would be one made of few colossal enterprises, located in a physical space made of big identical buildings and blocks.

Understanding the gentrification process

The term gentrification was first coined, more than forty years ago, by the English sociologist Ruth Glass. Glass (1964) utilised it to describe the process through which many of the working-class quarters of London, during the Sixties, were being appropriated by the middle-class ('gentry') thus becoming more expensive. Research on this emerging process was initially empirical work focused on the gentrifying class and on gentrification effects, seeing the process as a potential answer to inner-city decay (Smith and Williams, 1986). At the time, the concept of gentrification was mainly discussed by American analysts; twenty years later, it was welcomed in the English language by some American dictionaries. According to the

1980 Oxford American Dictionary gentrification is a 'movement of middle class families into urban areas causing property values to increase and having secondary effect on driving out poorer families'(Smith and Williams 1986: 1).

Over the Seventies a new phase of research originated in Britain, emphasizing the phenomenon's causation. Smith (e.g. 1979; 1984; 1987) can be regarded as the main representative of this school (often referred to as the production-side explanatory theory), which had its foundations in the Marxist concepts of classes and capital. According to Smith and Williams (1986), the whole process of gentrification can be explained in terms of flows: in the two decades after World War II, in many western cities the availability of cheap land in the peripheries led to a suburbanization of cities, meaning massive construction and development of residential, commercial and recreational activities in the suburbs, and devalorisation of capital invested in the inner-cities. This resulted in what Smith calls the 'rent gap in the inner-city between the actual ground rent capitalized from the present (depressed) land use and the potential rent that could be capitalized from the 'highest and best use' (...) given the central location' (Smith and Williams, 1986: 23). The rent gap created investment opportunities for the revalorization of these underdeveloped but potentially lucrative central cities, leading to their repopulation by upper-class residents. According to Beauregard (1986) some factors strongly contribute to the 'rent-gap' and gentrification processes. Firstly, the role of various speculators: landlords, real-estate agents and developers who steer the potential gentry to a neighbourhood. Secondly, the characteristics of the area, in fact not every lower class district is suitable for gentrification. The sites 'are often characterized by architecturally interesting housing or commercial and industrial structures 'with potential': a unique spatial amenity such as access to a waterfront, a hilltop location or a spectacular view' (Beauregard, 1986:53). Beauregard also pointed out that gentrification is a chaotic and complex process, involving a plurality of agents and factors that don't necessarily interact in a linear way.

In contrast with the production-side gentrification model, some other commentators have seen the characteristics of the gentrifiers as the most important explanation to the phenomenon (demand-side theory). Zukin (1982, for example) and Ley (e.g. 1986, 1996) are the best known representatives of this school. Zukin (1982), utilizing her case study of SoHo in New York, explains the fundamental role played

by artists in the gentrification process: a group of cultural producers (artists, musicians, etc.) begin to inhabit a rundown area of the city that can offer big spaces (often former industrial buildings) at affordable prices. Over time, the presence of this creative population transforms the area in a fashionable neighbourhood, new businesses appear and the artistic atmosphere attracts more affluent residents and even visitors. This process is the cause of a rise in rent prices, and the original artistic population is forced to leave to other peripheral areas of the city. However, in Zukin's view the real victims of this process are not the artists (as many have later interpreted), but rather workers of the small-scale industrial and commercial firms whose premises were converted to residential use (Zukin 1982). On the other hand, Ley (1986) stresses the difficult situation of the artist whose incomes remain low and provided evidence of the continuous displacement of the artists following waves of subsequent gentrification. In recent times, it has been argued that also other urban cultures may trigger the process of gentrification, by making an area more interesting to a wider public: for instance student communities (Russo and Arias Sans, 2009), ethnic groups (Bell and Jayne, 2004) and homosexuals (Bell and Binnie, 2004).

Whereas in the production-side theory gentrification can be interpreted in terms of flows of economic capital, in the consumption-side theory Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984) can be seen as the a key element. Harvey (1989) maintained that cultural capital can be developed by places as well as individuals. As Featherstone (1991) points out, modern cities' cultural capital was mainly constituted by historical buildings and traditional art. In the post-modern age instead, with the shift towards a more relativistic and pluralistic criteria of cultural taste, former industrial and rundown areas can acquire cultural capital in the process of gentrification and this capital, according to Bourdieu's theory, can be in its turn transformed in economic capital. Butler and Robson (e.g. Butler and Robson, 2001, 2003, and Butler, 2002, 2003, 2007) extensively studied the phenomenon of gentrification in London. They related this process to Bourdieu's concept of social capital (along with cultural and economic capital), meaning 'the sum of actual and potential resources that can be mobilised through membership in social networks of actors and organisations' (Butler and Robson, 2001: 2146). With their study, they aimed to investigate the different patterns of gentrification in inner London, an approach that in their view differs from the work of most researchers who tend

instead to view gentrification as a homogeneous process (2001). According to Butler and Robson (2001), different areas in London appeal to different groups, with specific characteristics and lifestyles. They argue that each area should be analysed individually according to their own dynamics and logic.

Generally, most authors have been negative in evaluating the outcome of the gentrification process. Both Zukin and Ley, for instance, point out the loss in authenticity and integrity in the process of commodification of art and culture through gentrification (Cameron and Coaffee 2005). Many stress the fact that whereas the gentrified areas appear regenerated, the original residents are forced to leave to other rundown areas of the city, thus leaving their social problems unsolved and fostering social segregation (e. g. Glass 1964). Other negative impacts of gentrification highlighted by research are loss of affordable housing, unsustainable speculative property price increases, homelessness, commercial and industrial displacement, increased costs to local services, loss of social diversity, increased crime and under-occupancy of the areas (Atkinson 2002).

However, gentrification could also be seen as a mechanism through which successive areas of a city are upgraded (for example, Hamnett, 1973). Besides, some of the negative impacts of gentrification as described in American literature fail to equally apply to the European case. For instance, Cameron and Coaffee note (2005) that the displacement of the poorest residents is irrelevant in most UK provincial cities, since middle-class gentrifiers have to date mostly occupied new-built developments on former brown fields, or conversions of old industrial or commercial buildings. This, especially when the gentrified area contains a significant stock of social housing, means no or very little displacement of the existing residential population. It could be argued, however, that as facilities and public spaces are redesigned for the needs of the new middle-class market, a symbolic displacement of the original residents takes place. Other arguments in favour of the process include reduced vacancy rates, increased local fiscal revenues, encouragement and increased viability of further development, reduction of suburban sprawl, decreased crime, increased social mix and rehabilitation of property (Atkinson 2002). As Atkinson (2002) points out, some characteristics of gentrification, like price value increases, could be seen as both problems or

advantages depending on the point of view (homeowners or tenants, for instance). In addition, different studies have often shown opposite results regarding, for example, shifts in crime rates and social mix (Atkinson 2002).

Also according to Zukin (1998), there are both positive and negative aspects of gentrification:

‘one of the virtues (...) is that it made urban neighbourhoods interesting, again, to a broad middle class. By supporting historic preservation, it rescued a significant number of old buildings from destruction. Together with other social and aesthetic movements, gentrification helped cause a sea change in architecture and urban planning away from modernism. (...) A negative aspect of gentrification is that it did encourage privatisation. (...) in this way, gentrification often reinforces an abandonment of public institutions’ (p.831-832).

City marketing development and the serial reproduction problem

As mentioned in the previous sections, a characteristic of contemporary cities is their ferocious competition to promote themselves on the tourist market, beside the more traditional rivalry to attract the best human and financial capital. According to Fainstein and Judd (1999) the new, global era is characterized by ‘a more flexible organization of production, higher mobility of capital and people, heightened competition among places, and greater social and cultural fragmentation’ (p.261).

As more and more destinations attempt to attract visitors, the tourist sector offer becomes increasingly crowded and place marketers need to find always new, distinctive connotations in order to differentiate and position their ‘products’. Several commentators (for example, Zukin 1998, Richards and Wilson 2006, Rutten 2006) criticised the repeated use of the same marketing ideas and culture-led city redevelopments. Harvey (1989) even referred to this phenomenon as the ‘serial reproduction of culture’. On the other hand, other authors have acknowledged the fact that for cities today there is no alternative than to compete. Bell and Binnie, for example, note: ‘In a bid to be unique, cities have in fact become more alike-but there is no alternative, as not having those features means not even being in the race’ (Bell and Binnie, 2004: 1814).

Richards and Wilson (2006) identify three main strategies utilized by cities and regions to develop distinction in cultural tourism: construction of iconic structures (landmarks like the Guggenheim museum in Bilbao), organisation of mega-events (Olympic Games, European City of Culture), thematisation ('cultural city', 'world city', 'creative city') and heritage mining (revalorization of cultural heritage). Many European cities, such as Barcelona, Bilbao and Glasgow (some of the most cited examples in regeneration literature), undertook their development starting with a 'flagship' project such as an iconic building or a mega-event (Smith, 2006b): the Olympic Games in the case of Barcelona, the construction of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, the European city of Culture event in Glasgow. Academic literature appears contradictory in evaluating the results of these projects. They are generally extremely expensive, requiring substantial public funding often provided at a national level, like in the case of Tate Modern in London funded through British Lottery funds. Some have even argued that the lottery is actually a reverse Robin Hood, taking money from poor communities and redistributing to projects that mainly meet the taste of the richer classes (Pollard, 2003). As seen earlier in this chapter, some commentators have pointed out the dramatic polarization of cities and even referred to cultural-led regeneration strategies as 'carnival masks' (Harvey, 1989) employed to distract attention from the real social problems afflicting urban areas. According to Walsh (1992) many regeneration programmes create a 'heritagisation' of space, meaning that the original history of a place is overwritten by developments that do not reflect what was originally there (Smith, 2006b).

Tourism developments have led to the creation of 'tourist bubbles' (Judd 1999) or 'enclavic spaces' (Edensor, 2001), areas that act as theme parks, providing 'entertainment and excitement, with reassuringly clean and attractive surroundings' (Judd and Fainstein, 1999: 39). In contrast, sustainable tourism development and regeneration schemes should maintain a balance between conservation of heritage, promotion of arts and festivals and development of new entertainment complexes (Smith, 2006b). Following Landry's work (2000), the 'creative city theme' has been a popular choice for medium sized cities that were struck by de-industrialization. However, also this approach seems no longer distinctive enough, since the number of European cities that call themselves creative is constantly growing, and this trend is starting to develop on a global level too. Also the concept of 'creative space'

(what we have previously called ‘creative quarter’ or ‘creative cluster’) has become a popular topic not only in urban planning research, but also in tourism literature. However, whereas creative or cultural clusters have been widely discussed as means of regeneration, the theme of tourism development in these areas still appears to be overlooked. Richards and Raymond (2000), Eade (2002) and Evans (2007) deal with this subject, stressing these areas’ potential in attracting visitors thanks to intangible characteristics like for instance a vibrant atmosphere or the impression they give of being real, authentic or, using Urry’s (1990) terminology, ‘vernacular’. These creative spaces are generally able to melt production and consumption, tourists and locals, rich and poor, high culture and popular culture. ‘The main point about creative spaces is that they are often empty of fixed ideas; blank slates; spaces that are multifunctional and that can be flexible to any particular narrative –and spaces where representations of just about anything can flourish’ (Richards and Wilson, 2006: 13). For their peculiarity of being (or appearing as) ‘authentic’, creative spaces can be seen as the opposite to ‘tourist bubbles’ as described by Judd (in Judd and Fainstein, 1999). Tourist bubbles are tourist areas separated from the ‘real’ city, they are leisure spaces that leave out poverty and urban decay, as well as every-day life. In Judd’s words, ‘the tourist bubble is like a theme park, in that it provides entertainment and excitement, with reassuringly clean and attractive surroundings’ (p. 39). According to Maitland (2006, 2007), tourists, workers and residents’ demands are becoming increasingly alike and something they all request from a place is exactly the feeling of distinctiveness or ‘placefulness’ that tourist bubbles are missing. Contemporary city users (residents, workers, visitors) are attracted by that set of qualitative assets, connected with a city’s quality of life and atmosphere, what Florida (2002) has named ‘amenity’ (Maitland and Newman, 2004).

Taking forward the ‘creative turn’ in tourism studies (Richards and Wilson, 2006), Richards and Raymond (2000) also propose the idea of ‘creative tourism’, which is now a widely used expression in tourism policy circles and, more recently, has been adopted also at an international organisations’ level (e.g. Creative Cities Network, 2006). Richards and Raymond (2000) use the term *creative tourism* in contrast (or as an extension) to traditional *cultural tourism*, in order to describe an emerging form of tourism that involves interactive experiences and the opportunity to develop

one's own creativity. According to Richards and Wilson (2006), places have used creativity to develop distinctiveness in several ways. For instance, 'creative spectacles' are innovative and original tourist products in which the visitors only play a passive role (such as travelling art exhibitions and film festivals). All these types of creative tourist activities, including 'creative spaces', differ from what they call 'creative tourism' because, according to them, they do not directly involve the tourist's participation. Forms of creative tourism are instead, for example, dancing holidays, arts and crafts workshops and geology tours.

Conclusion

This chapter looked at the role played by culture, and by the cultural and creative industries in particular, in urban development and regeneration. Although this topic has been widely studied, there seems to be no 'recipe' for effective cultural policy in order to achieve regeneration. Some of the risks connected to culture-driven urban development, which should be considered and addressed by policy-makers, include: lack of social inclusion, low benefits for the local population, loss of affordable housing, and decreased social diversity and authenticity (commercialisation of culture, creation of tourist bubbles). On the other hand there is evidence of the positive effects of these policies in social, economic and physical terms.

To counteract some of the risks connected with the cultural approach to urban development, many authors advocate a 'bottom-up' approach, involving local people. Different stakeholders should participate (e. g. Evans, 2005; Sacco and Tevano Blessi; 2007) and various local communities should be involved, putting emphasis on intangible aspects of culture (Mercer, 1991), place identity (Ploger, 2001) and 'quality of life' (Smith, 2006b). The local versus the national and the global should be negotiated (Evans, 2001), retaining local 'authenticity' (Gibson, 2005). Cultural activities need to foster civic pride, a sense of local identity and ownership (DCMS, 1999). Finally a number of commentators highlight the importance of creativity to healthy urban development (among others, Landry and Bianchini, 1995; Florida, 2002 and Richards and Wilson, 2006).

4. CREATIVITY AND TOURISM EXPERIENCES

Conventionally, urban tourism has been characterised by forms of what has been called mass tourism (Cohen, 1984; Urry, 1990), such as for instance organised tours. In the past few decades, however, the urban tourism demand has boomed (Maitland and Newman, 2009), showing its increasing complexity and diversity. A range of new types of visitor emerged on the urban tourism market, and authors have variously tried to categorise them according to their motivations, consumption preferences and socio-demographic characteristics. Examples of the typologies developed include ‘explorer’, ‘individual mass tourist’ and ‘drifter’ (Cohen, 1984); ‘alternative tourist’ (Smith and Eadington, 1994), ‘new tourist’ (Poon, 1993), ‘post tourist’ (Feifer, 1986) and ‘adventurer’ (Eade, 2002). However, most of these typologies were conceived more than a decade ago, and, perhaps for this reason, they no longer possess the sufficient depth to describe the multifaceted psychological, behavioural and social patterns of today’s tourism consumption.

Following the initial review of paradigms specifically related to tourism, the focus of this chapter moves towards other, more general, sociological theories that could be used to understand the phenomena researched within this study. An important part of this review was developed after the first stage of data analysis, and it builds upon some of the findings. Bourdieu’s theory of tastes (1983, 1984), for instance, was seen as an important framework to understand some dynamics recognised within the present study. Similarly, theories on cosmopolitan lifestyles, sub-cultural capital and creation of ‘cool’. A discussion on place and space is followed by a review of a number of approaches (taken by authors within a variety of disciplines) towards the study of human perceptions of, and behaviours within, a delimited space.

Tourist typologies.

Tourist typologies are generally derived from an analysis of visitors' characteristics and motivations to travel, namely from the study of *why* people travel (motivations), *what* they look for in their travels, and *how* they travel. For example, Urry (1990) famously categorises tourists according to their *gaze* (or specific way of looking at things in the tourist experience), with the romantic gaze (individual experience) and the collective gaze (collective experience) being the two most prominent types. While Urry's types have been criticised for their excessive focus on the visual dimension, for their broadness and for reducing the tourist to a passive construct (e.g. Harvey and Lorenzen, 2006), some of his ideas are still today valid and fascinating. For instance, he describes how the visual shapes the whole tourist experience: from viewing the destination prior to departure through images (e.g. in the media, brochures or even friends' holiday pictures), throughout the actual holiday in which the tourist constantly looks for photo opportunities, until the return home when the photographs taken are shown to friends and family (thus restarting the cycle). Not only these dynamics appear to be still relevant today, but it could be argued that this process is even magnified by the growing importance of Internet and so-called social networks as means of interaction between people.

The most telling criticism to Urry's theories seems, however, his focus on the sight, to the expense of other more relational dimensions like the interaction with others (Harvey and Lorenzen, 2006). More relevance is given to this dimension by Smith and Eadington's idea of 'alternative tourism' (1994). Newsome et al. (2001), elaborating on Smith and Eadington (1994), define alternative tourism as 'forms of tourism that set out to be consistent with natural, social and community values and which allow both hosts and guests to enjoy positive and worthwhile interaction and shared experiences' (p. 10). Characteristics of alternative tourism also include having a minimum negative social and environmental impact, consisting of smaller developments and locally-managed attractions, and being centred on the search for authenticity (Smith and Eadington, 1994). Interestingly for the present research, Eade (2002), in a study conducted in Spitalfields several years ago, noted that visitors were alternative in that they were looking for an off-the-beaten-track destination, and argued they could therefore be described as 'adventurer tourists'.

Several studies confirm that, in urban areas, off-the-beaten-track tourists are characterised by being more independent and experienced than the traditional visitor (Poon, 1993, Eade, 2002, Maitland, 2006). Not feeling satisfied with the mass tourism offer, they seem to seek ‘authentic’ and ‘non-homogenized’ experiences (Maitland, 2006). This type of visitor appears to be very different from the ‘post-tourist’ that Feifer (1985) identified twenty years ago. According to this category the ‘mass post-tourist’ does not even need to leave his or her house to visit places, because the view provided by television and magazines can act as satisfactory substitute. In addition, this visitor feels free from any kind of limits, including high-culture, taste, or authenticity criteria: even a miniature model of the Eiffel Tower can be appreciated as an example of a kitsch object (Urry, 1990). According to Feifer (1985) tourism is just a game where most experiences are staged: the post-modern tourist is aware of this and knows his or her outsider position. The tourist actually enjoys this game and, most notably, enjoys being treated like a child, being told what to see, what to eat and how to have fun.

Tourist, a contemporary flâneur?

Urry’s visitors’ classification elaborates on Feifer’s ideas (1985), identifying other types of tourist which seem, in comparison with Feifer’s mass post-tourist, less interested in experiencing a standardised or staged (McCannel, 1976) tourism offer. These visitors are more independent, prefer a romantic gaze to a collective one, and look for authentic experiences. Such a tourist, according to Urry (1990), mirrors the nineteenth concept of the romantic *flâneur*, ‘a fashionable man of leisure for whom the streets of the city effectively served as a living room, place of work and source of artistic inspiration’ (Hubbard, 2006: 102). Indeed, since the work of Corbin (1994), the romantic view of nature and the sea as sources of inspiration have been linked to the modern increase of travel (Baranowsky, 2003). However, Crang notes that in the case of tourism, in contrast with the more fragmented flâneur, ‘images, sights, activities are all linked through the embodied motion of the observer to create ‘proprioception’ – an active, embodied engagement with the world through vision’ (Crang, 1997: 365). Very similar to this type of visitor is the ‘new-tourist’ described by Poon (1993). According to Poon, new tourism is ‘a phenomenon of

large-scale packaging of non-standardized leisure services at competitive prices to suit the demands of tourists as well as economic and socioenvironmental needs of destinations' (1993: 85). Namely, new tourists are 'more experienced travellers, more educated, more destination-oriented, more independent, more flexible and more 'green'. Consumers look at the environment and culture of the destinations they visit as a key part of the holiday experience' (p. 85). They appear to be more independent-minded and to have a desire of being different from the crowd. Another key characteristic of the new tourist, very much in contrast with Feifer's 'mass post-tourist', is the search for authenticity, or, as Getz (1994) called it, the genuine, the unadulterated, the 'real thing'.

Although many commentators agree that the concept of authenticity is largely subjective (e.g. Cohen, 1988, Geetz, 1994, Moore, 2002), the discourse on authenticity has been a popular debate in tourism literature, focussing especially on the extent to which visitors actually seek authentic experiences. For instance Cohen (1988) notes that even a constructed touristic product can, over time, be perceived as authentic (a process that he called 'emergent authenticity'). Boorstin, back in 1964, even suggested that tourists deliberately look for inauthentic experiences and argued that tourism rendered most events superficial or turned them into pseudo-events (Smith, 2007). Feifer (1985), as well as Rojek (1993) argued that post-tourists can equally appreciate an authentic and a staged event or experience. However, some commentators think that whatever is perceived as authentic is, in fact, authentic (e.g. Cohen, 1988) and that the concept of authenticity is projected and constructed by tourists themselves (Wang, 1999). In addition, it is important to take into account that many types of visitor exist, each with different needs and expectations. For example Florida (2002) argues that creative people prefer authentic, indigenous or organic venues; on the other hand other people may as well enjoy a staged experience that allows them to escape into a 'fantasy world' (Smith, 2007).

Changing patterns in tourism: the appeal of everydayness

As Smith (2007), among others, noted, many forms of tourism revolve around escapism from the monotonous and the experience of difference, however most visitors like to find some reassuring reminders of home in the destination. Maitland's study of new tourism areas in London (2008), for example, shows that for overseas tourists to London taking part of the city's everyday life was often central to the tourist experience. Following Lefebvre's (1991) concept of everyday life (which infuses all aspects of life), Larsen (2008) suggests that tourism practices are today moving away from the search for the extraordinary. According to Larsen, there is a need for tourism studies to 'de-exoticize tourism theory and adopt a non-elitist approach to tourism practices' (Larsen, 2008: 27). Lash and Urry (1994) note that in our everyday life we constantly face the unfamiliar and the touristic. They propose the concept of de-differentiation between touristic practices and other spheres of cultural experience (Lash, 1990; Urry 1995; Thompson & Tambyah, 1999) or even between tourism and everyday life (Urry, 2002, Larsen, 2008, Bauman, 1996). It seems that while tourists often look for the familiar while they travel, non-tourists increasingly tend to 'touristify' their everyday life (Bauman, 1996; Larsen, 2008), undertaking leisure activities typical of tourists while in their own city. As Bauman suggests 'Tourism is no longer something one practices on holiday. Normal life — if it is to be a good life — ought to be and had better be, a continuous holiday. Ideally one should be a tourist everyday and everywhere (1996: 55). Fenner (2008) calls this practice *everyday tourism*, which he defines as the day-to-day consumption of places by residents and 'the tourist-like relationship between these people and the place in which they dwell' (p.1). VisitLondon, the marketing agency for London, has seized the opportunity provided by everyday tourism (also referred to as local or inner tourism). With its publication *London for Londoners* (VisitLondon, 2005), they have set some guidelines for local boroughs in order to attract Londoners to London's amenities. Londoners, according to VisitLondon (2005), constitute an especially important target, being an all-year-round market with higher than average spending in cultural and other leisure activities. Perhaps surprisingly, statistics show that 9% of overnight domestic visitors to London are from London itself and 68% of day trips of three hours or longer to London are made by Londoners (VisitLondon, 2005). Similarly, visits by friends and relatives

(VFR) represent an appropriate example of everyday tourism, in which residents participate in touristic activities while tourists take part in their hosts' everyday life. Larsen (2008), among others, proposes a view of tourism as a social practice, where significant others, face-to-face proximity and non-commercialized hospitality play a fundamental role. He further points out the need of reconstructing the term 'tourist', as people today tend to travel for many different reasons. Someone visiting a friend or relative who happens to live abroad is likely to consider him/herself tourist in a different way than someone on a safari or packaged tour; often such a person does not consider him/herself a tourist at all (Larsen, 2008).

As research previously conducted in London has shown (Shaw et al., 2004, Maitland, 2006), everyday locations can exercise an appeal to also overseas tourists. Edensor, in his fascinating account of *staged tourism* (2001), referred to such places as heterogeneous¹, as opposed to enclavic tourist places. Whereas an enclavic place is purified (Sibley, 1988) and softly controlled (Ritzer and Liska, 1997), a heterogeneous tourist space

'Is 'weakly classified', with blurred boundaries, and is a multi-purpose space in which a wide range of activities and people co-exist. (...) Generally, tourism has often emerged in an unplanned and contingent process and an unplanned bricolage of structures and designs provides a contrasting aesthetic context. In some ways, heterogeneous tourist spaces provide stages where transitional identities may be performed alongside the everyday actions of residents, passers-by and workers' (Edensor, 2001: 64).

Ethnic working-class quarters in cities are, for instance, an interesting example of heterogeneous spaces where 'everyday life' and 'the exotic' overlap in one same place. Spitalfields, for instance, has been referred to as 'heterogeneous place' by Eade (2002) and 'Heteropia' by Hubbard (2006). As noted by Huning and Novy,

¹ Although not mentioned by Edensor (2001), the concept of 'heterotopias' was first proposed by Michel Foucault during a lecture he gave in 1967 (the text was later published by *The French Journal of Architecture/Mouvement/Continuite* in 1984. For Foucault (1984), while utopias are sites with no real place (perfect representations of reality, placeless places), heterotopias are, in contrast, 'counter-sites (...) in which all the other sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted... the heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible' (*online*). Example of heterotopia range from the cemetery and the prison, to the holiday village and the brothel.

‘particularly edgy, transitional and allegedly authentic urban settings (...) have been turned into desired travel destinations, as their ‘authenticity’, the alternative lifestyles of their residents and their different tangible and intangible cultural resources – music, art, history, traditions, the aesthetic of their built environment etc. – became attractive for outsiders’ (p.2-7).

Similarly, Shaw et al. (2004) described the same phenomenon taking Spitalfields as an example. They conclude highlighting the need for effective planning, to avoid commercial gentrification which would displace the original low-income residents and businesses who were supposed to gain the most from the regeneration process. According to Shaw et al. (2004), the search for knowledge and the desire of experiencing other cultures is only one side of the set of factors that motivate tourists to visit ethnic areas; indeed there is, in addition, a more mundane wish to buy cheap food and drink. A similar study (Huning and Novy, 2006) conducted in Harlem (New York) and Berlin-Kreuzberg, found that off-the-beaten path tourism to low income neighbourhoods has potential for urban regeneration and would deserve more academic attention. In particular, they highlight the potential of tourism in strengthening local communities’ organisational abilities, their capacity to represent their interests and to interact with external social groups and actors. However, in the case of Harlem in particular, there is still little evidence of the actual benefits for local residents of tourism development (Huning and Novy, 2006). In addition, another study based in New York (Fainstein and Powers, 2005) pointed out that, while the local government claims to be trying to disperse tourism through the promotion of ethnic every-day districts, the efforts in this direction were in reality extremely limited. Both New York and London are extremely diverse in social and ethnic terms, however ‘the tourism regime is far less diverse than the city itself’ (Fainstein, 2005: 10) with the great majority of tourism facilities such as hotels and conference venues being located in the most central areas.

Towards a framework to understand the emerging forms of tourism consumption

Urry (1990) argued that one of the effects of the de-differentiation between tourism and every day life has been to make tourism both less hierarchical and more individualistic. According to Fenner (2008: 15) this has implications in everyday life, as leisure choices depend less upon a desire to be socially recognised ('keeping up with the Joneses') and more on the reflexive construction of self. Tourism has become a means of transmitting one's identity, through a particular form of travel in a particular style (Edensor, 2001). However, this identity-building aspect of travel is not exclusively an individualistic choice, since today cultural enrichment and the construction of self are increasingly important means of achieving social status. Edensor's account of backpackers' quest for distinction (2001) constitutes an appropriate example of this. Backpackers often aim to distinguish themselves from mass tourists, by travelling off-the-beaten-path, wearing particular types of clothes and looking for counter-cultural experiences (such as drugs or mystical practices). Their behaviour is, according to Edensor (2001: 74) 'status oriented'.

In this context, the work of Pierre Bourdieu (e.g. 1983, 1984), by providing clear and relevant theoretical structures, can constitute an important framework for the understanding of these social dynamics. With *Distinction* (1984) Bourdieu described the roles played by different forms of capital in determining taste and consumption preferences. According to Bourdieu, it is through everyday social interactions that status is reproduced and expressed (Holt, 1998). Most notably, Bourdieu maintained that, in social life, people compete to achieve status drawing on three types of resources: economic, cultural, and social capital (Characteristics of each are summarized in Table 4.1). However, in contrast with traditional views of actions governed by a set of rules and social classes defined by economic power, Bourdieu proposed that the powers of elite groups are mainly cultural and symbolic (Fox Gotham, 2007). Social classes aim to acquire and control cultural capital, which is made of 'all the learnable skills and competencies that enable individuals to handle the social potentials of scientific information, aesthetic enjoyment and everyday pleasures' (Honneth, 1986: 58).

The mainstay of Bourdieu's theory is the idea of *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1983), a complex concept that could be described as a system of classification, or a set of acquired dispositions that guide perception and direct social action (Fox Gotham, 2007). Some of the key concepts developed by Bourdieu, such as 'habitus' and 'cultural capital' have been criticized for being imprecisely formulated and therefore lacking reliability (i.e. being empirically untestable) (Robbins, 2000). For instance, according to Swarts (1981:346) 'the theoretical construct 'habitus' presents a number of conceptual and empirical ambiguities (...) [it] permits Bourdieu to make conceptually appealing transitions from micro- to macro- levels of analysis and to generalize through quite different domains of human activity. But this very appealing conceptual versatility frequently renders ambiguous just what the concept actually designates empirically'. Similarly, others see Bourdieu's theory as reductionist and implausible (e.g. Lamont and Lareau, 1988) for using a simple hierarchy which overlooks the variety of factors driving the struggle for status, including economic capital. Yet, this conceptual framework, if recognised as a simplification of a complex reality, represents a useful tool to describe with academically recognised terms some of the dynamics studied in the present research.

Table 4.1- Overview of Bourdieu's key theoretical concepts (Sources: Bourdieu, 1983 and 1984; Holt, 1998; Fox Gotham, 2007; Jenkins 1992; Butler and Robson, 2001; Huning and Novy, 2006; Peillon, 1998; Bridge, 2006; Nancarrow et al 2001)

<p>Habitus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A system of classification, or - A set of acquired dispositions that guide perception and direct social action (Fox Gotham, 2007); - 'Refers to the ways in which processes of class formation - and reproduction - are facilitated by the storage and (transposable) - transmission of core cultural dispositions in the individual' (Jenkins 1992: 39) - A set of widely recognized and therefore relatively stable tastes (Bovone, 2005).
<p>Field</p> <p>Fields, which constitute 'sites of struggle over a central <i>stake</i>' (Peillon, 1998: 213), are the foundation of most of Bourdieu's conceptualisations. Society, for instance, is a field (the 'social field') which contains a range of other fields (e.g. science, politics, arts). Different fields are autonomous, hierarchically organised and interact with each other. Autonomous</p>

fields within society are characterised by a specific history, rules, habitus and set of beliefs (Bourdieu, 1983). Within a field, particular configurations of agents interact and compete to define their position, through the accumulation of economic, cultural and social capital (Bourdieu, 1983).

Three types of resources on which people draw to acquire status within social life:

Economic Capital;

Cultural Capital;

Social Capital;

(each can be tangible or symbolic)

Economic Capital	Cultural Capital	Social Capital
<p>Monetary income and other financial resources and assets;</p> <p>Institutional expression: property rights</p>	<p>‘All the learnable skills and competencies that enable individuals to handle the social potentials of scientific information, aesthetic enjoyment and everyday pleasures’ (Honneth, 1986, p. 58).</p> <p>Forms of Cultural Capital:</p> <p>Embodied Cultural Capital: knowledge, skills and dispositions that are learned through participation in a particular habitus;</p> <p>Objectified Cultural Capital: cultural objects such as artworks, books, etc.;</p> <p>Institutionalized Cultural Capital: the official certifications (such as degrees and diplomas) of the existence of the embodied form.</p>	<p>The sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition (Huning and Novy, 2006: 6)</p> <p>It involves ‘transforming contingent relations, such as those of neighbourhood, the workplace, or even kinship, into relationships that are at once necessary and elective, implying durable obligations subjectively felt (feelings of gratitude, respect, friendship, etc.)’ (Bourdieu, 1986: 249–250). (Butler and Robson, 2001 :2146)</p>

	<p>Cultural intermediaries</p> <p>‘Working in the culture, media and marketing industries and diffusing cultural attitudes and the aesthetics of lifestyle into the mainstream (Bourdieu, 1984)’ (;Nancarrow et al 2001:312)</p>	
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Cosmopolitanism and the emergence of Cool: new forms of cultural capital?

Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital has been widely used in the social sciences, particularly in the study of contemporary consumption behaviours, lifestyles and motivation. In the context of the present study, three streams of research seem especially relevant: the analysis of what has been called a cosmopolitan lifestyle, the study of the concept of ‘cool’ (or, similarly, trendy and fashionable) and the idea of a sub-cultural capital.

Lifestyles as paradigms to describe urban society’s dynamics was advanced by Simmel already in the early 1900s (Holt, 1997), when he developed the famous theory which explains fashion styles with the trickle-down imitation of elites by the lower classes (Simmel, 1904). Sociology of consumption literature has by now widely acknowledged the fundamental symbolic component of commodities (e.g. Weber, 1978, Kleine and Kernan, 1991), and a consistent body of marketing research has been addressed to the study of personality traits that are shared by consumers of the same products (Levy, 1959). In such a context, the term ‘lifestyle’ indicates a shared consumption pattern (Holt, 1997). Hannerz (1990) was the first to describe the characteristics of an emerging group of consumers that seems to play an important role in the globalising world scenario: the ‘cosmopolitans’. Cosmopolitanism, in Hannerz’ view, is ‘a perspective, a state of mind, or... a mode of managing meaning’ (p.238). Cosmopolitans are characterized by ‘an orientation, a willingness to engage with the Other [and] a personal ability to make one’s way

into other cultures, through listening, looking, intuiting and reflecting’ as well as by a built-up skill of manoeuvring through systems of meaning (Hannerz, 1990: 239). The typical examples of the cosmopolitan lifestyle are the highly educated, professional expats who ‘actively consume cultural differences in a reflective, intellectualizing manner’ (Thompson and Tambyah, 1999: 215), whereas tourists are, in Hannerz’s view, only highly provincial, leisure travellers.

Cosmopolitanism is not only an innate personality trait, although some people may have a natural disposition; on the contrary, it can be cultivated through training and experience (Thompson and Tambyah, 1999). On the other hand, it represents itself a form of knowledge or, following Bourdieu (1984), of cultural capital, that individuals aim to acquire in order to achieve distinction or authority in their social field (Holt, 1997). Thompson and Tambyah (1999), in their study of a group of cosmopolitan professional expats in Singapore, note that one of their subjects’ defining traits was a need to differentiate themselves from the tourist and to affirm a sense superiority, both in aesthetic and moral terms. Urry, in its turn, described *aesthetic cosmopolitanism* as an ‘openness to others, curiosity, willingness to take risks and travel outside the tourist bubble, ability to reflect upon and judge aesthetically between different natures, places and societies’ (Urry 2005: 167). Interestingly, Rushbrook (2002) comments on the importance of cosmopolitan places in cities, arguing that they ‘serve both as destinations for local and out-of-town tourists and as markers of tolerance and diversity that enhance the city’s perceived quality of life’ (Rushbrook, 2002: 189). As Thompson and Tambyah (1999) suggest, the very existence of cosmopolitan enclaves in cities supports MacCannell’s (1992) idea that the process of globalisation, far from being a McDonaldizing phenomenon (e.g., Ritzer 1998), rather involves the development and commercialisation of an increasing heterogeneity of cultural forms. Binnie et al. (2006), on the other hand, point at the now diffused serial reproduction of cosmopolitan places, which is leading to a homogenisation and domestication of difference in occidental urban areas.

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Often, cosmopolitans have been identified with the transnational capitalist class (Sklair, 2001) or the liberal managerial class (Robbins, 2001). Indeed, the wide applicability of this category -as previously highlighted for other concepts such as

Florida's creative class or Bourdieu's habitus (see Table 4.1, p.73)- constitutes its weakness and, at the same time, the key of its academic success. Rofo (2003) also shows the similarities between the transnational elite made of cosmopolitans and the gentrifying class. Both are described by academic literature as being highly educated professionals employed in high status occupations (Rofo, 2003). According to Rofo (2003), the only real discriminating factor between the two categories is spatial orientation: while gentrifiers' location is precisely identified, cosmopolitans tend to be globally dispersed. As a consequence, Rofo proposed that 'gentrifying spaces are (...) increasingly enmeshed in global networks of flows and meaning. In short, gentrifying spaces provide a territory for articulation of what this paper calls a global persona' (p. 2521). His conclusion (which elaborates on Smith, 2001 and Zukin, 1991), is that gentrifying landscapes can be seen as 'translocal... 'landscapes of power' providing spaces for the display (...) of an affluent gentrification-derived identity' (Rofo, 2003: 2521). Cosmopolitan gentrifiers, as in Bourdieu's view, see their sophisticated taste and their ability to distinguish authentic products from commercial ones as a mean of distinction, 'using their taste for exotic food as a way of distancing themselves from other social groups' (May, 1996: 59). In this context, it seems important to look more deeply into this process of trend formation, to provide a theoretical background for the investigation of why certain areas are perceived as 'cool' or fashionable, and how the shift from 'gritty', 'edgy' or 'working class' to 'trendy' takes place. First, a brief digression on the meaning of the concept of 'cool' seems necessary.

As Nancarrow et al. (2001) note, while the word 'cool' seems by now to have lost meaning, the concept is still very powerful in orientating perceptions, taste and consumption choices. Going back in history, it appears that the origins of cool come from American black counter-cultures in the 1960s: 'cool' (in the sense of cold, detached) was back then the adjective that best described the attitude of jazz musicians towards their difficult life work conditions (Nancarrow et al., 2001). As the 1960s Beat philosophy evolved into hippie culture, the 'cool' values of sensation, liberation and selfexploration (as opposed to order and tradition) became the most influential of the baby-boom generation (Brooks, 2000). It is interesting to note here, how at that point in history the transmission of values and styles was happening in the exact opposite direction than the one described by Simmel (1904)

half a century earlier as a trickle-down imitation of elites by the lower classes: for this reason, this phenomenon has been called by Davis (1992: 212) the ‘float-up’ effect from, in particular, ethnic minorities. The origins of ‘cool’ as a typical attitude of a counter-culture is very important to understand some of the meanings the concept still bears today. Most notably, Nancarrow et al. (2001) refer to Thornton’s fascinating book on Club Cultures (1995), in which she developed and explained the notion of ‘sub-cultural capital’ and its use to understand the dynamics of the underground dance scene in contemporary London. What is most captivating about Thornton’s work is her analysis of hipness using Bourdieu’s cultural capital framework. According to Thornton (1995), in the field of dance cultures, hipness as a form of (sub)cultural capital is sought by dance cultures’ actors in order to achieve distinction and (thus) status. Intriguingly, hipness can be better defined in relation to what is not and what it dislikes. In particular, Thornton’s analysis explores the distinction between ‘the hip world of the dance crowd (...) and its perpetually absent, denigrated *other* – the mainstream’ (p.5, italic in the original).

Table 4.2- Opposition of values attributed to the hip underground dance community by its members as opposed to values attributed by them to the mainstream (Source: Thornton, 1995: 115).

US	THEM
Alternative	Mainstream
Hip/cool	Straight/square/naïf
Independent	Commercial
Authentic	False/phoney
Rebellious/radical	Conformist/conservative
Specialist genres	Pop
Insider knowledge	Easily accessible information
Minority	Majority
Heterogeneous	Homogeneous
Youth	Family
Classless	Classed
Masculine culture	Feminine culture

Similarly, Nancarrow et al. define coolness ‘partly as an attitude—laid-back, narcissistic, hedonistic—but also as a form of cultural capital that increasingly consists of insider knowledge about commodities and consumption practices as yet unavailable to the mainstream’ (Nancarrow et al, 2001: 315). They also note that most art, advertising, marketing and media creatives, ‘cultural intermediaries’ using Bourdieu’s (1994) terminology, are ‘prime exponents of the cool lifestyle’ (Nancarrow et al, 2001: 312). Nancarrow et al. also identify the areas in London mostly frequented by these (cool) cultural intermediaries: the City, Soho and Hoxton. Hoxton, in their words, is a ultrahip ‘maze of cobbled streets in the City of London’ and ‘as close to style leadership as we are likely to get’ (2001: 318).

A more thorough analysis of a ‘hip area’ and of the role played by cultural intermediaries in the definition of cool styles is the study conducted by Bovone (2005) in one of Milan’s bohemian quarters, the Ticinese. The term ‘bohemian’, often used in relation to people and places associated with a characteristic social and aesthetic sensibility, originated in the nineteenth century Parisian society (Hubbard, 2006). Initially used to refer to art production spaces in Paris, the ‘label bohemia [still] carries with it a romanticised imaginary of freewheeling, countercultural experimentation and excess’ (Hubbard, 2006: 224). Bovone (2005) stresses the particular importance of the fashion sector in Milan, and relates the Ticinese quarter’s success with the strong presence of fashion businesses and shops. For this reason, she identifies Ticinese with her idea of a ‘fashionable quarter’, which she defines as ‘an area undergoing deep transformation and consequently rich in many cultural components, where the circuit of fashionable goods is all simultaneously present: production, communication, consumption of nondurable design-intensive goods, and image related agencies and services’ (2005: 360). In the Ticinese quarter, Bovone noticed many of the social dynamics previously described by Bourdieu (1984) and by Zukin (1991), such as new cultural intermediaries making choices of taste and style, manipulating meanings, and using themselves as

‘shop windows to sell lifestyles and products’ (...). (...) If being fashionable also means foreseeing, before others, new trends, a fashionable quarter is a quarter where urban lifestyles and urban production—which will be predictably imitated—are initiated before elsewhere, where the role that culture could have in a future city is subject to experimentation’ (Bovone, 2005: 371 and 377).

Mapping Tourism Places

While definitions of space have generally focussed on material relations (production, consumption and how space is used and produced), the concept of place encompasses a cultural and symbolic component (Shaw and Williams, 2004). The idea of place as embedded with cultural and social meaning, described by Tuan (1977), is today the one generally adopted in cultural geography. For instance, Relph maintained that 'places in existential space can be understood as centres of meaning' (Relph, 1976). Several authors highlighted the role of place in shaping identities and the fact that place's significance lies in the meaning that we attribute to it (for instance, Entrikin, 1991; Rotenberg & McDonogh, 1993; Lippard, 1997).

Smith (2006b) notes that today, with mobility increasingly becoming a global phenomenon, sense of place is even less dependent on a physical location: immigrant communities recreate their cultural traditions in completely new and different environments (such as Little Italy and China Town) and, to an even bigger extent, leisure and recreation spaces are created from scratch to attract visitors. For this reason, tourism and city planning writers are now calling for a greater attention towards retaining sense of place and avoiding the creation of soulless commodified spaces. The production of these non-places (Augé, 1995) has been variously named, including mcdonaldization (Ritzer, 2000), geography of nowhere (Lippard, 1997) and placelessness (e.g. Entrikin, 1991, Ralph, 1976).

Ryan (2000) usefully noted that, as a consequence of the double (tangible and intangible) nature of tourism place, in tourism research any study that separated place and experience of place would constitute an incomplete analysis, as the two form one, inseparable whole. Despite the unquestioned role of physical elements of space in shaping places, including visitors which shape and are, at the same time, shaped by places (Shaw and Williams, 2004), other factors, such as cultural, relational and social aspects, cannot be overlooked by tourism researchers when looking at space issues. However, according to Hall and Page (2006), 'much of the research on tourism supply in relation to facilities and services is descriptive in content, based on inventories and lists of the facilities and where they are located' (p.127). The approach proposed by Jansen-Verbeke (1985, 1986), for example,

whilst acknowledging the importance of sense of place in the visitor's experience, mainly focuses on physical elements of the tourism environment. According to her (Jansen-Verbeke, 1986), the leisure product encompasses *primary* and *secondary elements*: the former includes all the tourist attractions and main tourist facilities (what she calls *activity place*) plus the physical and socio-cultural characteristics of the place (the *leisure setting*), whereas the latter comprises all the other supporting facilities such as, for instance, shops, restaurants and transport. This approach can however only provide a partial account of the amenities that drive tourism, as it fails to take into account many intangible elements and to consider those (not infrequent) cases in which secondary elements constitute, in fact, a location's main attraction (Shaw and Williams, 1994). Nonetheless, Jansen-Verbeke's method of facility mapping has been very useful in studying interrelationships between demand and supply and between visitors, tourism product and place promoter (public sector) (Hall and Page, 2006). It also shed light on the importance for the tourist experience of the so called secondary elements of leisure space, such as catering and shopping, their spatial relations and role in shaping visitors' behaviour.

Facility mapping, and, more generally, geographic tourism studies, have also highlighted the fundamental role of distance and transport in the development of leisure and tourism districts or towns: distances, as argued by Coppock and Duffield (1975), influence both the scale of demand and the availability of supply, and the interactions between demand and supply within space generate specific patterns of movement. Facility mapping research has established that clustering within districts or linear distributions may occur (Pearce, 1998) and they have explained these trends in terms of accessibility, proximity of various forms of tourism facilities and events, comparative shopping, cost of renting and regulations (Pearce, 1998). More recently, Pearce (e.g. 1998) adopted a supply-side approach for his research on the spatial and functional structure of some Parisian tourism districts, focussing on both functional and spatial associations within each district. His study showed the importance of agglomerations and the role of accessibility, which has a strong impact on the distribution of secondary elements (Pearce, 1998: 63).

An interesting approach to the mapping of places is offered by the work of Kevin Lynch, which also focused on the city's form and on its meanings to its users. In

The Image of the City (1960), Lynch proposes the term *imageability*, ‘that quality in a physical object which gives it a high probability of evoking a strong image in any given observer’ (Lynch, 1960: 9). According to Pacione (2005), Lynch’s *imageability* is precisely that set of characteristics that allow some places to be regarded as distinctive or memorable and therefore have a strong ‘*sense of place*’ (p.210). In particular, Lynch studied the ways in which people make sense of their surroundings, in order to determine whether city users had a coherent image of their environment and develop a theory of what planners should do to attain the correct empathy between space and its users (Pearce and Fagence, 1996). This has particular relevance in tourism, since visitors need to collect a large amount of information on the place they are visiting in a small amount of time, and the information they collect has strong impacts on their feelings and impressions, shaping the image of the place that will be retained (Hall & Page, 2006). Lynch also developed the concept of *legibility*, which is that quality that characterises a city or neighbourhood in which its parts (such as edges, nodes, landmarks) are easily identified and recognisable as belonging to a coherent pattern (Hall & Page, 2006).

However, for the purposes of this research, the most interesting aspect of Lynch’s work is the variety of methods he used to study the perceptions of the environments people have. His three-year work, based in three American cities (Boston, Jersey City and Los Angeles), used recorded interviews, response to photographs and mind maps in order to define how people perceive place character, how they locate landmarks and orientate themselves. In particular, mind maps (free hand sketches of the area people were asked to draw) allowed him to identify five elements that people use to make sense of place: paths (such as streets, pavements, trails), edges (boundaries such as walls, buildings, etc.), districts (recognisable areas having some common, identifying character), nodes (focal points, intersections) and landmarks (identifiable objects such as signs, stores or mountains).

Following Lynch, the use of mind maps has been applied to other disciplines, like for instance environmental psychology, planning and in some rare cases also tourism, mostly in order to assess issues related to orientation and wayfinding (Pearce and Fagence, 1996). One of the first tourism studies employing the use of mental (or cognitive) maps was conducted by P.L. Pearce (1977) and involved an

analysis of sketch maps in order to assess the role of landmarks, paths and districts to first time visitors to Oxford. Later (1981) P.L Pearce conducted another cognitive mapping study, this time in Northern Queensland, Australia, aiming at understanding how people got to know the route leading from Townsville to Cairns (340km). Both studies indicated the importance of experience and learning processes in the development of maps. As expected, people drew more detailed maps after few days of stay in the destination, and drivers showed a better understanding of street routes than passengers. However, in an other similar study conducted in Australia by Walmsley and Jenkins (1992), not only it was shown that drivers had a better understanding of the environment than passengers, but also that people who held a driving licence outperformed those who did not have one, thus confirming the role of personal knowledge in the new environment learning process. Although most tourism studies that employed the use of mental maps focused on way-finding and environment learning, this technique has potential for a much wider spectrum of uses. As noted by Pearce and Fagence (1996: 594), 'while orientation is an easily identified component of Lynch's work, it must be remembered that much of his writing was driven by a desire to improve the physical settings in which people work and play. The original concept of the cognitive map was one tactic to code and record citizen's views of their settings'.

Lynch's work has been criticised for the small sample size of his research (60 respondents in total) and for the difficulties of interpreting mental map results (Hall & Page, 2006). As a matter of fact the sketches are highly idiosyncratic and it could be argued that their accuracy is heavily dependent on the respondent's artistic abilities (Walmsley & Jenkins, 1992). In addition, according to Walmsley & Jenkins (1992), mental maps only focus on visual factors, failing to assess the importance of other stimuli such as olfactory and auditory, and to highlight the meanings people associate to places. Various authors (for instance, Downs and Stea, 1977, Pocock and Hudson, 1978, Dann and Jacobsen, 2002) have highlighted the role of tactile, auditory and olfactory cues in the tourist's experience (Pearce, 2005). These drawbacks could however be overcome –as Lynch has done in his study– through the triangulation of more than one technique (mental maps and interviews for instance). Furthermore other factors like smells or place meanings could be added to the mental maps by the interviewees if they are instructed to mark on the

drawing any element of space that is important to them. According to Pacione (2005), for instance, cognitive mapping does not capture the sense of place, for which a more humanistic approach would be needed: 'whereas traditional means of cognitive mapping provide subjective spatial representations of urban environments, more recently postmodern approaches seek to 'map' the meanings of the city for different 'textual communities' who share common understanding of the 'text'' (Pacione, 2005: 24). Also according to the French philosopher and sociologist Roland Barthes, 'the city is a poem, as has often been said and as Hugo said better than anyone else, but it is not a classical poem, a poem tidily centred on a subject. It is a poem which unfolds the signifier and it is this unfolding that ultimately the semiology of the city should try to grasp and make sign' (Barthes in Leach, ed., 1997: 172).

Conclusion

This chapter aimed to provide a theoretical framework for the analysis of emerging forms of tourism consumption such as the one investigated in the present study. Some of the most interesting and influential sociological approaches to the study of consumption and contemporary tourism were reviewed. Important points for debate appeared to be the search for authenticity, de-differentiation between tourism and other forms of cultural consumption and the increasing appeal of the every-day. Pierre Bourdieu's theory was adopted as a theoretical framework for the analysis of various forms of contemporary tourism and, more generally, leisure consumption.

Some flaws emerged from the use of theories that tend to simplify human behaviour through the use of typologies and categories: while, on the one hand, they seem particularly tempting to the researcher because of their apparently easy applicability to a range of situations, on the other this very applicability means they are unable to describe specific complex phenomena fully. Secondly, as for many of the theories discussed throughout this literature review, the geographical context in which they were developed is a very significant characterising factor, which makes them not necessarily suitable for application to other contexts. These points were kept in mind during analysis and discussion of evidence for this research. However, many of the authors discussed (for instance Jane Jacobs, Kevin Lynch, Pierre Bourdieu)

provided very interesting insights, and their ideas appear as valuable also in a UK context, if applied with care. In particular Kevin Lynch's theories and methods were used as a basis to develop the methodology for the present study, which is, like in Lynch's study, based on sketched maps and interviews. This will be discussed in details in the next two chapters.

5. METHODOLOGY

Introduction

According to Hollinshead (2004) considerations of method should come after considerations of methodology, because ‘methodological issues are those broader matters which need to be addressed with reference to their epistemological and ontological bearings’ (p. 73). Although the author of the present research believes that the choice of methods should primarily depend on the investigation’s aims and research questions, it was deemed important to frame the research methods within a reflexive methodological discussion. Two main reasons underpinned this choice. Firstly, the desire to provide this study with the adequate level of reflexivity and theoretical depth. Several authors (for instance, Delanty, 2005, Jacoby, 1987, Wagner, 1994) have pointed to the contemporary shift from intellectual culture to professional culture in academic research and lamented that this loss of reflexivity is leading to an impoverishment of the social sciences. According to Wagner (1994), the obligation to argue and justify research procedures is much reduced. Delanty (2005) links this trend to a collapse of intellectual culture (as described by Jacoby, 1987), which is leading to a ‘failure of social science to sustain its project’ (p. 3). A second - but equally important - reason for a methodological discussion is the author’s belief that the researcher’s philosophical standpoint, whether openly expressed or not, will always inform her choices of objectives, research questions, methods of investigation and data interpretation. As noted by Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005), even when qualitative research is conducted without a clear reference to theoretical frameworks, the researcher in reality presumes a particular framework, only without acknowledging it. In other words, our beliefs in terms of *ontology* (the nature of reality, that is, the nature of what we aim to investigate) necessarily inform our *epistemology*, meaning our beliefs on how we know about reality. Ontology and epistemology constitute the platform of our *methodology*: ‘those preferred practices and operational partialities (...) which the inquirer should respect as they

go out to find knowledge via the use of particular ‘methods’ or ‘approaches’ to inquiry (Guba, 1990:18). As Hollinshead (2004: 63) expressed it, ‘considerations of being, meaning and identity are the ontological assumptions which inevitably precede the conduct of each and every research study’.

Not only our views on reality and knowledge influence the methods we choose, but objectives and research questions are, in the first place, informed by our worldview. As Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005: 14) point out, ‘different theoretical frameworks direct attention to different aspects of a phenomenon. (...). The general theoretical framework fundamentally shapes the sort of things that the research focuses on and therefore also fundamentally shapes the method and techniques required for the research’. For these reasons the present chapter is aimed to clarify the methodological foundations for the chosen methods (outlined in Chapter 6), linking aim, literature review and the authors’ assumptions in terms of ontology, epistemology and methodology.

Guba (1990: 9, 18) identified four lead ‘basic belief systems’ which rule contemporary science (Hollinshead, 2004): *positivism*, based on a realist ontology; *post-positivism*, underpinned by a critical-realist view of reality; *critical theory*, characterised by an ideologically oriented standpoint; and *constructivism*, with its dialectical outlook on the world’s multiple realities. According to others (for instance, Byrne, 1998, Robson, 2002) positivism with its belief that the purpose of science is to explain reality (Delanty 2005) can be now considered a philosophical standpoint of the past. As Byrne metaphorically put it, ‘Positivism is dead. By now it has gone off and is beginning to smell’ (Byrne, 1998, p. 37 cited in Robson, 2002 p.26). According to Robson (2005), in the current methodological discourse it is typical to isolate two broader strands from a vast number of contemporary approaches to social research: post-positivist and constructivist. To these two, an emancipatory (or critical) approach should be added (Robson, 2002 p.26). In the following sections, the methodological choices of this study, with their epistemological and ontological orientations, will be illustrated. More specifically, these are a qualitative research design based on a case study strategy, underpinned by a relativist ontology and social constructivist (interpretive) epistemology.

Relativism.

According to a relativist ontology, realities only exist as multiple mental constructions: they are 'socially and experientially based, local and specific, dependent for their form and content on the persons who hold them' (Hollinshead, 2004: 76). In other words, reality is not a single objective entity, but it is socially constructed, holistic and contextual (Decrop, 2004).

Taken in its most extreme form, a relativist ontology would imply that there is no external reality independent from our consciousness (Robson, 2002). However, the philosophical standpoint of this research rejects this radical view. Instead, in keeping with a more moderate relativist worldviews (e.g. Robson, 2002, Huges and Sharrock, 1997), it is believed that reality does exist, however its representations are infinite. Therefore reality's accessibility is dependent on each participant's theoretical beliefs, and this, according to Robson (2002), ultimately has the same epistemological consequences as the denial of its external existence. It follows that reality can only be defined subjectively, as it represents an 'interpreted social action' (Robson, 2002: 23).

Smith and Hodkinson (2005) draw attention to two common misrepresentations of the relativistic view. The first is the idea that relativism means all claims to knowledge have equal validity and credibility, leading to an 'anything goes' approach (p.921). This, Smith and Hodkinson (2005: 921) argue, 'is nonsense for one simple reason: no one believes that all things are equal, and no one could lead his or her life guided by that belief'. The second distortion mentioned by the two authors refers to the alleged self refuting nature of relativism: some writers maintain that 'to say that all things are relative is to make a nonrelative or absolute statement and thereby to contradict oneself' (Smith and Hodkinson, 2005: 921). Rorty (1985) questions this statement arguing that it is a mistake to consider relativism as a theory of knowledge, and Smith and Hodkinson (2005) add that relativism 'advances no pretense that we can escape our finite (or time-and-place-constrained) condition of being in the world' (p. 921).

Although relativism does not represent a theory of knowledge, as a philosophical position towards reality, it has important methodological implications. Several approaches to research are based on a relativist standpoint. Namely, interpretive epistemologies and qualitative methods are generally associated with a relativist view, as they distinguish themselves from the realist (post)positivist approaches that view reality as an objectively defined entity. In the following sections some of these theoretical frameworks, and more specifically the ones adopted within this study, will be presented in greater detail.

Social constructivism.

Constructivism has been described by different authors either as an equivalent label for the *interpretive theoretical approach* or as a branch of it. Crotty (1998), for instance, considers *symbolic interaction*, *hermeneutics*, *phenomenology* and *constructivism* as different epistemologies all belonging to the interpretive theoretical framework (based on a relativist ontology). On the other hand, Robson (2005) considers *interpretive approach*, *naturalistic approach* and *constructivism* as different names to identify one same epistemology. To avoid unnecessary confusion, the term constructivism will be adopted in the current study to refer to the theoretical framework generally associated with qualitative research and described in the present section.

Constructivists, as heirs of the relativist tradition (Robson, 2002), view reality as individually constructed, and so does the author of the present study. Therefore, the present research is underpinned by belief that ‘social reality is not something outside the discourse of science but is partly constituted by science’ (Delanty, 2005: 147). As advocated in the constructivist tradition, in the present study ‘the subject is seen an active agent as opposed to the passive conception of subjectivity in the value-free social science of positivism and hermeneutics’ (Delanty 2005 p.147). However, it must also be said that constructivism, despite having its origins in the idealist philosophical traditions of Hume and Kant, differs from epistemological *idealism* as it does not bear the opinion that reality is a creation of the mind (Delanty, 2005). In Botterill’s words, constructivists (including the present researcher) ‘would accept of course an objective social reality outside of

science, but would stress as crucial how social actors construct their reality' (2001: 211).

The question of the social context of knowledge, that is, the extent to which social science can actually provide understanding of a socially constructed reality, is according to Delanty (2005) one of the most important issues raised by constructivism. In the constructivist view, reality can be known only through the lenses of our cognitive structures, and therefore the knowledge provided by social science is a

‘mediated knowledge; it is a mediation of science and reality. (...) Our knowledge of social reality is a construction of social science in the sense that social scientific knowledge is a reflexive knowledge which constitutes its object – [although] the object, social reality, exists independently of what social scientists do’ (Delanty 2005: 137 and 139).

Delanty (2005) identifies three main branches within the constructivist tradition: *radical constructivism*, *social constructionism*, and *scientific (or social) constructivism*. *Radical constructivism* originated in the 1970s from the philosophy of Ernst Glaserfeld, but its roots lie in the cybernetic tradition and the work of the psychologist Jean Piaget (Delanty, 2005). Radical constructivists think reality (viewed as an information-processing system) is ‘an endless process of constructing information in order for a system to distinguish itself from its environment’ (Delanty, 2005: 141).

On the other hand, *social constructionism* (as opposed to constructivism) is ‘the ‘weak’ argument that social science is principally concerned with interpreting the process by which social reality is constructed by social actors’ (Delanty, 2005: 140). This also implies that science should be seen as historically constituted and that social factors shape scientific knowledge. However, it must be noted that the terms constructionism and constructivism are increasingly used interchangeably in social science. Finally, social (or scientific) constructivism, which is the approach embraced by the researcher of the present study, claims that science is individually constructed, meaning not only that social factors influence knowledge, but also that the actual content of science (as opposed to its external

form) may in fact be constructed by social actors (Delanty, 2005). The epistemological implication of this paradigm is that findings are the creation of a process of interaction between inquirer and inquired, which constitute a singular entity (Hollinshead, 2004: 76). Since, according to the (social) constructivist epistemology, the researcher and the subject of the inquiry together contribute to the construction of science, a consistent research design should be one that 'focuses on the complex and nuanced process of the creation and maintenance of meaning' (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005: 2). Qualitative research, with its focus on the contextualised nature of experience and action (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005), is generally associated (among other epistemologies) with the social constructivist paradigm. Its general features and the reasons why it was chosen as the most appropriate approach for the present study, are illustrated in the next section.

A qualitative (flexible) research design.

In social science literature, two names have been used to label interpretative research designs: qualitative and flexible. According to Robson, these two words well capture the two main features of such designs: the fact that such methods result in qualitative data (frequently in the form of words) and that much less pre-specification occurs (thus flexible) (Robson, 2002). Robson finds the label 'flexible' more accurate because some inquiries of this kind may as well employ methods which generate quantitative data (Robson, 2002). However, since most authors utilize the name 'qualitative' this latter term will be adopted for the present study.

Generally, qualitative research is, as in the case of the present research, underpinned by an interpretive orientation, and it focuses on the complex construction of meanings and on interpretation (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005). According to Flick (2006), the loss of modern sense of certainty (what Habermas, 1996, called *new obscurity*), and the growing individualisation of ways of living, which together led to a 'pluralisation of life worlds, lies behind the relevance of qualitative research to study social relations' (p. 11).

Often, qualitative methods have been developed as a critique of quantitative research (Flick, 2006) and saying that one is a qualitative researcher has been used as a statement to say not-quantitative (Silverman, 2006: 33). Qualitative researchers claim that we should not assume that quantitative methods are the only 'right' methods of doing research, and that some of these methods may in fact be inappropriate to study social phenomena (Silverman, 2006). For the current research, which is exploratory in nature, methods based on operational variables and large surveys were deemed inappropriate, since they exclude the observation of behaviour in everyday situations and can overlook basic social processes (Silverman 2006). While quantitative research is concerned with establishing relations between variables, qualitative research allows the inquirer to study specific phenomena which would be unavailable elsewhere (Silverman 2006). Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005) highlight another important characteristic of qualitative methods that was seen as particularly beneficial for this research: the ability to 'generate analyses that are detailed, 'thick', and integrative' (in the sense of relating individual events and interpretations to larger meanings and patterns) (p.2). Other features of qualitative research, typically claimed in methodology literature, are: soft (opposed to hard quantitative), subjective (opposed to objective), political (vs. value-free), speculative (vs. hypothesis testing) and grounded (vs. abstract) (Silverman 2006: 35). However, Silverman (2006) also highlights how the typical characteristics of both types of research design, can be seen alternatively as advantages or weaknesses depending on the point of view. Flexibility of qualitative designs, for instance, could encourage the inquirer to be innovative but, for others, it could also mean 'lack of structure' (p.35).

Flick (2006) identifies a number of essential features that distinguish qualitative research, which seem particularly relevant to the present study. Firstly, in qualitative research the goal is not to test existing theories, but the central quality criteria depend on the findings being grounded in empirical material, the methods being appropriately selected and applied, as well as the relevance of findings (Flick, 2006). Secondly, qualitative inquiries need to demonstrate the variety of perspectives involved. Thirdly, Flick stresses the active role of researchers, their subjectivity and the reflexivity of the researcher and the research. This implies that both subjects' and researcher's subjectivities are taken into account, and both

the researcher's reflexive thoughts and the subjects' reflections form part of the research process (Flick, 2006). 'Researchers' reflections on their actions and observations in the field, their impressions, irritations, feelings and so on, become data in their own right, forming part of the interpretation' (Flick, 2006: 16). These two latter features constitute very important qualities of the present study, in which each subject's feelings and thoughts were individually transcribed, studied and interpreted, and the researcher's reflections on the fieldwork experience were utilised to complement the data. Finally, qualitative research is characterised by the variety of approaches (Flick, 2006, Robson, 2002).

Qualitative designs can take different forms (e.g. case study, ethnography, grounded theory, participatory action research, etc.) and they can be underpinned by a variety of theoretical positions (constructivist, hermeneutic, feminist, phenomenological, etc.). This is one of the reasons why they are also referred to as 'flexible designs', and why they can be especially suitable for mixed-design methodologies and triangulation of methods (which may even mix qualitative and quantitative tactics) (Robson, 2006). the present study involved the combination of two qualitative methods (semi-structured interviews and mental maps) and a number of different subjects (tourists to London, Londoners and creative entrepreneurs). As will be illustrated in the next chapter, this research aims at examining the subtle links between the perceptions of producers and consumers and the qualities of the area, themes that cannot be currently quantified or categorised and that therefore require a qualitative approach. Besides, the necessity of an in-depth analysis versus the risk of conducting a superficial, descriptive study, unable to effectively contribute to policy development or to the theoretical debate, led the methodological choice of an entirely qualitative research design.

According to Robson (2005), three research designs appear especially appropriate for 'real world research': ethnographic studies, grounded theory studies and case studies. Ethnographic studies seek to 'capture, interpret and explain how a group, organization or community live, experience and make sense of their lives and their world' (Robson, 2002: 89). Typical features include the selection of a particular group or community to study, the researcher's immersion in that

environment and the use of participant observation (Robson, 2002). In grounded theory studies, ‘the central aim is to generate theory from data collected during the study’ (Robson, 2002: 90). The main characteristics of grounded theory are, according to Robson, the fact of being applicable to a wide variety of phenomena, being systematic yet flexible and to provide detailed prescriptions for analysis (and theory generation). Grounded theory research designs are generally based on interviews. Finally, case studies involve the ‘development of detailed, intensive knowledge about a single ‘case’, or of a smaller number of related ‘cases’’ (Robson, 2002: 89). In case study research one or few cases are selected and studied in its context through a variety of methods ranging from observation and interviews to document analysis.

For the present research, two main elements led the researcher’s choice towards a case study design. On one hand, the objective of generating an in-depth analysis of an emerging phenomenon. On the other, the fact that London, both home to some of the highest spatial concentrations of creative industries in the world and at the same time a leading tourism destination, could provide some excellent examples of the phenomenon taking place. In the next section the characteristics of the selected research design will be exposed in more details.

A case study strategy.

Case studies are a widespread way to do qualitative research, although their essence is not necessarily only qualitative (Stake, 2003). In particular, they have been a common research strategy in the fields of psychology, sociology, political science, social work, business and community planning (Yin, 2003, p. 2). It should be noted, however, that case study is a strategy (or an approach) and not a method such as observation or interview (Robson, 2002). As Yin pointed out, a case study is only one of several ways of conducting research, other strategies being, for instance, experiments, surveys, histories and the analysis of archival information (Yin, 2003: 1). According to Yin (2003) case studies are the most appropriate strategy when the investigation aims to answer ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions, when the researcher has little control over events, and when the study focuses on a contemporary, real-life phenomenon (like in the present case). Yin

(2003), who has written a great deal on the case study approach and attempted to revive it as a serious research strategy (Robson, 2002), also provides a useful definition:

‘A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident’ (Yin, 2003: 13).

A case study approach appeared to be the most appropriate strategy to conduct the present research, which is characterised by:

1. Being a contemporary phenomenon. This research does not intend to reveal the historic tourism development of four creative London areas, its aim is to investigate the dynamics and processes happening now.
2. Having a real-life context. Urban development and the acts of visiting and experiencing places are all real-life situations (as opposed, for instance, to the study of a literary movement or a mathematical formula);
3. Having unclear boundaries between phenomenon and context. In the case of tourism the distinction between what is being studied (for instance, tourists’ perceptions and behaviours) and place dynamics (its context) are typically very weak, in many cases non-existent. In the particular case of this research, the research questions stretch from a phenomenon focus (visitors’ characteristics, motivations and behaviours) to a context focus (characteristics of space, relation production/consumption). This seems also to be consistent with the constructivist standpoint underpinning the study (social actors, context and researcher cannot be isolated).

Another fundamental characteristic of the case study strategy, according to Robson (2005) is the fact of being focused on the particular: ‘the *case* is the situation, individual, group, organization or whatever it is that we are interested in’ (Robson, 2002, p. 177, italic in the original). As Miles and Huberman (1994) suggested, in some circumstances the term ‘site’ might be preferable (as opposed to case study), ‘because it reminds us that a ‘case’ always occurs in a specified social and physical setting: we cannot study individual cases devoid of their context in a way that a quantitative researcher often does’ (p. 27, as quoted in Robson, 2002: 179). In the specific case of this inquiry, the term ‘site’ seems

especially appropriate, since the four case studies are actually individuated as geographically delimited spaces. Finally, an important characteristic of case study strategies is that they are generally driven by a need to understand complex social phenomena: case studies enable researchers ‘to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events’ (Yin, 2003: 2).

Criticisms of Case Study Research Designs

Two major criticisms have been most frequently brought forward when evaluating case study research designs. A first concern has been the lack of rigour of some research projects based on case studies (Yin, 2003). This lack of rigour appeared to be caused to a great extent by the unsystematic or sloppy procedures followed by the researcher, and not by the case study approach in itself (Yin, 2003). With qualitative research methods in particular there seems to be a higher risk of conducting unsystematic research, since such methods are, by definition, flexible. The author of the present research, however, strongly believes that quantitative and qualitative methods can be equally prone to error, if the researcher fails to be rigorous when designing the enquiry, collecting evidence, and analysing the data. For instance, during data collection for this research, particular attention was placed on the validity of data collection and analysis methods. Every piece of evidence and every subject were treated with equal attention and approached with systematic procedures, even though they were considered unique and idiosyncratic elements of a whole. Also, to avoid biases, the researcher decided to avoid setting hypotheses or initial statements about expected findings, and tried as much as possible to approach the research with no pre-conceptions. Finally, maximum care was taken to report all evidence and findings fairly.

The other concern that seems to haunt researchers with regards to case study design is that they provide little basis for generalisation (Yin, 2003). Generalisation is a standard aim in quantitative research, and generally achieved through statistical sampling (Silverman, 2005). In case study research instead (especially if based on qualitative methods), case studies are normally not chosen on a random basis, and samples are not selected using statistical techniques. In some cases, generalisability within the case study may be possible, a quality often

referred to as ‘internal generalisability’ (Robson, 2002). However, in the specific case of this study, even internal generalisability (in a statistical sense) was not possible. ‘Transferability’ (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004; Flick, 2006) seems instead a more appropriate terminology for this research, which was aiming to analyse in depth four specific case studies, in order to shed light on an emerging phenomenon and provide a basis for better understanding of similar phenomena in other areas, other times or other cities.

Conclusion

This chapter aimed to provide a methodological framework for the present study, which is characterised by a qualitative research design based on a case study strategy. The methods utilised for the present research were chosen according to criteria of appropriateness for the research’s aim and research questions. Nonetheless, it is believed that the researcher’s epistemological standpoint exercises an impact on the research design, since her philosophical view necessarily informs any methodological choice. The constructivist approach is seen by the author as the closest to her belief system. Her view of reality (ontology) is that anything our mind perceives is dependent on our previous experiences, beliefs, and personal characteristics. This fact, however, is not seen by the researcher as an obstacle to good research: on the contrary, since reality is multiple and individually constructed, the work of every single researcher appears to be even more important as it contributes to the creation of a sound body of knowledge that, through a multiplicity of methods and approaches, can help the understanding of such a complex entity. Since reality is here seen as constructed by individual actors, one of the most important preoccupations of this research has been to analyse how these individual actors and their perceptions of the studied phenomenon contribute to its formation and development. Therefore, an approach based on the contextualised nature of experience and action, which would allow a deep exploration of human perceptions and behaviours in a specific context, appears to be the most appropriate.

6. METHODS

Introduction

The phenomenon of tourism development in creative non-central urban areas appears to be still at a very early stage, and little is known about its dynamics (notable exceptions are, for example, Evans, 2007; Shaw et al. 2004; Huning and Novy, 2006). Particularly, in the case of the four London areas chosen as case studies (Spitalfields, London Fields, Hoxton/Shoreditch and Deptford), existing tourism research is mainly limited to marketing studies (Briggs, 2005, Tour East London, 2005a and 2005b). A deeper analysis of tourist perceptions, social dynamics and space/users relationship appears to be missing. Only in the case of Spitalfields has research on tourism development been previously conducted, mainly focusing on its ethnic or cosmopolitan character (e.g. Shaw et al. 2004; Brown, 2006; Eade, 2002).

The present study aims to interrogate, contribute to, and for the first time, bring together, theories on tourism, agglomeration, creative industries and urban form. The overall aim is to explore the role played by London's creative business clusters in the development of urban tourism. In order to focus the scope of this research on specific aspects of the studied phenomenon, the overall aim was organised in three research questions:

- What are the characteristics of tourists visiting these areas? Can they be described as creative themselves?
- What is the relationship between cultural production and consumption in developing tourism in creative areas? What is the role played by the cultural and creative industries in this development?
- How does the configuration of urban space affect the development of tourism in creative areas?

The methodology chosen in order to answer these research questions is a qualitative case study research, based on face-to-face interviews with visitors, mental maps sketched by visitors, and in depth-interviews with local creative entrepreneurs. The chosen methods are discussed in the following sections.

Research Methods

The background of this study touches a number of different fields, including economic and human geography, tourism, environmental psychology and urban regeneration. In economics, research is mostly based on quantitative data and on the development of models. However, this type of outcome was not sought within the present study. Also tourism research is traditionally linked to quantitative sociological studies (Botterill, 2001), although this trend has been changing in recent years with tourism studies moving towards the recognition of qualitative methods as valid tools in understanding tourism mobilities. As this study mainly involves the exploration of human perceptions, attitudes, choices and (inter)actions, to discuss these aspects systematically with the subjects involved seemed to be the most effective way of achieving the research aims. This study aims at examining the subtle links between the perceptions of producers and consumers and the qualities of the area, themes that cannot be quantified and that require a qualitative approach. Following these considerations, a qualitative methodology based on face-to-face interviews (with visitors and creative entrepreneurs) and cognitive maps was deemed the most appropriate to attain the research aims. Qualitative data can complement the existing quantitative data on tourism in the four case study areas (such as Briggs, 2005, Tour East London, 2005a and Tour East London, 2005b), and provide rich material for an in-depth analysis of such a complex reality. In order to tackle the built environment and spatial dimension of this research (see research question 3), a cognitive mapping technique was also selected as a research method for this study.

Choice of case study areas

The present doctoral research stemmed from the author's interest in the development of post-industrial areas in cities, and the decision to analyse tourism development in London was taken before the specific choice of research questions. After considering a number of potential topics related to the development of urban tourism in London, the theme of the creative industries' role in this development was selected as the most appropriate. Only then, a number of potential case study areas were identified, and the final four were then selected using a purposive sampling technique. The most important criterion for the selection of case study areas (besides being in London and non-centrally located) was the existence of a high concentration of creative industries, following the researcher's definition of 'creative clusters' as geographic concentrations of interconnected creative companies and institutions. Since there is no recognised definition of what a 'high concentration' is, this aspect was assessed through the review of relevant policy documents and academic papers, and through informal interviews with creative entrepreneurs and academics. After a preliminary list of creative clusters in London had been developed, other criteria were applied to choose the final four case studies. Firstly, consistent with the researcher's interest in post-industrial districts and regeneration, it was decided to limit the studied areas to East London. The East side of London is the area that, since the 1970s, has been most severely affected by de-industrialisation and it still remains the most deprived (National Statistics, 2007). Secondly, it was decided to select one area that appeared to be already on the tourist map, in order to have at least one case where tourism activity was certainly observable, and to use it as a pilot case. Spitalfields, which appears in most London guide books for its markets and Bangladeshi restaurants, was then chosen as the first case study. Hoxton/Shoreditch and London Fields were then selected. They were chosen because - according to a number of informal exploratory interviews with creative workers and people interested in contemporary art- they were emerging as very well-known hubs of creative industries. Also, they seemed to constitute interesting cases because very little evidence of tourism activity in those areas existed. Finally, two main reasons led to the choice of Deptford, situated in South-East London. Firstly, the desire to move away from the north-east part of London (known as the 'East-End'), an area

which is already well-known among young Londoners for its creative industries and night-life. Secondly, the fact that from the initial exploratory interviews most people, including Londoners, did not seem to have any knowledge of this area or its creative activities.

To conclude, it must be noted the chosen areas were not believed to be necessarily the most creative in London nor the ones with the absolute highest concentration of creative industries. Simply, consistently with the purposive sampling technique utilized, they were chosen because their characteristics seemed to be coherent with the focus of the research, as well as interesting to compare because of their apparent dissimilar stages of tourism development. In the next sections, the specific methods that were used for data collection and analysis will be illustrated, and the fieldwork described.

Face-to-face interviews

After comparing, both theoretically and through a pilot study, the ability of various methods to provide relevant evidence for the research questions, alongside their advantages, limitations and practical feasibility, interviewing was chosen as the leading method for this qualitative research. During an interview conversation the interviewer initiates the dialogue in order to obtain research-relevant information and focuses ‘on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction or explanation’ (Cohen and Manion, 1989: 307). A fundamental advantage of carrying out an enquiry involving humans is indeed the fact that they can tell you things about themselves (Robson, 2002). As highlighted earlier, the most important aspect of this study has been the exploration of visitors’ characteristics, choices and (inter)actions, as well as their perceptions of place. In addition, the views and perceptions of some local creative entrepreneurs were investigated, in order to analyse the social dynamics of a creative cluster (e.g. collaboration, competition, networks) and relate them to tourism development. Given the complex and interrelated nature of the issues to be analysed, to discuss them systematically with the subjects involved appeared to be the most effective way of addressing the aims of this research. Details on the questions asked and on

how they relate to aims and objectives of this study are provided in the Evidence Analysis chapters (also see complete topic guides in Appendix I, II and III).

Often research methods literature differentiates between trying to find out what people know, do, think or feel (Robson, 2002). This, according to Robson (2002: 228), ‘leads, respectively, to questions concerned with *facts*, with *behaviour*, and with *beliefs* or *attitudes*’. In the case of the present study, however, the evidence collected belonged to all of these categories: facts such as visitors characteristics and behaviours, beliefs (what people think and feel about certain aspects of the area or of its development) and attitudes (for instance, visitors and creative industries towards each other). The methods therefore had to be flexible and allow a deep insight on a very wide range of topics: for these reasons face-to-face interviews were selected over other interviewing techniques such as e-mail interviews.

The main strength of face-to-face interviews is precisely their flexibility (Robson, 2002) and validity. Face-to-face interviews allowed the researcher to modify her questions according to the interviewee’s answer, which provided two fundamental advantages. On the one hand, it allowed a deeper exploration of particularly interesting or unexpected themes, on the other, it enabled the clarification of possible interviewees’ doubts, thus ensuring greater validity of the data collected (Jordan and Gibson, 2004). For instance, certain terms such as ‘creative cluster’ and ‘cultural district’ needed in some cases further explanation by the interviewer, whereas some generic yet key concepts such as *cool* or *atmosphere* often came about in the conversations requiring the request of additional details from the interviewee. In addition, and also as a result of this flexibility, face-to-face interviews can provide rich and illuminating material (Robson, 2002).

A drawback of interviewing’s flexibility and depth is this method’s lack of standardisation, which renders the results less comparable and makes it more difficult to avoid biases. In particular, a weakness is that ‘the researcher may consciously or unconsciously steer the interviewee towards expressing views that agree with the research themes sought’ (Jordan and Gibson, 2004: 222). Also, such flexibility makes the research more difficult to replicate, thus raising

concerns about reliability (Jordan and Gibson, 2004; Robson, 2002). However, as Silverman (2001) pointed out, authenticity rather than reliability is often the issue in qualitative research. ‘The aim is usually to gather an authentic understanding of people’s experiences and it is believed that open-ended questions are the most effective route towards this end’ (Silverman, 2001: 13). In addition, ‘the personal nature of interviews may enable the researcher to develop empathy with participants thereby creating a more comfortable environment for both parties’ (Jordan and Gibson, 2004: 222). The latter advantage was particularly evident in the context of this research, as most interviewees (both visitors and creative entrepreneurs) seemed to feel extremely comfortable and able to express themselves in a very spontaneous way.

In order to counter the comparability problem, a semi-structured interviewing approach was chosen for this enquiry. Semi-structured interviews are those in which a set of questions are identified in advance, but the researcher is free to modify their order or wording, add new questions or include explanations, based on what appears as most appropriate following the conversation with the interviewee (Robson, 2002). The semi-structured approach enables a greater comparability across interviews, still providing rich, descriptive data, which allow a deep exploration of possible interconnections between experiences and views (Jordan and Gibson, 2004). Another weakness of face-to-face interviewing is the fact that it is time consuming, both for the researcher and the interviewees. As in regards to the former, this did not constitute a serious barrier for the present study, it being a three-year research project. However, the time issue can indeed be a problem when it comes to obtaining co-operation from potential interviewees. The advantages and limitations of in-depth, semi-structured interviewing are summarised in Table 6.1 (page 104).

Table 6.1- Summary of advantages and limitations of in-depth, semi-structured interviewing

	Advantages	Limitations
Face-to-face interviews (general)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexible - High validity - Provides rich material - Allows a more authentic understanding of people experiences - Allows to read body language - More comfortable environment due to personal encounter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data collected are less comparable - the researcher may consciously or unconsciously steer the interviewee towards expressing views that agree with the research themes sought - More difficult to replicate (raises concerns about reliability) - Difficult to rule out biases - Difficulty of obtaining co-operation from potential interviewees - Time consuming - Requires training and confidence
Semi-structured face-to-face interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - greater comparability across interviews - allow a deep exploration of possible interconnections between experiences and views - especially helpful for inexperienced researchers 	

Sources: Jordan and Gibson, 2004; Silverman, 2001; Robson, 2002; Cohen and Manion, 1989

Mental mapping

At the end of the interview, visitors were provided with a blank sheet of paper and a marker, and asked if they wanted to draw a map of the area as they remembered it, marking any landmarks or elements that are important to them. This technique, known as cognitive mapping, mental mapping or sketch maps, was first developed by the urban planning writer Kevin Lynch (1960), as discussed in Chapter 4. Following Lynch's seminal work, this method was applied to other disciplines, mostly in order to assess issues related to orientation and wayfinding. However, the original purpose of this technique was to study people's perceptions of their environments in order to improve the physical settings in which they work and play (Pearce and Fagence, 1996).

The main advantage of using sketch maps (or mental maps), which explains the choice of this technique for this specific research, is that the drawings are very spontaneous, and were believed to reflect in a realistic way the elements that remained etched in the drawer's memory. On the other hand, one of the main criticisms of this technique is the difficulty of interpreting sketch map results (Hall and Page, 2006). This aspect constituted a problem for the present study, since analysing the drawings without resorting to quantitative methods (such as counting landmarks and recurrent elements) proved to be quite a difficult task (see discussion on sketch map analysis, page 116). In addition, sketches can be highly idiosyncratic and critics argue that their accuracy is heavily dependent on the respondent's artistic abilities or willingness to draw (Walmsley and Jenkins, 1992). This drawback emerged as an actual benefit in the case of the present study, since many of the subjects revealed to be creative people (such as architects, designers and art students) who suffered no inhibition and seemed glad to draw, providing highly symbolic, detailed and even artistic maps.

A further critique of this method, namely sketch maps' mainly physical nature (thus their failure to highlight place meanings), did not fully apply to the present study, since people tended to represent their feelings and perceptions on their maps through the use of symbols. In addition, it must be noted that the maps were never analysed as independent items, but always in relation to the drawer's

interview. This allowed for a deeper analysis, counteracting the recognised disadvantage of a lack of meaning and detail (it should be also noted that Lynch himself utilised this method in combination with interviews). Examining the outcomes of visitors' sketch maps together with their interviews allowed a sounder understanding of people's perceptions of the area, and provided a spatial dimension to explore how the configuration of urban space effects the development of tourism. For instance, through maps it was possible to better understand the perceived position of an area (central, peripheral, etc.) as well as its boundaries and points of access. In addition, most interviewees seemed to find drawing their own representation of the area an entertaining activity, thus relaxing the atmosphere and stimulating further discussion on the subject. Advantages and disadvantages of this method are summarised in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2- Summary of advantages and limitation of Sketch Maps

Advantages	Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spontaneous, high validity; • can provide an opportunity for further discussion on the area and its amenities; • allows better understanding of perceived location and boundaries of the represented area; • it represent an innovative method in tourism research; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • difficulties of interpreting the results; • sketches are highly idiosyncratic • accuracy is heavily dependent on the respondent's artistic abilities; • focus only on visual factors (excluding smells, etc.); • may fail to reveal meanings attributed to places;

Sources: Lynch; 1960; Walmsley and Jenkins, 1992; Hall and Page, 2006; Pearce and Fagence, 1996

Pilot Study

In order to test and improve the methods selected for this research, a pilot study was conducted in the area of Spitalfields during a period of two months (between 20th November 2007 and 20th January 2008). The methods selected for the pilot

were in-depth interviews with visitors and sketch maps. The Spitalfields area was chosen for the pilot study as it appeared to be the most developed of the four case studies in terms of tourism, thus allowing easier contact with visitors. The specific aims of the pilot were to trial interview protocols and procedures, including:

- to test the methods previously selected: notably, to verify their appropriateness in order to answer research questions and their feasibility;
- to identify the best technique to approach visitors and to define a tactic for the interviews: location (e.g. in the street or in bars, galleries, etc.), budget, criterion for choosing interviewees, wording of questions.

Ten interviews with visitors to the area were conducted during the pilot study. As in the final fieldwork, 'visitor' was defined as any person staying in the area for three hours or longer, who did not live or work there. Three types of location were tried for the interviews: open-air public spaces such as the street or benches, cafes and restaurants, and the entrance of an exhibition space. The street would have been a good location in terms of randomness of the interviewees' choice, but weather conditions and the lack of comfort represented a major problem. The art exhibition (on Brick Lane) had two main flaws: the very narrow target (only contemporary art lovers) and the position (standing, although not outside). It was nonetheless especially interesting to hear the views of some contemporary art gallery patrons and, despite the position, they all showed to be especially cooperative. The most successful locations in terms of response and quality of the interview (length and detail) were all those where the visitors were already sitting and looked relaxed. Interviews that were made in these conditions, although taken in a number of different places located in various parts of the pilot area (a Moroccan restaurant, a bar, a take-away inside the old Spitalfields market, a bench in the shopping mall), obtained a response rate close to 100% and good interview quality.

Visitors were approached and provided with some information about the research. They were asked if they were available for an interview and where they came from (including the area if from London). Then the consent form was explained to them and they were asked to sign it. The interviews, guided by open questions (see full topic guide in Appendix I and II), were recorded with a digital device and

generally lasted between 10 and 30 minutes (excluding introduction, drawing the map, etc.). In many cases the interviewees showed interest in the research topic and afterwards asked questions about the study.

Biscuits or chocolates were offered during the interview. Interviewees showed good response to this type of reward, expressing appreciation which possibly led to a greater collaboration. Each interview was recorded with a digital recording device. Although it was taken into account that recording may alarm some interviewees and slightly alter what they say (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998), this technique represented a very useful tool in the case of this research. Recording allowed the researcher to capture every word said by the informer (and also other sounds such as the tone of voice, laughter, etc.). As noted by Taylor and Bogdan (1998), during interviews (in contrast with other methods such as observation) the informants are aware of the fact that their words are being studied, therefore recording has a lower impact on the interview's outcome.

At the end of the interview, visitors were asked to draw a map of the area, marking on it landmarks or anything that was important to them or that they remembered. Generally people seemed to enjoy this part of the interview very much, they smiled and drew with passion. For many, it was a chance to describe the area in further details, whereas others regretted not being able to draw a good map because they did not know the area well enough. Repeat visitors (Londoners, in most cases) could draw much more detailed maps than first time visitors, whose maps often only represented one or two streets, the market and a couple of shops. All the maps were nonetheless interesting, as they showed what really marks people's attention.

After the pilot study, the final topic guide for interviews was devised: changes made to the pilot study topic guide were minimal, and the same instruments (such as recording device, markers used to draw maps) were kept for the main study. Then data collection started (since the data collected during the pilot was not considered for final analysis). This included interviews with visitors (and sketch maps) and with creative entrepreneurs in the four case studies. In the next section

the practicalities of primary research are discussed, with an attempt to keep a reflexive approach throughout.

Main Study: Interviews with visitors and sketch maps.

Table 6.3- Summary of fieldwork

	Time of fieldwork	Total number of visitors interviewed	Number of visitors interviewed (UK + overseas)	Number of visitors interviewed (from London)	Number of Creative entrepreneurs interviewed
Pilot Study (Spitalfields)	November 2007	10	4	6	/
Spitalfields (excl. pilot)	November 2007-March 2008	42	17	25	5
Hoxton/Shoreditch	January-May 2008	34	17	17	6
London Fields	June-July 2008	39	7	32	5
Deptford	August-October 2008	17	7	10	6
Total	November 2007-October 2008	142	52	90	22

Semi-structured face-to-face interviews with visitors were conducted in the four case-study areas between November 2007 and October 2008. In accordance with

the United Nations World Tourism Organisation definitional framework (UNWTO, 1995), for the purposes of this research any person (whether London resident or not) undertaking a non-routine trip of three or more hours to the area where the interview was taking place was considered a ‘visitor’. Residents and people who worked in the area were excluded. In addition, in order to distinguish Londoners from tourists to London (as the topic guides for these two categories were slightly different, see Appendices I and II), any person who was in London for ‘not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within [London]’ was considered a tourist (UNWTO, 1995: 21). As a consequence, interviewees were either Londoners who were paying a visit of three or more hours to the area, day trippers and overnight visitors to London who paid one or more visits to the area within their stay, or overnight visitors to the area. The latter case was initially expected to be a rare occurrence, however it revealed to be not as rare, as several interviewees were staying as guests with friends who lived in the area.

To build a sound analysis of the case studies and to consider a varied range of visitors, potential interviewees were approached in a number of public places. Following a purposive sampling technique developed as a result of the pilot study, people who seemed relaxed and in a comfortable position were preferred. Interview locations included shopping precincts (such as markets or shopping areas), open public spaces (streets, squares, green spaces, canal in London Fields); and cafes/bars. The interviewer first addressed people asking them if they lived or worked in the area. If they answered no they were asked whether they would like to take a short interview. Once consent to proceed was obtained, the interviewer introduced herself and briefly explained the use of data in accordance with ethical privacy codes. Often, interviewees showed interest in the project and asked more details on the research objectives. In that case, details were provided only after the interview, in order to avoid influencing their answers (this was also explained to them). An informed consent sheet (Appendix IV) had been prepared for the interviewees to sign. On the form, they were asked to indicate their normal place of residence (for Londoners the first half of their post code), profession, gender and age.

In qualitative research there are generally no rules in terms of sample size (Quinn Patton, 1990). According to Taylor and Bogdan (1998: 92) ‘qualitative interviewing calls for a flexible research design. Neither the number nor the type of informants needs to be specified beforehand (...) the size of the sample in an interviewing study is something that should be determined toward the end of the research and not at the beginning’. However, for the present study between thirty and forty visitors per case study were aimed to be interviewed. This aim was achieved for all the case studies except Deptford (see Table 6.3, page 109), due to the extremely low presence of visitors in that area. Interviews lasted between 15 minutes and one hour. According to Silverman (2001) an interview that lasts shorter than 30 minutes is unlikely to be valuable. Nonetheless, in the specific case of this research, short interviews appeared to be the most appropriate technique. As a matter of fact, interviews could not be planned in advance because visitors had to be found and interviewed *in situ* in order to get their fresh impressions and feelings on the area (especially for sketch maps it was vital to conduct the interview during their visit). Therefore, the impossibility of planning the interviews at a convenient time for the interviewee together with the fact that most visitors spent less than 5 hours in the area made it impossible for the interviewer to ask them a commitment of more than one hour. In addition, already from the pilot study it was noted that even an interview of 15 minutes could achieve a satisfactory level of depth and cover all the topics required.

In contrast with many interviewing situations in which researcher and respondent come from very different social backgrounds, in the case of this research most interviewees turned out to have much in common with the researcher: both, in fact, lived in London, were between 20 and 35 years of age and had a high level of education. It could be argued that interviewees and researchers have similar socio-demographic characteristics because only visitors with those characteristics accepted the interview. However, this statement does not fully apply to the present research, since nearly all the people asked accepted to do the interview, and the researcher approached for the interview any person she met who was sitting down or standing in the selected locations. Silverman (2001) outlines the difference between the positivist interviewing approach, in which interviewer and subjects are treated as objects (not emotionally involved) and the humanistic approach,

which favours interviews where the two parties ‘become ‘peers’ or even ‘companions’ ‘ (Reason and Rowen, 1981: 205). In the present study the peer-to-peer relationship between researcher and interviewees was not especially sought after (as it is, for instance, in the emotionalist approach, see Silverman, 2001). However, the fact that the researcher had a similar background to the subjects showed several benefits, in terms of language used (no need to change register for instance) and ease of understanding. Also, the atmosphere during the interview conversation appeared to be especially relaxed, which arguably allowed a more naturalistic dialogue. The researcher is not an English native speaker, and this appeared to be an advantage in some cases in which the interviewees felt intimidated by the fact that their English was ‘not too good’.

At the end of the interview, visitors were provided with a blank sheet of paper and a marker, and asked if they wanted to draw a map of the area as they remembered it, marking on it any landmarks or elements that were important to them. As previously discussed (page 105-106), interviewees seemed happy to represent their own image of the area on paper, especially since many of them worked in the creative field. The drawing was often the stimulus for further discussion on their visitor experience and on the area’s characteristics, and in some cases the drawings included comments and symbols (for example ugly, dodgy, dangerous).

Interviews with creative entrepreneurs.

As outlined above, interviews with visitors were complemented with in-depth interviews conducted with a number of creative entrepreneurs. These were, in most cases, creative producers and creative shop owners, although also three creative industries’ employees were interviewed: two employees of art galleries and one employee of a theatre and performing arts venue (the Albany in Deptford). Also for these informants a purposive sampling technique was used, meaning that the respondents were chosen because they were considered especially interesting for the research’s purposes. As Silverman (2001) points out, purposive sampling requires the investigator to take a-priori decisions on the parameters of the population in which she (or he) is interested, and to choose the subjects on this basis. It therefore allows researchers to choose a case because it illustrates some

specific features or processes that are relevant to the research objectives. For example, in the case of shop owners, only shops that were selling creative products were interviewed (meaning by creative products those produced by creative industries, as defined by DCMS, 1998).

Creative entrepreneurs were selected through internet research (e.g. through websites of artists' associations such as Hidden Art, cultural events' programmes, shopping guides) and contacted by email to arrange a face-to-face interview. The response rate to email contact was fairly low, around 10%. The aim of the interviews with creative entrepreneurs was threefold. Firstly, it represented a way of getting to know the area and its dynamics more deeply: its recent history (also in terms of tourism development), the types of existing creative enterprises, its amenities, and the (urban and tourism) development policies pursued by local authorities as perceived by the interviewees. Secondly, interviews aimed to assess whether the creative cluster acted as a cluster in Porter's sense (1998), with businesses competing *and* collaborating with each other. Finally, these interviews allowed the researcher to explore ideas emerged from the literature review as important to creative areas, such as 'buzz' and 'atmosphere', also from the point of view of local creative entrepreneurs. Ultimately, the aim was to link all these factors (e.g. area's characteristics, existence of networks and collaboration between businesses, creation of atmosphere) with the development of tourism. Most notably, the topic guide for these interviews (see Appendix III) was specifically designed to answer the second research question: What is the relationship between cultural production and consumption in developing tourism in creative areas? What is the role played by the cultural and creative industries in this development?

Interviews were semi-structured and were recorded with a digital recording device. All the interviews, the ones conducted with visitors and the ones with creative entrepreneurs were transcribed, printed on paper and analysed (manually) using the same analysis method, which is illustrated and discussed in the next sections.

Approach to Data Analysis

‘Data analysis consists of examining, categorizing, tabulating, testing, or otherwise recombining both quantitative and qualitative evidence to address the initial propositions of the study’ (Yin, 2003, p. 109). Unlike quantitative analysis, in qualitative research there are few fixed formulas or ‘recipes’ to guide data analysis (Yin, 2003). The outcome of analysis, in qualitative research, depends on the presentation of sufficient evidence and careful consideration of alternative interpretations, but also on the researcher’s own style of rigorous thinking (Yin, 2003). Robson (2002) highlights the central role of the investigator in qualitative research: ‘the central requirement in qualitative analysis is clear thinking on the part of the analyst (...) the analysis is as much a test of the enquirer as it is a test of the data’ (p. 459). However, qualitative methodology text books provide guidelines on how to undertake a more systematic analysis, also offering a choice among a number of different approaches. In this section the main features of qualitative analysis will be set out and the approach taken within the present study will be described.

The approach to qualitative analysis taken in the present research reflects the methodological approach chosen. Unlike in grounded theory, here a considerable part of the literature review was undertaken before starting data collection, and this was aimed at precisely identifying a-priori themes. This choice was a consequence of the author’s belief that, as researchers, ‘we are like dwarfs on the shoulders of giants’ (John of Salisbury, 1971 [1159]: 167) and that no research develops in a vacuum. It was strongly believed that the identification of some relevant themes through the review of research conducted by other authors in the past would allow a more complete study. However, as illustrated in the next section, while some themes were set a-priori following research questions and the initial review of literature, others emerged unexpectedly during the analysis (Appendix V shows the themes used for analysis distinguishing between ‘a-priori’ and ‘emerged from data’). For this reason, a second phase of literature review was embarked after the first round of analysis, in order to provide a theoretical framework for the new themes emerged (for instance, cosmopolitanism, fashionable, coolness).

Analysis techniques

Yin (2002) suggests five analysis techniques: pattern-matching, explanation building, time-series analysis, logic models, and cross-case synthesis. In the present research ‘explanation building’ was chosen as the preferred analysis technique. This method, according to Yin (2002) concerns the stipulation of causal links between variables, generally in narrative form. However, because narratives cannot be precise ‘the better case studies are the ones in which explanations have reflected some theoretically relevant proposition’ (Yin, 2002: 120). Therefore theoretical propositions play a fundamental role in the analysis process. In the present research, explanation building was developed through the application of seven chronological steps, as described by Yin (2002, p. 121):

1. some initial theoretical statements were made, through a literature review. These were not developed in the form of hypotheses, but represented themes or specific points of interest (for instance, characteristics of the new tourist, tourist off-the-beaten-track, search for atmosphere);
2. all the interviews were transcribed, printed on paper and, together with sketch maps, manually coded (the coding technique is explained in more details later in this chapter).
3. the findings of an initial case were compared against such statements or propositions (the case of Spitalfields was analysed first);
4. statements and propositions were revised; a new phase of literature review was embarked concerning the new themes (cosmopolitan lifestyles, coolness, cultural and sub-cultural capital);
5. other details of the case were compared against the revision;
6. the revision was compared against the evidence of the other three case studies;
7. the whole process was repeated until a satisfactory depth of analysis was achieved (four times in this case).

Sketch maps Analysis

Before describing the process of analysis undertaken in this study in more details, a brief digression appears necessary. Whereas words are generally the most common type of qualitative data (Robson, 2005), in the case of the current research evidence also took the form of images (sketch maps). Lynch (1960), who is generally considered the father of this type of visual method, utilised for his analysis a very similar approach to the one normally referred to as *content analysis*. Lynch counted the elements drawn by the study participants (such as streets, squares, buildings) and organised them in relevant categories (as seen in Chapter 4).

A similar approach was attempted in a first stage of the present research (pilot study analysis). In this first analysis testing, the occurrence of elements drawn by research subjects (for instance, bars, restaurants, graffiti, etc.) were counted and grouped in categories such as ‘night-life’, ‘art’, ‘food’ and so forth. However, this approach appeared to be inappropriate for the objectives of this study for a number of reasons. Firstly, it seemed to provide insufficient depth of analysis due to the simplification imposed by the process of categorising. Some of the maps featured a considerable wealth of detail and creativity, which would have been lost if analysed with such a structured technique. Secondly, Lynch’s approach would have led to analysing all the maps together, whereas one of the main features of this research, which is based on a constructivist paradigm, is to consider every subject individually and explore their idiosyncrasies. Thirdly, such a structured, semi-quantitative approach would have been inconsistent with the design of the whole study, which is qualitative in nature and underpinned by an interpretive/social constructivist theoretical framework. Consequently, after the pilot stage, it was decided to treat sketch maps in the same exact manner as speech transcripts, and to analyse each map in conjunction with its drawer’s interview.

Identification of themes and sub-themes

More specifically, an analysis technique based on identification of themes (or codes) was used for both images and interview transcripts.

According to Ryan and Russell Bernard (2003), the analysis of texts requires the accomplishment of four main tasks:

1. the discovery of themes and sub-themes, where *themes* ‘connote the fundamental concepts we are trying to describe’ (Ryan and Russell Bernard, 2003: 87).
2. the individuation of a few manageable themes;
3. the construction of hierarchies of themes or code books;
4. the association of themes into theoretical models.

As in most qualitative research, this study involved ‘a combination of inductive and deductive theorising’ (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005: 259). Theories emerge from the empirical data, however they also build upon existing theory. As described by Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005) this mixed approach involves the deductive development of new theories which are then compared with inductively derived theory. ‘They [these techniques] explicitly recognise the role of prior theory in framing both the content of the data and how it is analysed’ (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005: 259). More precisely, Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005) highlight that analysis should begin at the beginning of the study, when relevant themes are identified through a literature review. As described in the previous section, this is the process that was followed in the present study. The literature review informed the research questions (which were adjusted as the main issues emerged), the choice of methods and the topic guide for the interviews. As a consequence, the interviews were to some extent already structured according to themes, which facilitated the organisation of the analysis process.

Ryan and Russell Bernard (2003) provided some useful guidelines on how to identify themes. Firstly, they suggest that a theme can be singled out from a text, image or other form of data, when we can answer the question: ‘What is this an expression of?’ (p. 87). As already mentioned, themes may come both from the

data and from the researcher's previous theoretical understanding of the phenomenon (Ryan and Russell Bernard, 2003). The two authors point out that, even when the research main themes are decided in advance (through research questions, hypotheses, etc.) it is impossible to predict what will emerge from the data. In the present study, although some themes were pre-determined (e.g. motivations to visit, atmosphere, characteristics of space), the researcher allowed new themes to emerge from the data and adapted the initial propositions to the new discoveries. Some of the themes emerged were, for instance, everyday tourism, exploring, getting inspiration and trendiness/coolness (see Appendix V for a full list). New themes were searched for until theoretical saturation was reached, meaning that nothing new or relevant was emerging (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005). Also whereas initially the aim while searching for themes was to find as many as possible (Ryan and Russell Bernard, 2003), a second, fundamental stage involved the reduction into few key themes. Analysis of the main key-themes and their sub-themes in relation to research questions and existing theories will lead to the development of a set of relevant findings.

It should also be noted that, whereas most themes were common to all the case studies, some were specific to only one or two cases. 'Water', for instance, was typical of London Fields, whereas 'ultra-trendy' was completely absent in Deptford. After the first stage of analysis (on Spitalfields, which constituted the pilot case for analysis) three options for the analysis of the four cases were considered:

- to use an individual list of codes for each of the four cases, and conduct the analysis in a completely independent way;
- to conduct independent analyses for each case, but using one common list of codes,
- to use the same codes and analyse all the four cases together.

Finally, the second option was chosen as the most appropriate. A common list of codes was kept and updated with the new themes and sub-themes emerged from all the case studies. Since the themes identification consisted of four rounds of analysis per case study, this approach allowed the researcher to verify, for each new emerged theme, whether the new theme was present to some extent also in

the other cases. For instance, the theme of natural beauty came out very strongly in London Fields, which was analysed after Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch. Consequently, the presence of this theme was therefore verified (during the second round of analysis) also in the first two cases.

One of the aims of this study was to compare the four case studies and understand whether they are at different stages of a similar kind of tourism development (as opposed to having individual stories and dynamics). Therefore it was decided to keep the four analyses (and consequently analysis chapters) separated, but to have a final common discussion of all the four case studies together. In the next four chapters, the analysis of evidence will be discussed and the findings illustrated for each case study (in the same order in which the data were collected and then analysed: Spitalfields first, Hoxton/Shoreditch second, then London Fields and finally Deptford. After these four individual chapters, the results will be discussed as a whole and the four cases compared (Chapter 11).

Conclusion

The overarching aim of the choice of methods (a combination of face-to-face interviews with visitors and creative entrepreneurs and sketch maps) has been to provide the best data collection tool to answer the research questions. However, also other factors had an impact on this choice. For instance, the researcher's opinions in terms of epistemology certainly played an important role: it was in fact believed that a personal dialogue with the subjects involved would have been the best way to explore feelings and perceptions in depth. Other evidence collection methods, such as questionnaires or email interviews, were disregarded as not sufficiently in-depth.

Eventually, the interviewing process (both with visitors and creative entrepreneurs) revealed to be, for the author, a very important experience. It enabled real contact with the researched phenomenon and with the subject involved, allowing an all-round immersion in the areas' various realities. A sketch maps technique was also adopted in order to obtain a spontaneous image of visitors' perceptions of the studied areas. This method was considered by the researcher an especially

interesting one because it involved images and spontaneous representations of place. The idea of having data in the form of words as well as images seemed particularly challenging. Indeed, this approach resulted in some extremely interesting representations of place and provided valuable evidence (as better explained in the next four chapters). However, the analysis of this type of data did present some difficulties. After various trials, it was decided to analyse the maps with the same method as interviews, that is, through a coding technique based on the individuation of themes and sub-themes. Images drawn on the maps were therefore treated like concepts expressed in the interviews and each map was analysed in relation to its correspondent interview.

7. EVIDENCE ANALYSIS: AN INTRODUCTION

The structure of the second part of this thesis (Chapters 8-13) reflects the strategy used for analysis, which was undertaken for each case study individually. The findings of each case study are illustrated following the order adopted for analysis: Spitalfields first (Chapter 8); then Hoxton/Shoreditch (Chapter 9); London Fields (Chapter 10) and, finally, Deptford (Chapter 11). Following individual chapters, the four case studies are discussed all together (Chapter 12) and the research conclusions are drawn (Chapter 13).

Each 'Evidence Analysis' chapter is organised according to the same structure. They all open with an introduction on the case study, aimed to provide a brief overview of the area's characteristics in terms of location, history, and urban/tourism development. The information provided in these initial sections comes from a review of the relevant literature, policy documents and national statistics. Then, for each case, the fieldwork undertaken is briefly described, including number of interviewees and their demographic characteristics. Following this introduction, the findings are illustrated according to key themes. In accordance with the method of analysis used, evidence from interviews and sketched maps are illustrated together. Quotes from interviews with visitors and creative entrepreneurs, as well as sketched maps (see images at the end of each chapter), are used to illustrate key themes. Six macro-themes emerged from the analysis, and they are used as heads of the analysis sections: Visitors' Characteristics; The Tourist Experience; Atmosphere; Spatial Characteristics; and Tourism Development. Finally, conclusions (for the specific case) are drawn.

8. SPITALFIELDS – EVIDENCE ANALYSIS

The Spitalfields Area

Spitalfields is located in the East London borough of Tower Hamlets, not far from the centre yet outside the touristic core of the city (see page 151 for location details). Tower Hamlets is the third most deprived local authority in England (Government Office for London, 2008), with 66.6% of all children living in income-deprived families and 45% of the population residing in socially rented accommodation (Tower Hamlets, 2008). More specifically, the ward of Spitalfields and Banglatown, with an Index of Multiple Deprivation of 48.56 in 2007 (Government Office for London, 2008), is today the seventh most deprived ward in Tower Hamlets and the tenth most deprived in London (Tower Hamlets, 2008; GLA, 2008).

Historically, Spitalfields has been home to a number of different immigrant communities, including French Huguenots, Irish migrants and Russian-Polish Jews. Between the 1950s and 1960s, and after the decline of traditional industries in the 1970s, it became a magnet for Bangladeshi immigrants, and the ethnic restaurants and shops that subsequently opened transformed part of the area into the Bengali heart of London. The area's transformation into a creative hub started in the 1970s, when a group of Londoners, united in a heritage Trust, conducted a campaign to save from demolition the numerous Georgian houses that had escaped modern urban renewal (Jacobs, 1996). The Trust sought buyers for these houses within a controlled circle of like-minded (mostly white, European) artists, writers and architects, thus regulating who moved into the area (Jacobs, 1996). Within ten years the prices of these once affordable Georgian houses had risen tenfold. At the same time (late 1980s and 1990s) a number of large development plans for the area were devised, including one within the City Challenge regeneration programme in the early 1990s, and two within the Single Regeneration Budget programme between 1997 and 2004. The plans involved the

construction of brand new office blocks and mock-Georgian housing, the refurbishment of the old wholesale fruit and vegetable market and the reconversion of disused industrial buildings into studio and leisure consumption space. These developments have by now been implemented, reinforcing the divide between rich and poor and the spatial segregation of the Bangladeshi community (for instance, Jacobs, 1996, Eade, 2004).

The commercial core of Spitalfields lies within the rectangle bounded by Brick Lane, Commercial street, Bethnal Green and Whitechapel road. Most shops are small and independently owned, with fewer mainstream chains (Carey and Ahmed, 2006). The only restaurant chains can be found around the newly refurbished Spitalfields market, where the most conspicuous investments in property development were made. There, ‘shiny’ new office blocks were built and a number of new shops opened to provide for the growing demand of the City of London. On Brick Lane and around it most shops are small and owned by independent entrepreneurs. As Carey (2004) points out, Brick Lane’s economy is characterised by a very neat dual segmentation in terms of ownership of businesses. On one hand, between Whitechapel road and Woodseer Street (see Figure 8.1, page 151) there are mostly south Asian enterprises, which albeit including some food and fabric shops largely focus on restoration. This area also includes the Great Mosque of London (London Jamme Masjid), originally a Huguenot church and later a synagogue (Carey and Ahmed, 2006). In contrast with the southern part, north of Woodseer Street and around the Old Truman Brewery most leisure spaces and shops are owned and staffed by white entrepreneurs (Carey, 2004).

Today, thanks to the area’s vibrant artistic population and relatively affordable studio space (compared to more central areas), Spitalfields has become a very fashionable location for creative industries (see page 152, for a map of creative businesses). Local creative businesses include about 200 studios in the refurbished Old Truman Brewery. There is also a university residence that is home to art students from five different London universities, and numerous spaces where artists live and work. The area also offers a wide range of places where culture and creative products can be viewed and consumed: markets where artists and

designers sell their creations, shops (often managed by designers) where creative products are sold, art galleries, music venues and so on. In addition, the curry restaurant cluster (now branded as Banglatown), the several food and craft markets and a lively night-scene contribute to the attraction of an increasing number of visitors.

Fieldwork

Consistent with the visitors' population of the area, visitors under thirty years of age represented the majority of interviewees (see Table 8.1 page 150 for an overview of interviewees' characteristics, including gender, place of residence, profession and age). More than half of the subjects named London as their usual place of residence. A number of tourists to London were also interviewed: these mostly came from Europe (UK and other European countries), but also from Asia, US, Canada and Australia. In terms of profession, it appeared that a high proportion of interviewees were employed in the creative sector or were studying to become creative professionals (according to the DCMS's definition of creative industries, see DCMS, 1998). Other sectors of employment included finance, business administration, informatics, education and retail.

Interviews with visitors touched a range of topics varying from the subject's characteristics (profession, interests, travel habits, etc.) to the reason for visiting and their perceptions of the area, including the role of the creative industries and associations with other similar areas. Also, the interviewee's knowledge and views on the other three case study areas were explored to verify case studies' awareness. Through hand-sketched drawings of the area interviewees represented their mental image of the precincts, including favourite amenities, public transport and memorable elements.

In the case of creative entrepreneurs, the discussion tackled the nature of their business (size, type of activity, history, location choice), the area's characteristics and development (in terms of visitors, history, changes over time, etc.) and policy (awareness, participation, opinions, aspirations). These interviews also discussed the relationship with other creative entrepreneurs, local initiatives and public

policy. The five creative entrepreneurs interviewed were a jewellery maker (who also runs a jewellery shop) a fashion designer (who also runs a shop too), the manager of a fashion designers' showroom and retail space, the owner of a music shop and an accessories designer (see Table 8.2 page 150). The findings of the interviews (including sketched maps) are discussed in the following section.

Visitors' Characteristics

To get an overview of each interviewee's characteristics, some basic questions such as age, gender, profession and place of residence were included in the consent form they were asked to fill in prior to the interview (an example of the consent form can be seen in Appendix IV). In addition, at the beginning of the interview, visitors were asked whether they considered themselves to be frequent travellers, how many trips they had made in the last three months, and what made them decide to visit this particular area of London. If Londoners, they were also asked whether they ever visited areas of London other than the one where they lived and, if so, what they normally looked for on such occasions. If the interviewee's place of residence was not London, questions included the main reason to visit London, length of stay and 'three things you like the most about London'. These questions aimed to investigate the 'type of tourist' who would visit a creative area such as Spitalfields. Moreover, much of the evidence regarding visitors' profiles actually emerged spontaneously from the discussion about the area and not through specific questions.

A sizable proportion of the interviewees (both inner visitors and tourists to London) worked in the creative industries, and some declared to be especially interested in the Spitalfields area precisely for this reason. Often those visitors whose jobs did not belong to the creative sector still had a specific interest in art and culture. A few visitors who worked in a creative business declared to be there for a specific reason related to their job: for instance, a fashion designer from Hong Kong was in London for the London fashion week and in Spitalfields specifically to check the new European fashion trends. Similarly, an artist was there to see some art galleries, and an art student to take photographs in the market. More generally, interviewees enjoyed the fact that the area is interesting

from a cultural point of view; for a creative professional, the area could even represent a source of inspiration. For instance, an art director from East London said:

‘From what it has to offer, it’s completely unique, I mean, so many people come here to get inspiration, you get all the graphic designers come here, so many people come here to get inspiration, share inspiration, it’s everything for everyone, people come here from their country and they feel inspired, and they go back to their country they have something to offer’ (art director, London).

When visitors were talking about ‘culture’ and the fact that the area is very ‘cultural’, they often used the term culture in its broadest sense. Therefore, whereas in some cases they referred to the arts and to the presence, for instance, of art galleries, in others they alluded to the fact that area is very multicultural and allows the experience of cultures other than their own. All the people interviewed in Spitalfields came from developed countries and had either an occidental (European, American or Australian) or a North-Asian (Japanese and Korean) cultural background. This target was obviously not a choice of the researcher but it reflected the type of people visiting the area. They had a full understanding of the manifold meaning of culture and some of them offered interesting contributions on the different types of culture you can find in a place such as Spitalfield. For example:

‘It’s so interesting culture it’s like a mish-mash of like a lot of different communities..a big like a migrant population living here, quite international, quite a lot of like trendy people, quite a lot of all kinds of people really, a bit of a meeting point I find, kind there’s like a lot of different elements of culture like old east London, very international (...) I’m so more interested in weird funny little corners of London than [commercial high streets], I like the fact that some of the streets are named here in another language and, yeah, it’s always interesting to walk from one end to other and find very different looking people, often have some weird adventure’ (producer from Clapton, London).

An observation that can be made with regards to visitors’ characteristics, following the interviews conducted, is the fact that with few exceptions visitors to this area seemed to be in search of some type of cultural capital. For instance,

many were in search of fashionable items, or looking at the shops, stalls or just at other people to discover the latest trends. The few visitors who did not mention any form of cultural enrichment (or consumption of cultural products) as a reason for their visit, declared to be in Spitalfields to meet or to accompany a friend or partner. Shopping was also a frequently mentioned reason for visiting: this would probably deserve a separate discussion, because although not normally seen as a cultural consumption activity, shopping can actually represent a way of acquiring cultural capital if the objects of the shopping activity are fashionable items. This cultural capital would be ‘objectified’ if the items are bought, ‘embodied’ if the person only aims to gather knowledge on the latest trends. Very rarely they were in Spitalfields to see a specific exhibition or art event (whereas this was often the case in Hoxton). However, visitors to Spitalfields seemed to be seeking the enrichment of their knowledge in one or more cultural spheres, whether it were urban culture (such as graffiti art), contemporary art, fashion, music or ethnic culture.

Most visitors interviewed in Spitalfields seemed to be characterised by a cosmopolitan lifestyle. All the overseas and domestic tourists interviewed were frequent travellers, and especially interested in discovering the multicultural face of London. Also inner visitors (Londoners) were, in many cases, young international professionals, ‘footloose’ and open to living in different parts of the world. In particular, interviews with visitors revealed a specific interest towards the encounter with different cultures, which became apparent also in the consumption of ethnic food, clothes and cultural activities such as music and theatre. However, whereas the majority of people interviewed said to enjoy the fact that in Spitalfields different cultures merge in harmony, one, on the contrary, remarked on the social divide:

‘There is one thing which I didn’t like, there is still a lot of separation between different ethnic groups, there is the Muslim Muslim, the Indian Indian, the European European, maybe it’s inevitable, I’m not sure, but it still strikes me because in a metropolis such as London, which has been a multiethnic city for so long, well, you understand how difficult it is to integrate people’ (librarian from Italy, aged between 40 and 50).

Although this Italian woman was in London for the very first time, she was a ‘frequent traveller’ and had visited many places in the world. She was especially interested in learning about the local culture, and indeed she made many interesting remarks on Spitalfields social and spatial dynamics. She represented the social and ethnic divide also in her sketch map (Figure 8.4 page 154), where it is clearly shown (as she also explained while drawing) that the separation is not only cultural but also physical and spatial. In her map, we can see the Muslim zone characterised by women wearing a burqa, the mosque, a Muslim centre and the curry restaurants. On the other side, clearly divided by what she called ‘the Indian gate’, we find the white fashionable part, with the Old Truman Brewery and the trendy shops and bars.

Another characteristic common to many visitors to Spitalfields, which is also consistent with their cosmopolitan lifestyle, is their desire to discover new things and thus to explore the area in an unplanned manner. For instance, this visitor from Birmingham stressed his creative way of exploring the city:

‘This [the art space where the interview took place] is a fantastic place and I just walked in I didn’t know about the exhibition, I just spend maybe 10 minutes here and I will be on my way, and this is great, that you can have these little diversions that you haven’t quite planned for, (...) [it] enriches the whole experience, because you haven’t planned it, it just draws you in (...) so if you have a space that allows or encourages diversions then you explore and it’s like you roam the city’.

Spitalfields’ interviewees, despite having many common traits, were nonetheless quite varied in terms of experience as London (and Spitalfields) visitors. Even among Londoners, whereas some knew the area very well and declared that they went there fairly often, others were very new London residents thus still exploring the city like a tourist. Similarly, among overseas visitors, different levels of experience as tourists and approaches to their visit can be recognised. Some were experienced travellers, and liked to roam and discover new places. Others, on the other hand, came following a guidebook or accompanied by a local, therefore their visit was much more structured and followed a known path. In any case, the concepts of roaming and exploring appeared to be important themes for many

interviewees, who seemed to appreciate the lack of a tourist trail. See for instance this extract from an interview with a student from Italy:

‘I like very much to visit new places, to get lost, dangerous places (...) I walk, because I like walking and thinking, so I walk and think, I get lost and then look for the way back’ (student from Italy, lives in East London).

The Tourist Experience

One of the most significant macro-themes that emerged from the discussion between researcher and visitors, was their experience of the area. When asked what made them decide to visit the area, what had they been doing and what they liked and did not like about the area, interviewees tended to describe, in varying detail and depth, their experience of the place. This included what features of the area were most important to them in order to enjoy their visit (revealed also by their sketch maps) and what aspects, on the other hand, made the quality of their visit lower. Also their behaviour while there, the facilities they chose to use and their social encounters were part of the experience (although very rarely visitors mentioned interactions with people other than their travelling companions). These aspects in some cases came out also through other questions, such as: ‘What do you look for when you visit an area different from the one where you live?’, ‘if you could change something to make this area more appealing to you what would you change?’, ‘How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?’ and ‘Does it remind you of any other area that you know?’. The perceived quality of the visitor’s experience and the area’s features that, according to visitors, make this experience possible are important data in order to analyse the actual and potential tourism development of an area. Findings relating to this theme will be discussed in this section.

As previously discussed, most interviewees shared a keen interest in culture and, in many cases, they also had in common a creative profession. However, what seems most interesting for the purposes of this research, is not the fact that visitors are themselves quite creative, but rather their creative approach to experiencing the place. Take as an example the way a young Polish artist, who recently moved to London, described her tourist experience in Spitalfields:

‘I like new people, new places, it’s very inspiring, it’s like a documentary of the everyday, I like photography and I’m interested in what people look like, how they behave, what they are doing... I like this place, there is a lot of street art, I make good pictures I think, and it’s a very crowded place, vibrant, every time I’m here people are different, I like especially artists, it’s inspiring, maybe I’ll go home and something will happen’.

As seen in the previous section, exploring and discovering a new corner of London is an important activity for many visitors to Spitalfields, who can often be seen wandering around and taking pictures of unusual subjects (e.g. graffiti and posters). Interestingly, Spitalfields is developing as one of the most popular new tourism areas in London despite the lack of a major attraction (although the Sunday markets certainly represent a strong pull factor). However, visitors did not lament this absence at all; on the contrary they seemed to appreciate the place’s heterogeneity and the fact that ‘there is a lot going on’ (as opposed to one main thing to do). The lack of major attractions leaves visitors completely free to create their own programmes. This not only applies to people who work in the creative industry sector: the great majority of people interviewed seemed to find the place ‘inspiring’ and to enjoy its dynamicity. Also the interviewees’ sketched maps are mirrors of this ‘openness’: many of them show the very idiosyncratic interpretations that people give to the area, highlighting each person’s representations and very personal points of interest (ranging from Banksy’s urban art to curry restaurants and posh vintage shops). In many cases, interviewed visitors tried to provide a creative (sometimes artistic) interpretation of their mental image of the area, adding pictures, metaphoric images and imaginative representations of their feelings or favourite activities to their maps (e.g. Figure 8.7 and Figure 8.8).

The lack of a major attraction is seen by some visitors as a sign that the area is not touristy, therefore ‘true English London’ (as a tourist from South Korea said). Seeing a non-touristy place, or a place where normally locals live and play, constitutes an attempt to participate in locals’ everyday life, or to ‘live’ the place the same way locals do. This is well-represented by this extract of an interview with a Spanish tourist:

‘Maybe sometimes I go recommended by someone who tells me you need to go there to visit that thing... I really appreciate that kind because you can see the real London not just the Big Ben, and I’m looking for this real London for Londoners not just the tourist... (...) and I see people that live near this area, they know each other when they see other people in the street, and I think that that’s the reason why it’s real London’.

A photography student from Birmingham, made an interesting observation with regards to this point:

‘I don’t know, it seems that there is less... not less tourists because there are tourists, but people who try not to look like tourists, if you know what I mean’

While tourists try to camouflage themselves, Londoners seem to be doing the reverse; that is, try to live the city as if tourists. It seems necessary to specify that London is in this sense peculiar due to the high number of people who are not originally from the capital, but live there for a short time (a few years or even less). In many cases, the London residents interviewed had been living in London for a relatively short time, and were still exploring the city ‘like a tourist’. See for instance, quote 10 in Appendix VII (Appendix VII contains a selection of all the most interesting interview extracts, many of which could not be included in the main text for lack of space).

Another interesting process which is also connected to London’s mobility is the ‘visit friends and relatives’ phenomenon. Several interviewees were either Londoners who were in Spitalfields with a week-end guest or VFR tourists who were visiting the place with a local. This is the perfect example of the process described in the previous paragraph: the Londoner who is taking his/her guest around actually behaves like a tourist, visiting markets and exhibitions, eating out and so on; whereas the tourist who is guided by a local feels he/she is visiting places that ‘only local people know’. On the same line, it seems interesting to point out how, ironically, Londoners tend to describe the area as ‘unique’, whereas tourists to London see it as typically London (see, for instance quotes 1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 23 Appendix VII).

Similarly, a considerable difference between Londoners and non-Londoners' perceptions of where Spitalfields is can be noted: Londoners often describe Spitalfields as a central area (or not far from the centre), whereas overseas tourists do not seem to have a clear idea of where they are (they generally arrive by underground and just have the impression to have travelled from 'central London' to 'everyday London', see for instance quote 19, 20 and 23 Appendix VII). Also sketch maps represent an important tool in order to understand how people locate Spitalfields in their minds. Except from one day-visitor from Oxford who went to Spitalfields walking all the way from London Bridge and sketched some elements of her journey on the map (Figure 8.5 page 155), all the other interviewees did not represent the area in relation to the city centre. The gherkin (the only London iconic building that is clearly visible from Spitalfields) appears in two sketch maps. Five maps include Hoxton square and one also London Fields, suggesting that more people identify Spitalfields with the East-End than with the city centre. This is also consistent with the finding emerged from data collected in these other two case studies, according to which some visitors are on a 'creative tour', visiting in one day a number of creative areas (generally walking from Brick Lane to Hoxton and Shoreditch, often through Columbia market, and sometimes all the way to London Fields). However, the majority of these drawings are very self-contained representations of the Spitalfields area only (the most inclusive ones stretch from Liverpool station to Whitechapel and Bethnal Green). This is an important finding, especially if we take into account that visitors were not asked to draw a map of Spitalfields, but to represent 'this area' (if they asked specifications the interviewer simply clarified 'whatever this area is for you, feel free to represent whatever you like'). It seems therefore that interviewed visitors considered Spitalfields as an area on its own right, almost detached from anywhere else. However, whereas in other case studies (London Fields and Deptford in particular) an important theme which emerged from the data was the area seen as a small, independent village, in Spitalfields this did not occur, and the idea of the old town emerged, as later discussed, only in relation to the traditional, artisanal shops. The fact that the maps show only a small perimeter may be linked to the fact that people travelled to Spitalfields by underground and thus they may have found it difficult to connect what they were visiting with other parts of the city. Evidence of this is the fact that the three closest underground stations

(Liverpool Street, Aldgate and Aldgate East) are the orientation points that most people remembered and drew on their maps.

Finally, in terms of tourist experience, what visitors actually do during their visit should be mentioned. Generally, the most typical activities are looking at the shops and markets, especially to buy clothes and accessories, drinking in the local bars and cafés, and relaxing with friends. Eating at the local restaurants is also important. The two bagel shops and the other take-away shops seem appreciated by most people; in particular, the bagel shops are considered by some as a local icon (and appeared on 8 sketch maps). Shops, markets, cafes, bars and restaurants are the most recurrent element of mental maps. Other activities, represented in the maps too, include roaming around, looking at graffiti art and at the architecture, visiting art galleries and taking photographs.

Atmosphere

One point on which both Londoners and tourists to London agree is the fundamental role played by place atmosphere in the tourist experience. The interview questions that most often generated reflections and comments on the area's atmosphere were the ones that aimed to investigate visitors' perceptions: Do you like this area? What do you especially like about it? What do you not like? How would you describe the area to someone who has never been here? Does this area remind you of any other area in London or in other cities that you know?

When asked such questions visitors illustrated, often in a very articulated and eloquent way, the features that were most important to them. In some cases these were tangible elements, such as the cafes, the shops and the market. However most times the first thing that comes to mind was 'atmosphere' or the 'vibe'. In previous studies (for instance Griffin and Hayllar, 2007) interviewees were prompted on the concept of atmosphere and asked to describe it. In the case of the present research, the word atmosphere emerged spontaneously in almost every interview, and appeared to be the single most important 'tourist attraction' in the area. Following analysis of evidence collected in the four case study areas, atmosphere was defined, for the purposes of this research, as 'the sum of the

intangible qualities that make up the overall feel or mood of a place'. Thus, a question this analysis is aiming to answer is, what are the elements of Spitalfields that provide it with this intangible quality that people call 'atmosphere'?

The following section aims to investigate the varied perceptions of Spitalfield's atmosphere, and to 'unpack' its fundamental components. In some cases, visitors who mentioned the word atmosphere directly failed to provide an explanation of what the term meant to them. Others linked the term with intangible qualities, which were not necessarily related to each other and at times even appeared as paradoxical (e.g. traditional and trendy, vibrant and relaxed). Overall, visitors' perceptions of atmosphere seemed to draw on a number of elements:

'I like the atmosphere it's very trendy, up to date, as well as very comfy, with the cafés and everything, like cosy, quite friendly, people are very fashionable, and unique' (visitor from Hong Kong).

A complex concept frequently mentioned by interviewees is trendiness and other related concepts such as cool, hip and fashionable¹. Trendiness, similarly to atmosphere, is a very intangible concept and often interviewees describe Spitalfields as trendy, cool and fashionable without really explaining these terms further. However, evidence collected suggest that the most important factors that make Spitalfields a 'cool' area are the shops and the people (namely, people's style, mostly given by the clothes they wear). The following interview extract represents an example of the use of these terms by a visitor (from London) while answering the question 'what do you especially like about this area?' (see also quotes 12 and 13 Appendix VII which represent similar answers to the same question):

'Relaxed, chilled out, its quite interesting to see people dressed up, it's a bit trendy, quite amusing how people dress around here, not the hassle and bustle of the fashionscapes around here, there is no business as such it's more relaxed (...). It's slightly pretentious, cool and trendy but not as trendy as other areas of

¹ As shown in Appendix VI a simple count of the occurrences of words such as trendy, cool, hip etc. gives a result of 57. Only Hoxton, albeit fewer interviews were conducted there, gave a higher result (61 occurrences) with regards to these terms.

London, it's a bit rough around the edges, it's quite old' (research officer from London)

This interview extract introduces two other elements of complexity in the idea of a trendy or cool area. Firstly, different people have different opinions of what the trendy areas are. In particular, whereas this interviewee said that Spitalfields is 'slightly pretentious, cool and trendy but not as trendy as other areas of London', other visitors called it 'the fashionable part of town' and even declared to find it intimidating 'because it's all ultra-trendy, they [people] think they are gonna look unpaid'. A graphic design student (from London), however, explained how Spitalfields used to be 'the place to be', whereas now much of the creative population has moved further East (especially to London Fields), to have 'more neighbourhood life, because here [Spitalfields] is too close to the centre, too many people arrive, especially with the Sunday markets'. Similarly, a Londoner interviewed in London Fields, expressed the same view, declaring that she used to like Spitalfields until it became too popular and therefore too commercial:

'I used to go there [Spitalfields] a lot more, but now I don't go that much, it's sort of become more commercial, it's like -what's the fun- it's kind of dirty, it's become a bit popular (woman from London, works in advertising- interviewed in London Fields).

In London Fields also another interviewee (a free lance photographer from North London, originally from Italy) made a similar comment. Spitalfields, according to him, is now so popular that friends who come and visit from abroad arrive with the specific request to see it. He, however, found it too crowded and he preferred London Fields, which he described as 'folkloristic, excessively trendy, pleasant, safe and quiet'. As we can see from his interview's extract, his description of Spitalfields is fairly similar, except for the fact that he found Spitalfields too crowded instead of 'pleasant and quiet':

'[Do you know Spitalfields?] Unfortunately I do, it's a compulsory passage, especially with friends who come and visit me from Italy, they come with the request to go there, but it's too crowded, well it is a bit folkloristic but you go once and enough, it does make me feel like going again unless I need to buy something in particular or if I'm meeting friends who live there'.

Similarly, several visitors detached themselves from the crowd of ‘fashionable patrons’, almost wanting to portray a ‘superior’ image of themselves. For example a musician from Birmingham (who graduated from a London art school) said:

‘it’s the fashionable part of town and I find it a bit intimidating, really (...) I don’t care about that, it annoys me just that everyone is in their gear, and they like to go to fashionable bars and all that (...) I used to live in Shoreditch High Street for a short while, I mean, my girlfriend did, and it was just driving me crazy... but I’m just a miserable geek, I mean, most people enjoy it’.

This interviewee tried to represent his detachment from the fashionable part of London also through his mental map (Figure 8.6 page 156), which seems to intentionally portray an alternative vision of the ‘mainstream alternative’ Spitalfields. Although the interview took place in an art space (which the interviewee described as very interesting), in his map the main elements that stand out are two strip clubs (that no one else ever mentioned), a ‘tramp’, two bagel shops, a music venue, his ex girlfriend’s house and his friend’s house. Brick Lane (the street) and the two historical bagel shops are the only elements that make the area recognisable (Brick Lane is the one element present in almost all the maps of Spitalfields).

Perceptions of Spitalfields being arty and creative are contested qualities that contribute to create an ‘atmosphere’. On one hand, for most visitors the area’s ‘arty feel’ (generally attributed to the people’s style, rather than the shops and recreation facilities) is a major element which contributes to its nice atmosphere. However, some visitors found Spitalfields and its people slightly ‘pretentious’ (for example, interview 17 and 18 Appendix VII). Others, like for instance a student from Montreal, Canada (next extract), thought the exact opposite:

‘Yeah it’s a cool area, it’s unpretentious, alternative in a certain way, I usually like the music that most places play around here, plus it’s not as crowded as central London, people here know what to do, know pretty much what they are looking for (...), people here agree on a common liking, I like that.

[How do you mean it’s alternative in a certain way?]

well, usually people that you find here, and this is represented in the shops, bars and clubs, it's sort of underground but not hard underground, they are not gonna play Britney Spears in a bar here, it's quite indie and that's what I like, also in the shop its quite vintage and you can find records from small labels'

Two interesting points can be made in relation to this quote. Firstly, the area's pretentiousness represents a source of controversy. However, what is even more interesting, is the link this Canadian student made between what is sold in the shops and the style people adopt. In particular, the fact that the type of fashion which can be seen in Spitalfields is alternative and underground, linked to certain types of music and scenes that are often associated with the East End. This could possibly explain why, although generally fashion adverse, several visitors still felt emotionally attracted to these trends and styles. Also, in the same interview this student noted how these underground trends, which used to be alternative and nonconformist, 'became sort of mainstream', so that the area became so popular and some people started to criticise its commercialisation.

Although each visitor held his or her personal views about the area's pretentiousness or laid-back feel, often the area's atmosphere was described as very welcoming and cosy. These two intangible qualities, according to the evidence collected, seem to be in turn provided by a number of factors. An important element that appears to make visitors feel comfortable is the area being 'young': as noted before, most interviewees were under the age of thirty and many of them enjoyed the fact that in Spitalfields they could meet other people of the same age (see for example quotes 21, 30, 33 and 37 Appendix VII). Whereas in other areas (such as, for example, Hoxton) some visitors felt too old and declared to have moved on to other more middle-age areas (see quote 53 Appendix VII), in Spitalfields this did not occur. The small number of older visitors interviewed did not see the area's youthfulness as a problem, and they seemed to have found leisure spaces that matched their own interests (one, for example, said she discovered 'the best chocolate shop in London'). Another factor that seemed to render the area welcoming is the open attitude of people. Whereas for several interviewees, as seen above, the trendiness of Spitalfields patrons can be intimidating, for others this is a sign of openness because, as a visitor from Oxford

put it, ‘everyone is wearing absolutely anything and everything and always look fabulous’.

An important feature that seemed to contribute to the area’s atmosphere and sense of place, especially from the point of view of those ‘new visitors’ who have not seen its fast development of the last few years, is the impression it gives of being authentic, real, and not a tourist trap (see quotes 6, 7, 8, 20 and 33 Appendix VII). As previously noted, many tourists like to explore the area and look at it as an example of ‘real London’, the London where people actually live, work and play. Also being very diverse, as discussed above, contributes to this ‘authentic feel’, because cosmopolitanism is considered by many as one of the most typical features of London. One of the interviewees, an Italian librarian, well-described her own interest in ‘neighbourhood sightseeing’:

‘We knew [from the guide book] that this was a special area, a bit different from the centre of London, because I like to see not only the sights, the city from an artistic point of view, but also special things such as neighbourhoods, what kind of people live in these neighbourhoods, and also immigration, how life develops, in fact here it’s crazy because it’s like a continent within one city, it’s very interesting’

As an interviewee’s friend noted, it seems that, rather than really mixed, Spitalfields has been characterised by different historical periods in which different communities followed one another:

‘Spitalfields is more than just a market, there are the curries, and it’s so diverse culturally as well, first it was a very Jewish are, then very French area, now it’s a very Muslim area, and in about ten years it will be a very white middle class area’.

It also interesting to note that some visitors tried to portray the area’s atmosphere also in their sketch maps. In the one shown in Figure 8.7 (page 157), for instance, it is possible to see an attempt to represent the joyful mood of an area that the same interviewee described as ‘lively, a mix of cultures, and still intense’. Also Figure 8.8 (page 158) seems to be especially eloquent, showing, thanks to the use of symbols, the essence of three different areas: London Fields, Hoxton and Dalston. Whereas London Fields is represented as a bunch of flowers, Hoxton is a

night-club and Dalston a vomiting person. These two maps constitute some very interesting examples of the use of metaphors within sketch maps. Obviously such a vivid representation is possible thanks to the drawing skills of the interviewees (who are an architect in the first case and a design student in the second), revealing one of the main disadvantages of the use of sketch maps in research: the fact that the result is very much dependent on the personal skills of the interviewee. In the case of this research the use of this method was facilitated by the fact that a high number of visitors were employed in the creative sector. An interpretation of the latter map could be that London Fields, where the drawer lived, is very green (or also that the flower market is there) and that Hoxton is a place to go out (which was in fact confirmed by his interview). Another possible analysis however sees it more as a representation of the interviewee's general opinion on these areas: London Fields is joyful and beautiful while Dalston seems horrifying. Also, this map shows that this interviewee, similarly to several other visitors (especially the ones interviewed in London Fields) considered Spitalfields as part of a wider area which includes also Hoxton and London Fields. In his interview, he described how the East-End is seen by many designers and design students (such as himself) as a separate, independent world:

‘London Fields, Hoxton and here are all linked, because London Fields and Dalston it's where everyone [art and design students] lives, Hoxton where everyone goes clubbing and here where everyone goes for shopping. This side of the East is like a small city, I know people who don't take the underground to go to the centre for months, whereas in other areas this doesn't happen because young people go out here anyway’ (graphic design student, from London, originally from Italy).

Spatial characteristics

One of the themes that this study aims to investigate concerns the effects of the configuration of urban space in the development of tourism in creative urban areas. This aspect appeared to be of secondary importance for visitors if compared with the area's intangible qualities, however, some physical/visual elements were mentioned as particularly important during interviews.

In terms of the configuration of space, the quality that appeared to be by far the most important is having small, independent, unique shops: '[shops] individually owned, that are not part of chains so they sell things that you cannot buy anywhere else' (music journalist from London). This quality is closely related to the concept of authenticity: people found that small shops, which do not belong to high street chains, felt more 'real' and more traditional. Many visitors seemed to hold an image of Spitalfields close to the idea of a traditional village, where artisans sold in their shops the products they had personally conceived and made. This was consistent with the interviews with creative entrepreneurs, who revealed that in Spitalfields many of the local shops were actually run and owned by creative professionals, such as fashion and accessory designers, who produce and sell their products in the same space. Generally, small shops, small streets, the contrast between old and new buildings were the physical spatial qualities that visitors mentioned as important to them (see, for example, quotes 22 and 23, Appendix VII).

The Old Truman Brewery (a reconverted industrial space which now contains shops, caf  s, and exhibition and studio spaces) often recurs in the visitors' mental maps suggesting that it represent a landmark for the area. This fact could be attributed to its shape, which, according to Lynch's theory (1960), appear to be especially memorable thanks to its tall and very recognisable smokestack. However, another factor that definitely makes it an important attraction is the fact of being a model of post-industrial architecture, seen by some as an interesting piece of urban culture (see quotes 23, 24, 25 Appendix VII). This appears to be especially relevant to an area such as Spitalfields, which many visitors, as previously discussed, see as an example of 'typical London'. A characteristic of London (and of Spitalfields in particular) is that overseas tourists seem to especially appreciate is precisely the capital's ability to develop without forgetting its past. This extract of an interview made with a Spanish tourist well illustrates this view:

'The changes taking place in this area for us are very interesting because it's like the new London tries to accept the ancient London, in a way we assimilate our past but doing new things, for example this place [the Old Truman Brewery]

like very ancient but they didn't demolish it and this is very nice, its smaller but with old walls'.

The Old Truman Brewery, with its multiple functions and typical urban post-industrial architecture, seems very representative of that other quality discussed in the first part of this chapter, that is, the area's openness to different uses and different interpretations (or as Edensor, 1998 called it, its 'heterogeneity'). Spitalfield is heterogeneous in more than one sense. Its users are multiple and include residents, workers and visitors. Besides, according to its visitors, it is also heterogeneous in terms of diversity, since numerous culturally different communities co-exist. This, as some visitors noted, is also reflected in the area's spatial configuration. For instance, street names are written in Bengali and some old buildings have been reconverted to new uses by various ethnic groups. For instance, a tourist from Italy, previously quoted, noted the transformation of urban space over time and its adaptation to meet the needs of subsequent communities:

'I'm interested in the architecture, how the area developed, for example how they have used old factories and warehouses, how they have reused them and what they left inside, or how they have transformed old buildings into buildings belonging to other cultures, like we saw a building that used to be a church, then it was synagogue, and now it's a mosque, so how it transformed three times still remaining the same building' (librarian from Italy).

Tourism Development

An especially interesting aspect of the findings emerged from the Spitalfields interviews is the perceived level of tourism development from the visitor's point of view. When this research started in 2006, Spitalfields was chosen as an example of a creative 'new tourism area' in London, although considered, among the four case studies, as the one where tourism development had reached the most advanced stage. Visitors to Spitalfields were considered 'alternative' or 'adventurers', looking for an off-the-beaten-track destination (as described by Eade in 1997 and 2002). However, the evidence collected for the present study showed a partial variation in this situation. Tourism in this area is growing at such a rapid pace that enormous changes occurred even within the relatively short

timeframe of this study. Secondly, the qualitative data shows that visitors to Spitalfields are now quite heterogeneous with varying expectations, motivations and opinions. Many visitors are indeed looking for an alternative, non-touristy destination, and like to explore the city in an unplanned way, precisely like an ‘adventurer’. However, it must be noted that Spitalfields is now starting to become an established alternative tourist destination and it is now featured in most tourist guide books for its markets and curry restaurants, and as an example of the cool, alternative London. For this reason, some visitors (especially Londoners) declared that it is starting to become too touristy and to be outdated as an alternative place (ten interviewees compared it to Camden which went through the same process twenty or so years ago). Other areas, such as London Fields, are now preferred by hard-core ‘off the beaten track’ visitors. On the other hand, perhaps precisely because the area has become so popular, there are also a number of visitors who are much less adventurous: they tend to walk only on the main streets (Commercial Street, Brick Lane and the newly refurbished Spitalfields market) and even declare to be afraid of dodgy side streets (which are instead some of the favourite elements for other visitors). Also people’s mental maps represent this difference between ‘adventurers’ who generally draw an extended map of the area including the narrow side streets, and more traditional visitors, who tend to remain on Brick Lane and only remember that one street. The problem of tourists not leaving the beaten track is felt by the creative businesses which shops on the roads off Brick Lane, like this fashion accessories maker:

‘Well, it’s like retail fretful, you don’t actually go upstairs, many people won’t look down the scary side street, if we were on Brick Lane, yes we would have more tourists, more passers-by but the rent would be quadruple what we have now, it suits our business’

The theme of the ‘scary side street’ recurred in a few other interviews, together with crime, poverty and dirt (e.g. quote 15 Appendix VII). Even some mental maps represent crime (stolen bikes, streets where is best not to go) and ‘scruffy areas’. Intriguingly though, for some interviewees these elements were actually part of the fun, part of the true London experience, making the area more interesting. Certainly, the contrast (for instance between shiny fashion designers’ shops and rough corners, clean and dirty, old and new) is part of the area’s charm.

The newly refurbished Old Spitalfields Market represents the shiny, clean and new corner of Spitalfields. Only two visitors, and none of the local creative entrepreneurs, declared to like the new refurbished market area. Especially those visitors who knew the area well and witnessed its rapid change spoke about the pre-renewal market with a feeling of nostalgia (see, for instance, quote 26 Appendix VII).

Although the Old Spitalfields Market area may look like a touristy space, patrolled by security guards and full of consumption amenities such as shops, cafés and restaurants, during week-ends visitors seem to be much more interested in the area around Brick Lane and the Brick Lane markets. These parts are more scruffy, dirty and colourful than the refurbished Old Spitalfields Market (so people described them), and interviewees seemed to like their bohemian style. For instance, the engineer quoted in the next extract described the area as bohemian and alternative, and depicted its shops as daring:

‘[How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?] Eclectic, bohemian, alternative area, which is different and daring, if you look at most of the shops they are different and it takes some bravery to do that, I would say it’s a unique area, that’s the main thing about it, it has a character that everybody knows, very different from other areas. And it’s also a Bengali area, not only an artistic area, and the market is brilliant, and the history’ (engineer from North West London).

However, as seen earlier, with regards to Spitalfields some other visitors noted that its popularity is making it more commercial, and therefore less appealing. This is another point on which visitors’ opinions are by no means uniform. In particular, as seen in previous sections, frequent visitors (generally Londoners) point out the area’s ‘commercialisation’, whereas first time visitors (often not from London) tend to find it non-commercial and authentic (e.g. quotes 6, 7, 8, 20 and 33 Appendix VII).

The Creative Cluster

This study aims to explore the relationship between cultural production and consumption and its role in developing tourism in creative areas, and in particular, to investigate which part creative industries play in the area's tourism development. In order to tackle these objectives, towards the end of the interview visitors were expressly asked whether they had noticed a high number of creative industries in the area and, if so, if these industries were important to them. It must be noted, however, that the majority of visitors spoke about the presence of many creative people and creative shops spontaneously while answering previous questions. Five interviews were conducted in Spitalfields with local entrepreneurs, in order to explore also the production side. Questions included:

- type of business (size, etc.),
- reasons for locating in the area and advantages of location;
- whether it was perceived as a creative cluster or a cultural cluster;
- opinion on public policy, place marketing, cultural events happening in the area, tourism development, etc.

Of the five creative businesses that accepted to be interviewed, four were collective shops which brought together the work of more than one independent designer (one jewellery, two clothes and one accessories). The five interviews seemed to confirm visitors' impression that in Spitalfields the same people make and sell the products (and therefore the shops appear as more authentic). However, some visitors thought that Spitalfields, despite being creative and frequented by artists and arty people, is not such a great place for contemporary art (it seems in fact to attract visitors more for other creative aspects such as fashion). An artist from London, for example, said that it is difficult to find the art galleries (see quote 29 Appendix VII), and also in the interviewees' sketch maps they seldom appear.

Although a few interviewees said they were not aware of the many creative industries located there, most subjects seemed to believe that they were in a very creative area. See for instance how this graphic design student describes the appeal of the area for young artists and creative people:

‘By now everyone knows that here you can find young people, young fashion designers and new things, many of my friends live in this area and work here, those who work in fashion, so you are sure here you will find youngest shops, youngest brands, night-clubs, also the people who work here are younger, they go to have a coffee in the cafès around here... I’m studying graphic design so I hang around with that kind of people, and I don’t know why, but when I arrived in London they were all here ...’

One of the creative entrepreneurs interviewed, a jewellery designer (who shares a shop with five other designers), explained in a similar way the reasons why they decided to locate in this area. She pointed out the fact of having a pool of other creative professionals as a key factor for the development of a creative cluster:

‘People kind of lived around here so it seemed sensible [to locate in the area], it was the place where it all seemed happening, quite cheap rent, it was the natural place to start, it wasn’t like we need to choose somewhere in London’ (jewellery designer)

Of the five creative entrepreneurs, she was the only one who mentioned the presence of other artists or creative businesses as a main factor for the choice of location (Table 8.2, page 150 presents a list of creative entrepreneurs interviewed and a summary of some of their answers). This finding differs greatly from Hoxton/Shoreditch and London Fields, where this appeared to be a very important factor (see relevant chapters).

Four creative entrepreneurs declared that Spitalfields was chosen as business location because it was, at the time, becoming fashionable or ‘up and coming’ (see for example quote 32 Appendix VII). Two of the creative interviewees mentioned the affordable rent and the fact that they were already living near-by (for one these were the two main reasons for locating there). While the development of leisure consumption appears to be, for creative businesses, an important reason to locate in Spitalfields, the presence of many creative industries seems in its turn to contribute to the development of leisure consumption in the area. Creative industries in fact play an important role in shaping both the atmosphere and even the urban form of the area (with their small shops), contributing to its tourism development. Several visitors commented on the

importance of the creative industries (and especially of the art community) in creating an atmosphere:

‘What I like the most is that there are no chain places, and there is a personal feeling to it, like this place for example [a bar inside the Old Truman Brewery], so comfortable, so relaxing, of course I like the fact that is full of young people, it’s a party place, and I also like the artistic feel, a place where artists live, it gives that bohemian quality (...) they were the first to change the area’ (engineer from west London).

However, visitors did not see the creative industries only as a positive element. Ten interviewees spoke about gentrification and commented, often in a critical tone, on the creative industries and their impact on urban change. On one hand, they argued, creative industries help the area thrive, but on the other they also bring about a very rapid transformation, leading to a possible loss of the area’s soul and character, and therefore of appeal for certain visitors. For instance a producer from London noted:

‘I think the area is becoming more gentrified and as a result it has lost appeal to me. Like, what often happens is, a place gets trendy, the property prices move up, the people who live here can’t afford to live here anymore and probably it becomes more like the same street that you find anywhere in the world, and less like an interesting different weird place (...) ten years ago [this area] was a completely different place but maybe there was nothing here ten years ago, I don’t know... it’s a natural... it’s still of a natural process that seems to happen everywhere and all the counter cultures go somewhere else’.

Also creative entrepreneurs partly appreciate and partly fear the area’s development process. They see a potential for growth of their business, but, at the same time, fear that the area will lose that arty feel that made it special. Rents are a concern for both local creative entrepreneurs and visitors: the former because they think they will lose their space, the latter because they think big companies, being the only ones able to afford high rents, may eventually take over.

In order to understand whether local creative businesses perceive the existence of a creative (or cultural) cluster, creative entrepreneurs were asked whether they actually considered the area to be a business cluster and if they felt any

connections with the other local creative entrepreneurs. The entrepreneurs interviewed considered Spitalfields a creative area and, when asked, they all said the area is definitely a creative and a cultural cluster. However, while some feel they belong to a creative community which collaborates, for instance, in terms of marketing and advertising (publishing a shopping guide, etc.), others do not feel there is enough mutual intellectual exchange or collaboration and wish there was more. For instance an accessories designer said:

[participating with other local creative businesses in an international exhibition] was good to meet some of the other businesses in the area, because people have shops next to us and we don't really know their names (...) I would like to be more involved in a lot more events that are happening in Brick Lane as a whole, so all of the shops getting together and doing something for the weekend (...) I think everyone is in their own little world with their shops and sometimes it's hard to break out of that (Accessories designer)

The presence of other creatives did not emerge as an important asset of the area for creative entrepreneurs (see Table 8.2 page 150), suggesting that in Spitalfields the benefits of co-location are not very strongly perceived. When asked what the area's assets for their business were, none of the creative entrepreneurs interviewed in Spitalfields mentioned the presence of other creative entrepreneurs. Conversely, in Hoxton and London Fields this was perceived as the main advantage. In Spitalfields the famous name and the fact that the area is becoming increasingly popular were seen as the most important assets. However, it must be noted that all the five creative entrepreneurs interviewed in Spitalfields were owners or managers of a retail space. This could partly explain why they placed so much importance on the area's popularity and tourism growth. Yet in Hoxton and London Fields not only independent artists, but also commercial art galleries commented on the advantages of being located in a creative hub.

Although not mentioned as a main asset for their business, the entrepreneurs interviewed in Spitalfields did see the area's creativity as a positive aspect. For instance, an accessories' designer explained how, despite the fact of conducting most of her business on-line, being in a creative area is very important in terms of artistic inspiration:

‘It’s difficult for us because we are not just a shop, here we are a studio, and we sell around the world on-line, so we are not just a shop here, it’s just nice for us to be in the area soaking the atmosphere, it’s so young and exciting there is always something happening, street art going on or independent coffee shops, cinemas and lots of bars, it’s quite nice for the young companies to be based in this area’

Conclusions

Spitalfields interviewees, which included a majority of young creative professionals, showed a particular interest towards the arts and other cultural products. Some of them were in Spitalfields to discover emerging trends or to find inspiration for their creative work. Visitors like to explore the area in an unplanned manner, discover its hidden gems, and, at the same time, enrich their cultural capital. Different forms of cultural capital seem to be in fact available: *objectified*, like for instance the artworks that can be purchased in the local contemporary art galleries, as well as *embodied*, such as knowledge of the latest fashion trends, of the most cutting-edge underground music, or the most hidden graffiti.

The notion of atmosphere, which visitors to Spitalfields describe as relaxed, young, welcoming, vibrant and arty, appears to be a central theme of most interviews with both visitors and creative entrepreneurs. The findings suggest that a major contribution to Spitalfields’s atmosphere is that people find the area very authentic and traditional. This is linked to the small and independent shops that distinguish Spitalfields from most central areas’ high streets. Both Londoners and visitors find the area very ‘real’, however, whereas most Londoners find Brick Lane ‘unique’ and they like to explore and consume it in a ‘touristy’ manner, paradoxically tourists to London often go there because they want to see something typical, ‘the real London’. In addition, visitors place great importance on artists and designers selling the products they have personally made, just like artisans used to do in past times. The presence of numerous creative businesses in the area means many young artists and people employed in the creative sector frequent the area, which provides its ‘arty feel’. A high proportion of visitors are

employed in the creative sector themselves, and in their interviews they revealed that ‘soaking in that artistic vibe’ gave them inspiration for their work.

As Richards and Wilson (2006) noted, creative spaces seem to be particularly open to different interpretations because their multifunctionality allows visitors to create their own narratives and exercise their imagination in the tourist experience. In a way, it seems that the lack of major attractions leaves the tourists completely free to create their own programmes. Many people like the area’s cultural diversity, with rich and poor living side by side, which strongly contributes to the feeling it is ‘authentic’. Also in terms of spatial characteristics, visitors appreciate the way old buildings have been reused to meet the needs of new, culturally diverse communities. Visitors seem to appreciate the area’s mix of cultures, which makes it seem unique but at the same time ‘typically London’. However, in contrast to this view, a visitor also noted a very strong separation between the white fashionable crowd and the Bangladeshi community. This keen interest in cultural differences contributes to delineate a profile of the Spitalfields visitor which seems characterised by a cosmopolitan life-style (Thompson & Tambyah, 1999), whose traits include an especially open mind towards cultural differences, the search for cultural capital and a tendency to travel off the beaten track (Urry, 2005). However, whereas some visitors correspond to Eade’s (2002) description of the ‘adventurer tourist’, many others seem to explore only a circumscribed space (especially Brick Lane and the markets). This suggests that Spitalfields is now becoming a very established ‘alternative destination’ and, thanks to the presence of the area on travel books and so on, it is starting to attract visitors that are less ‘adventurous’. For the same reasons some repeat visitors (especially Londoners) declared that Spitalfields is becoming too touristy, and they now prefer to go to new alternative destinations (generally further East).

Gender	Male: 22	Female: 20	Tot. 42					
Profession	Creative industry/arts (inc. art students): 18	Business/finance: 3	Student: 6	Education/research/journalist: 3	Engineer/informatics: 1	Management/accounting/administration: 4	Hospitality/retail: 3	Other: 4
Usual place of residence	London: 26	UK (excl. London): 3	Europe (excl. UK): 8	US & Canada: 1	Asia: 3	Australia: 1	Tot. non Londoners: 17	
Reason for visiting London (non-Londoners)	Holiday/pleasure: 5	Business: 2	VFR: 4	Study/Learn English: 4	Day Visit: 2	Other:	Tot. non-Londoners: 17	
Age	<30: 31	30-39: 6	40-49: 3	50-59: 1	Over 60: /			

Table 8.1 –Visitors interviewed (Spitalfields, excl. pilot)

Type of business	Role of interviewee (owner, manager or employee?)	Years since business started	Number of people working in the business	Main reasons for locating in the area	Advantages of this location
1) Jewellery maker (shop)	Owner, manager and producer	10 years	10 part-time	Famous name, presence of artists, no similar shops	/
2) Fashion designers' shop	Manager	7 years	14	It was becoming fashionable, no other similar shops	Brick Lane is a good spot, will be even better with the construction of a Tube station
3) records shop	Owner	3 years	2	Up and coming area, no similar shops	/
4) accessory designer's studio (main function) and shop (secondary function-products mostly sold on-line)	Owner, manager and producer	3 years	/	We lived nearby, affordable rent	Right for the kind of business we are, right place to be, young for a young company
5) fashion and accessories designers' shop (collective shop, 6 designers)	Owner, manager and producer	2 years	6	We lived nearby, happening place, affordable rent	Markets, reputation of the area (also known thanks to the film 'Brick Lane')

Table 8.2- Creative entrepreneurs interviewed (Spitalfields)

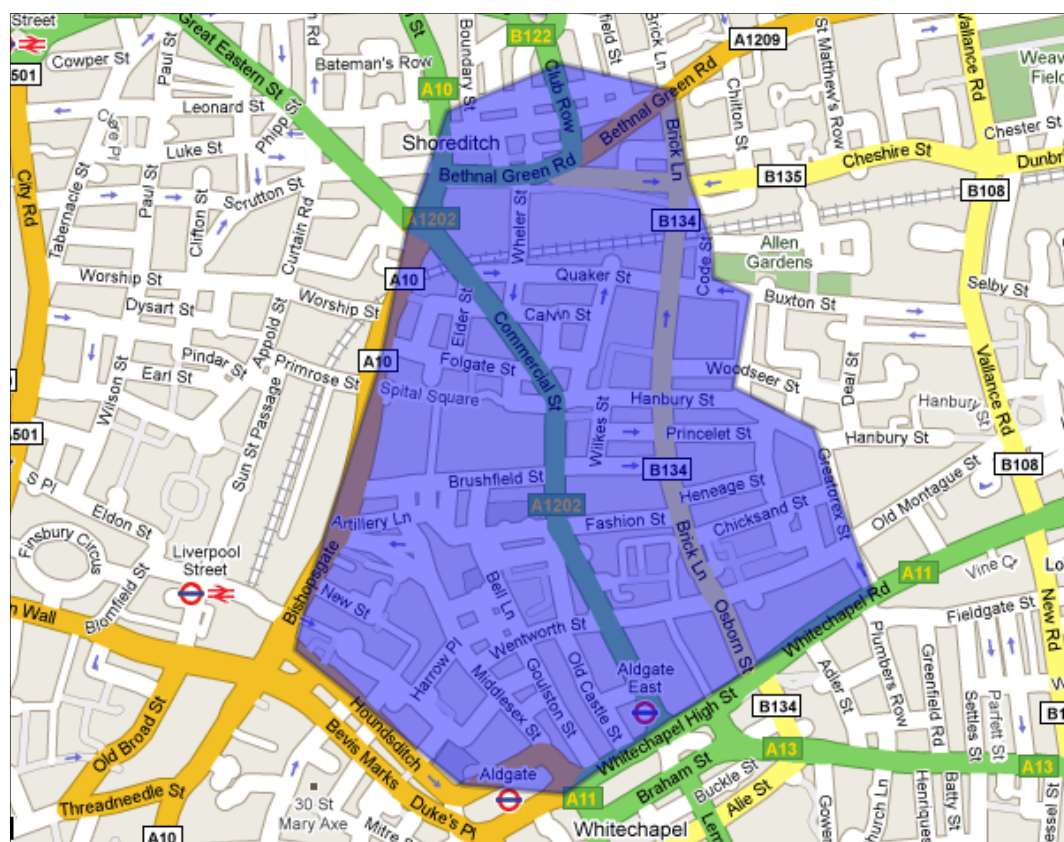


Figure 8.1-Google Map showing Spitalfields case study area

All Creative Industries

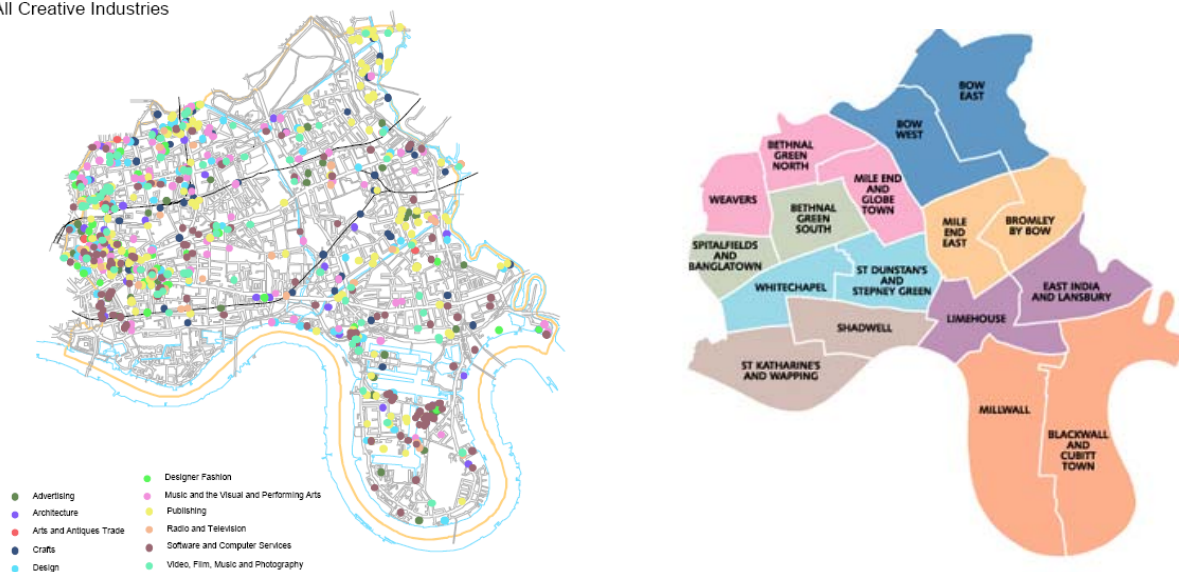


Figure 8.2

Left: Map of creative business in Tower Hamlets (Source: Tower Hamlets, 2006);

Right: map of Tower Hamlets with wards partition and names (Source: Tower Hamlets webpage, www.towerhamlets.gov.uk)

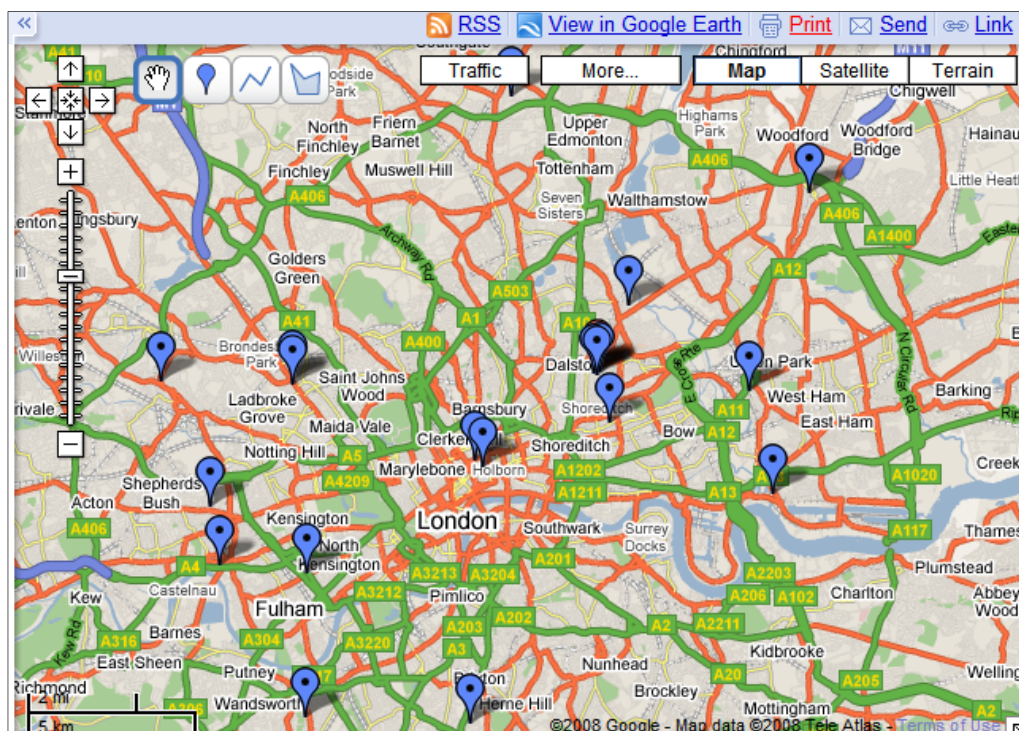


Figure 8.3- Google Map showing Brick Lane/Spitalfields interviewees' place of residence (if within Greater London). Postcodes (if provided by interviewee): W12, NW6, E15, SW2, E8, N1, N13, E8, W6, E5, NW6, NW10, SW5, SW18, N1, E18, E16, E8.

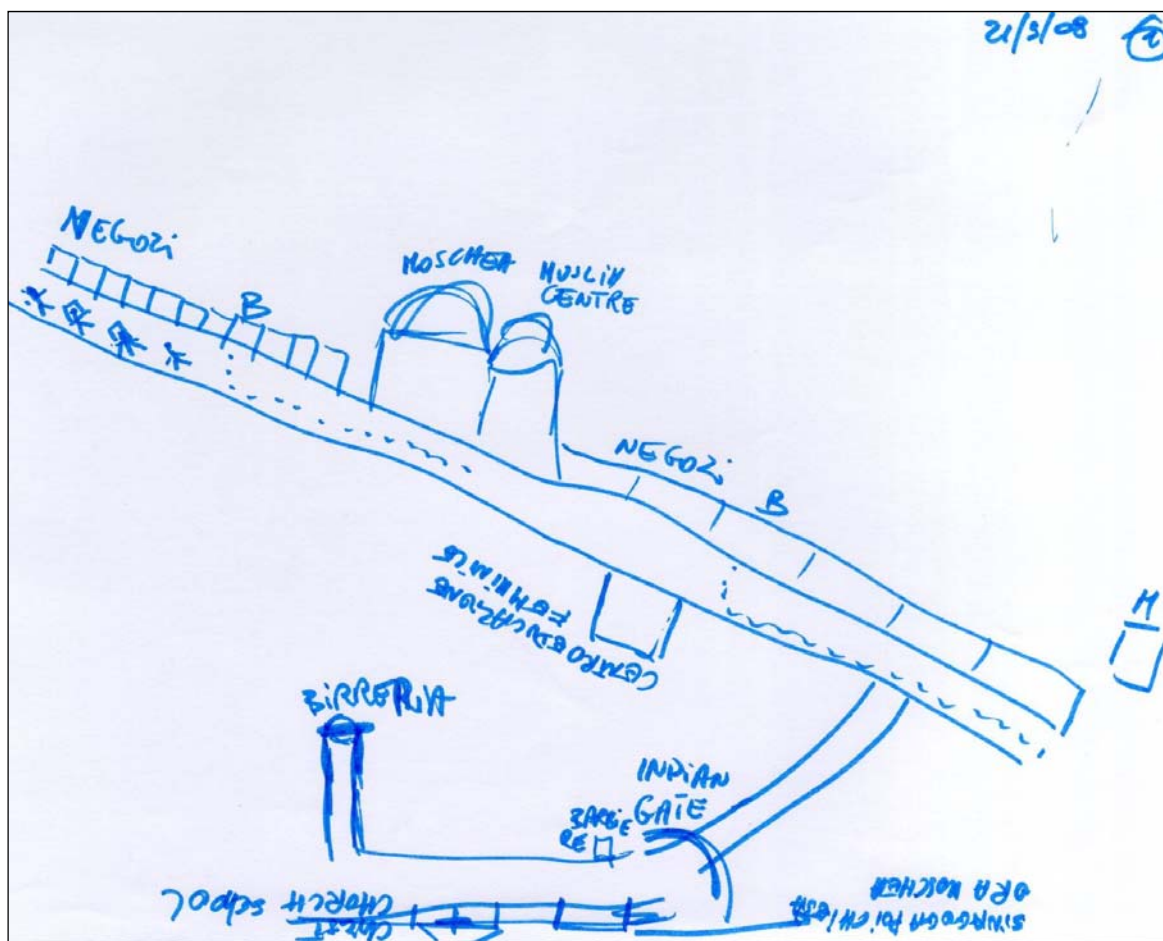


Figure 8.4 – sketch map drawn by a first time visitor to Spitalfields (from Padua, Italy)

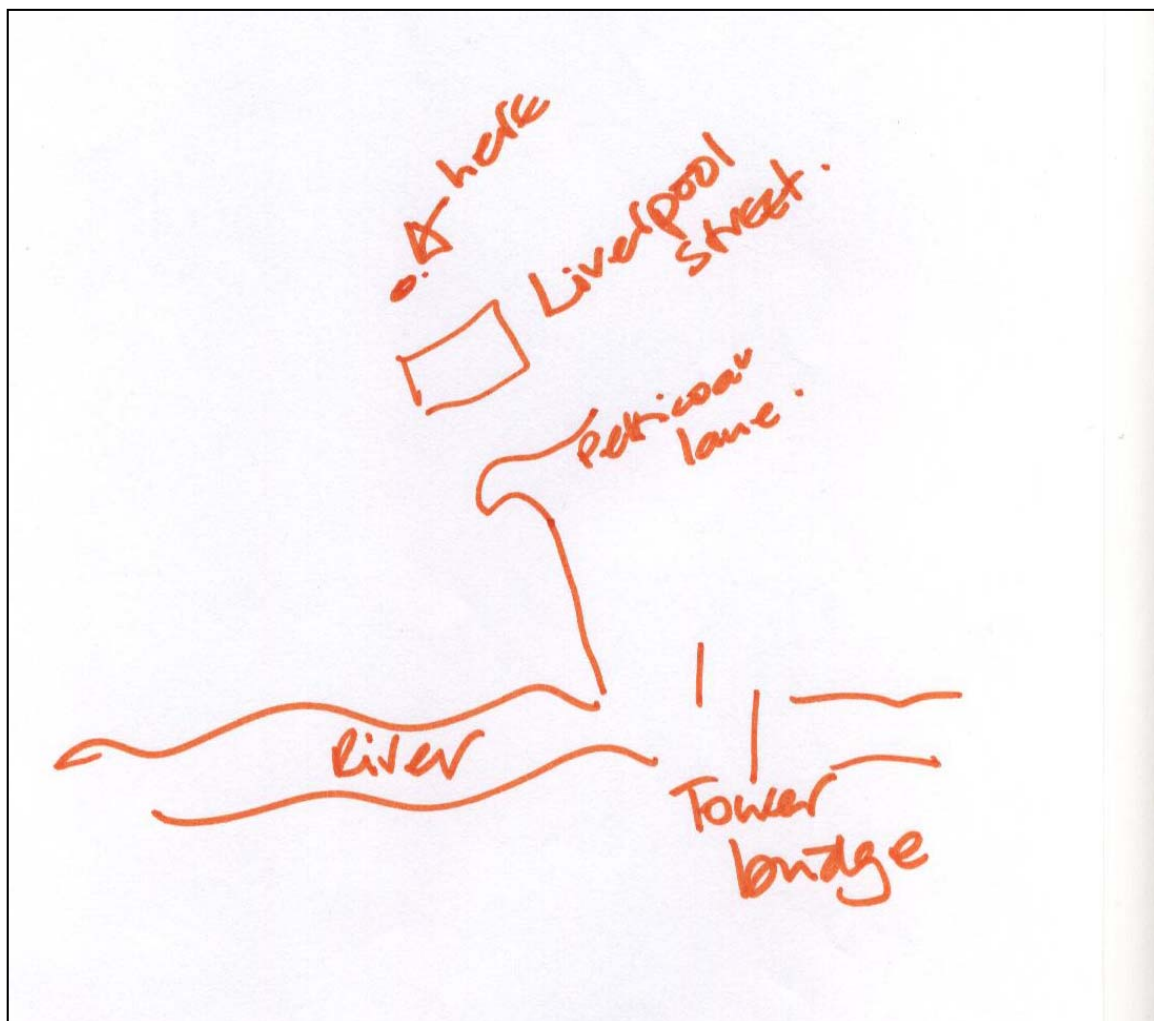


Figure 8.5 – sketch map drawn by a VFR day visitor from Oxford, UK.

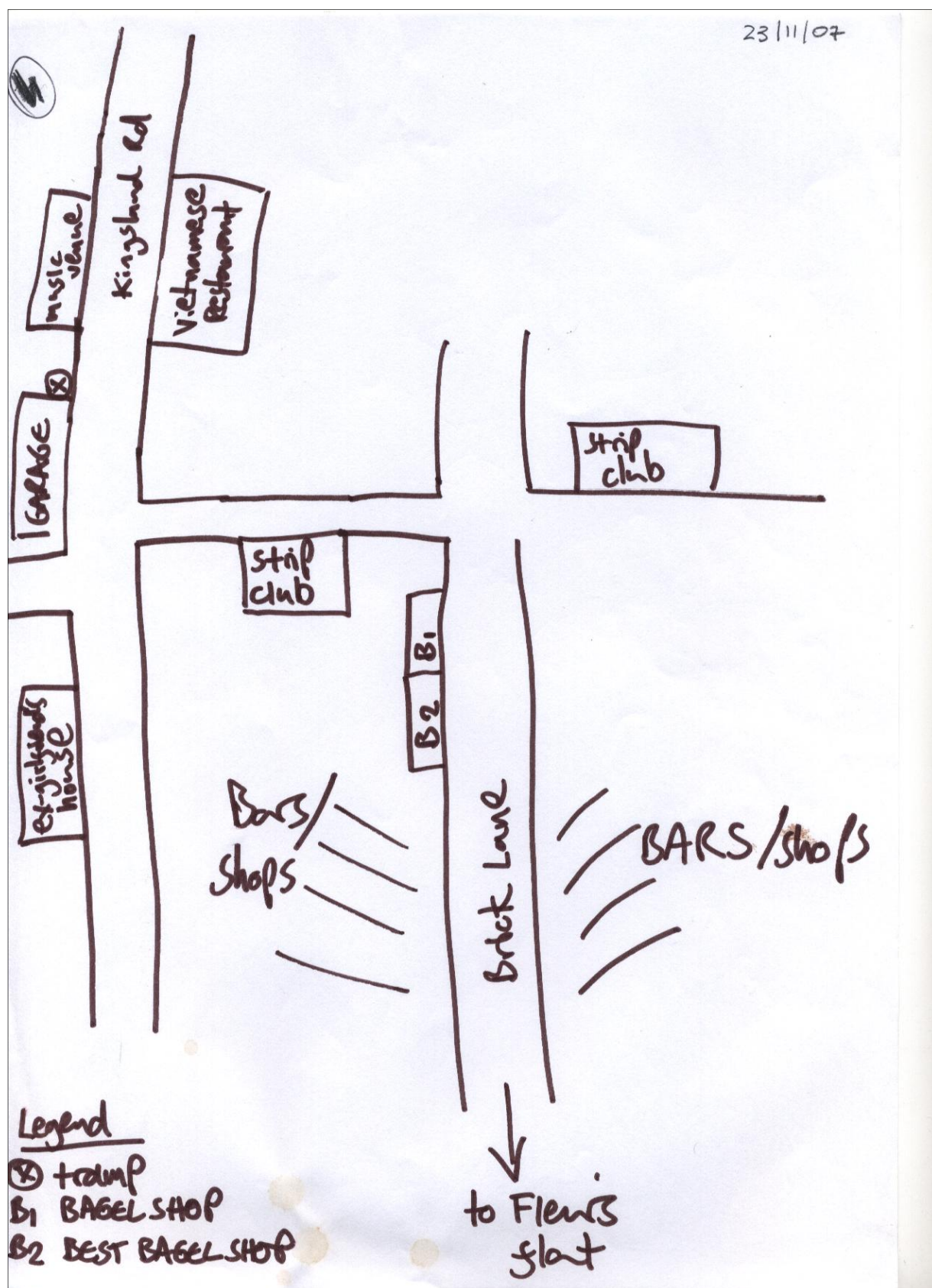


Figure 8.6- sketch map by a musician from Birmingham, UK (business tourist)

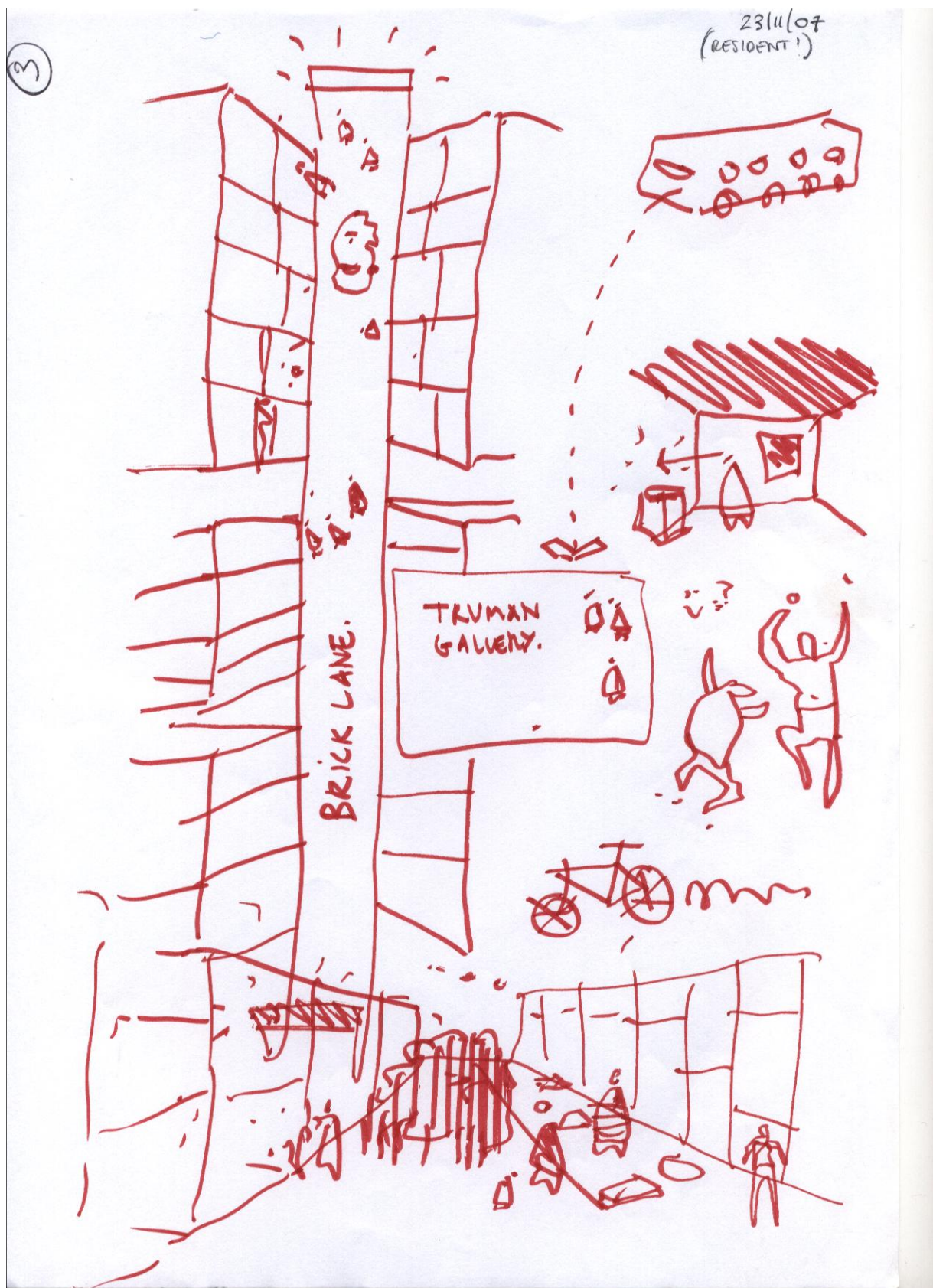


Figure 8.7- sketch map by an architect from London (originally from Belgium)

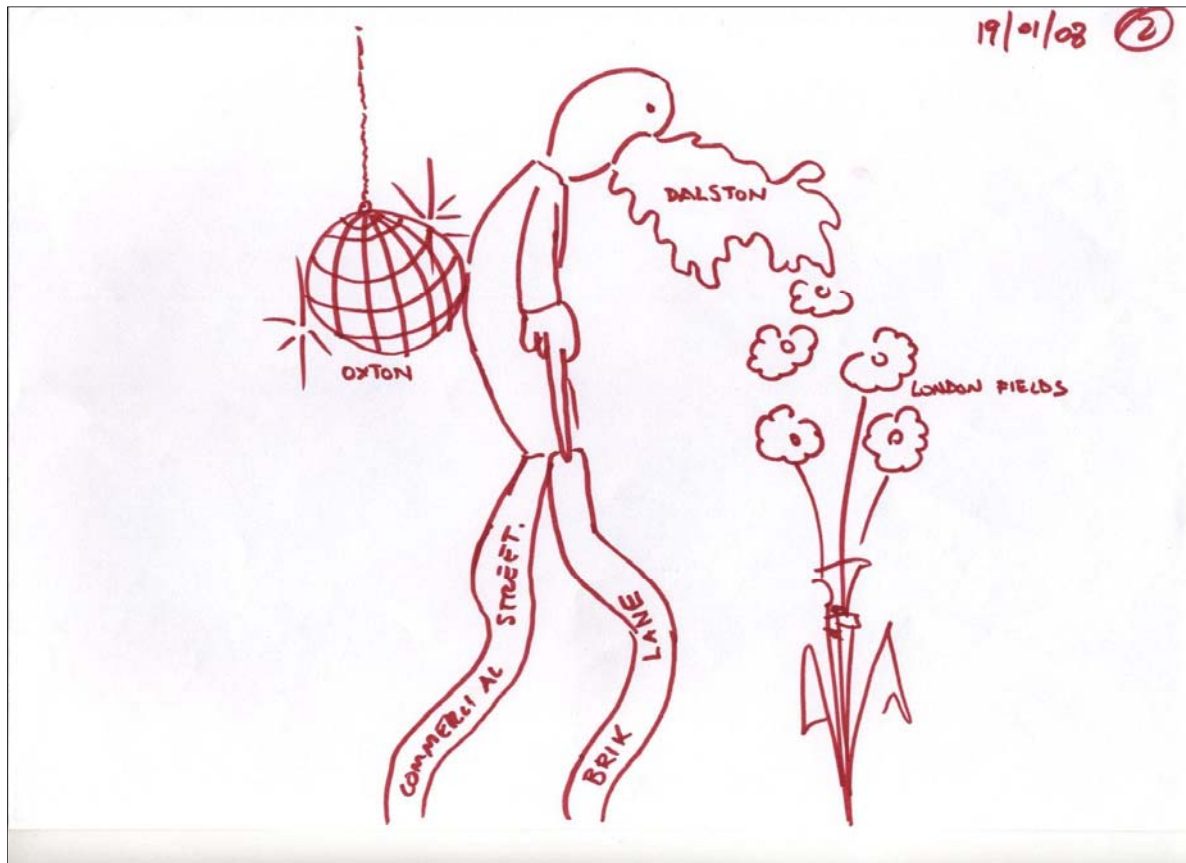


Figure 8.8 - sketch map by a graphic designer from London (originally from Italy)

9. HOXTON/SHOREDITCH - EVIDENCE ANALYSIS

The Hoxton/Shoreditch area

Interviews took place within the frame created by Hoxton Square, Arnold Circus and Leonard Street (map shown in Figure 9.1 page 180). The boundaries of this territory (here called Hoxton/Shoreditch) are not officially delimited and were chosen by the researcher because of the presence of creative industries and leisure facilities (see Chapter 6, 'Choice of Case Studies'). This area comprises sections of three different wards: Hoxton and Haggerston (in the borough of Hackney and both part of the Shoreditch neighbourhood), plus a small section of Weavers ward in Tower Hamlets.

Hackney's traditional economy was based on furniture-making, leather and clothing manufacture. This is reflected in the present local economy, which is mostly made of small businesses (88.7% of Hackney enterprises have fewer than 10 employees; Hackney Council, 2006). Between 1970s and 1990s many artists settled here, starting the development of several creative industry clusters. In the early 1990s, the area around Hoxton Square became the nurturing ground for the then emerging artistic group later known as Young British Artists. Still today Shoreditch and Hoxton are believed to contain some of the strongest clusters of creative businesses in Europe (Hackney Council, 2002). In the early 1990s, a number of regeneration projects were implemented as part of the City Challenge programme, including the redevelopment of some derelict buildings on Hoxton Square for artists' studio space and the reconversion of the Shoreditch Power Station into Circus Space, a circus school and cabaret space (Attfield, 1997). Other buildings on and around Hoxton Square were subsequently bought and redeveloped for use as cultural and leisure facilities (for instance, the Blue Note club and English National Opera contemporary opera studios) (Attfield, 1997). In 1996, Time Magazine designated Hoxton as one of the 'coolest places on the

planet’ and the area was then linked to the notion of ‘Cool Britannia’ (Pratt, 2009: 1047). In the early 2000s a branch of the famous White Cube gallery opened in Hoxton Square and several historical buildings on the square were refurbished. By that time, the area was already considered the ‘epicentre of the new media industry in the UK’ (Pratt, 2009: 1047), property prices had risen, and artists were moving to cheaper areas further east. While high property prices forced many artists to leave, the fact that 64% of all homes in Haggerston are socially rented (Hackney Council, 2007) meant that the economically deprived local population, to the present day, still remains.

The large development of the leisure and cultural economies in Hoxton/Shoreditch does not seem to have relieved acute social and economic problems. The expansion of leisure consumption has as yet failed to provide quality jobs for the local deprived population (Evans and Shaw, 2004) and its booming night-time economy has borne negative impacts on local crime rates (Hackney Council, 2007). According to Government Office for London statistics (2008), Hackney is the second poorest Borough in England, and Haggerston ward, where most of this case study area lies, ranks among the 5% most deprived territories in the country (Hackney Council, 2006). Even before recent recession, the borough had an unemployment rate of 11.9% and one of the highest crime rates in the UK (Hackney Council, 2006). In Haggerston the situation seems particularly dire, with less than half of the working age population in work and much higher crime rates than the rest of Hackney (Hackney Council, 2007).

Fieldwork

34 visitors (20 men and 14 women) were interviewed in the Hoxton/Shoreditch area between January and May 2008. Half of the subjects were London residents, from all parts of London, whereas half did not normally live in London. Most of the latter were VFR visitors (refer to page 181 for an overview of their place of residence). Like the other three case studies, the majority of interviewees were under 30 years of age. However, some older people were also interviewed, including one over 60 (see Table 9.1 page 178 for details). As in Spitalfields,

interviewed visitors included a high proportion of creative professionals. Beside visitors, six ‘creative entrepreneurs’ (including people working in cultural/art venues and creative shops) were also interviewed (see Table 9.2 page 179 for details).

Visitors’ Characteristics

Of the four case studies investigated within the present research, Hoxton/Shoreditch seems to be the one for which being a ‘creative area’ has the strongest impact on the type of people who decide to visit it. Across all four case study areas interviewees’ interest in art seemed to be an important element (with the exception of Deptford, where this is true but to a lesser extent). However, in the case of Hoxton/Shoreditch, this represented almost a constant factor across interviews. With the exception of only four visitors (of the 34 interviewed), all the interviewees declared to have a specific interest in the arts, and to be in the area for reasons related to this (for instance, the opening of an exhibition, looking around art galleries or the ‘arty feel’).

In comparison with Spitalfields visitors, Hoxton/Shoreditch interviewees seemed to be less interested in encountering different cultures during their visit. However, from other points of view, they could still be described as having a cosmopolitan lifestyle. The profile that came across from their interviews is one of an experienced traveller, open to ‘otherness’. In most cases (Londoners especially, but also tourists), interviewees said they were currently living in a country different from their motherland. Also, a search for cultural capital seemed to be an important objective. When asked what they looked for when visiting new places, most people named art or other forms of culture such as music or architecture. Half of the interviewees actually worked in the creative sector and, in some cases, their visit was directly related to their job. For example, an artist from Stroud (UK) was in London for the opening of his own exhibition the next day in Deptford and had decided on his day off to go to Hoxton/Shoreditch to visit some art galleries. A few architects were especially interested in the look of buildings because of their job. For instance, an architect who recently moved from Italy to South London, talking about what drove him to visit places within London, said:

‘...either I’ve read something interesting in my guide book or it’s an area with some fascinating story, and, because of my profession, I also like a lot to look at buildings, the architecture, the urban side of cities, so basically I like to go around and see the exterior design, the city in its various forms’

This interviewee’s sketch map reflects the subject’s interest for architecture, showing an image of the Gherkin and some other contemporary buildings in Liverpool station (Figure 9.4 page 183). Also Hoxton Square is represented, with short buildings all around it. Graffiti ‘art’ also plays an important role in his mental image (as confirmed through the interview), and two markets are represented as well (Columbia Road and Spitalfields). In this map Hoxton/Shoreditch, Spitalfields and Brick Lane are considered as part of the same area.

As in Spitalfields, artists and designers said they were looking for ‘inspiration’ or even raw material for their art (collected by taking photographs or buying products at one of the art tools shops). See, as an example, this extract from an interview with a graphic designer from south London:

‘I come here for culture (....) shops that you can get up here are a bit more fun (...) a bit arty and I come here for visual inspiration, to get inspired
[Interviewer: yes I saw you were taking pictures, what do you take pictures of?]
Anything that inspires me really, just the environment, just the environment more than anything, that’s what inspires me, I travel in different areas in London and get the different vibes, different environments and surroundings’.

In the case of Spitalfields there were differences between the characteristics and motivations of inner visitors and overseas/British tourists. However, in Hoxton/Shoreditch the visitors’ population seemed to be much more homogeneous. Generally young and well educated, in most cases they came to Hoxton/Shoreditch with a specific objective in mind related to their interest in the arts (often the White Cube gallery, as later discussed). In several cases they came following a guidebook, website or a review on a magazine (tourists as well as Londoners). In the case of tourists who were in Hoxton/Shoreditch as part as their visit to London, they were typically VFR or repeat visitors to London who already

knew the capital quite well. In some cases they were even Hoxton/Shoreditch repeat visitors, having been in this area during one of their previous visits to London. In other cases, they had never been to Hoxton/Shoreditch before and expressed their interest in discovering new parts of London or to see art galleries (White Cube in particular). Hoxton/Shoreditch interviewees seemed especially interested in exploring new places rather than adhering to the classic tourist route. Also, they appeared interested in getting to know the local cultural offer (from graffiti to contemporary art).

The Tourist Experience

Although overseas and British tourists seemed very keen on discovering a new, non-touristy part of London, ‘seeing real-London’ was not often mentioned as a main motivation to visit the area (in contrast to Spitalfields). On the other hand, Londoners frequently said to be especially interested in discovering new parts of London, just like a tourist would do. In particular, photography appeared to constitute a central activity for some Londoners visiting Hoxton/Shoreditch. Many explained they found the area especially interesting from a visual point of view, particularly in relation to its ‘urban look’ (for instance, see quotes 39, 42 Appendix VII). Graffiti, posters on the walls, old buildings, scruffy buildings seem to be elements that add to the urban charm of the area and visitors enjoy taking photographs of them. For instance, an architect from London was in Hoxton/Shoreditch for a ‘graffiti photographic tour’ (as described in quote 42, Appendix VII).

Not only creative professionals, but also people working in other fields appeared interested in discovering new parts of London. In quote 44 (Appendix VII), for instance, a hairdresser describes his view of London as made of many different towns, and his curiosity about new parts of the city. The theme of ‘London, a city made of many cities’ seems to be in common not only to interviews with Hoxton/Shoreditch visitors, but to much of the evidence collected across the four case studies (both tourists and Londoners). This theme emerges very clearly from the next quote, which is also a good example of the ‘de-differentiation’ or everyday tourism concept:

‘Every street, every corner [of London] seems to witness events and stories, so it’s really a source of inspiration for me, I like to go around because looking at a corner, at a street more attentively these stories come to mind, London seems to have an infinity of this, it’s a city that offers endless possibilities, I came ten years ago, the typical tour you make with your parents, instead now I’m really experiencing it, I’m discovering, in the week-ends I try to see different places (...) because there are areas that are completely different, it seems that there are one hundred different Londons’ (architect from South London)

As the qualitative data shows, in Hoxton/Shoreditch art galleries seemed to represent a major attraction for Londoners and overseas/British visitors alike. Take as an example the next extract from an interview with a fashion designer from Italy (on holiday, visiting a friend) who, very interestingly, considered the area his ‘number one’ tourist spot when he goes to London:

‘It’s a classic itinerary for me, when I come only two or three days I don’t go to the number one London area, Oxford Street and Covent Garden, for me this is the central area because I want to see the art galleries, I’m very interested in contemporary art, and these fashion shops, by independent designers (...) we went to White Cube and various other galleries and later we will leave this area and we will go to Tate Modern’ (fashion designer from Siena, Italy).

Some visitors (including visitors interviewed in Spitalfields and London Fields), when asked what they had been doing during their visit, described their programme for the day, which included more than one creative area (see discussion on ‘creative tours’ in the previous chapter). This is also shown in visitors’ mental maps, which frequently included Brick Lane, Spitalfields market, Liverpool Street station, Columbia market, Hoxton Square and Shoreditch in one map (see for instance Figure 9.3 and Figure 9.4 page 182-183). Interestingly, several maps also included the Gherkin, which could mean that Hoxton/Shoreditch was actually seen as quite close to the financial core of London. This leads to another interesting question for this research, that is, whether Hoxton/Shoreditch is considered a central area or not.

Generally, non-Londoners seemed to consider Hoxton/Shoreditch as a peripheral area, whereas Londoners see it as just outside the centre, near the City. However, most people rather identify it with East London or the East-End, and this seemed to be the most important aspect of its location for them. As mentioned earlier, the area was never referred to as 'Hoxton' or 'Shoreditch' by the interviewer, so the subjects' interpretation of what 'this area' was for them represents a finding in itself. Interviewees tended to refer to it as either Shoreditch, Hoxton or, more generally, the East End.

Atmosphere

As mentioned in the previous section, in Hoxton/Shoreditch the numerous art galleries (White Cube in particular), are important tourist attractions. Other reasons to visit the area, according to the evidence collected, include meeting friends who live there and wandering around. However, similarly to the other three case studies, when Hoxton/Shoreditch interviewees attempted to express what they liked about the area, they often referred to its 'vibe' or 'atmosphere' and described its intangible qualities. For example:

'There is no reason to be here today rather than I like it here, I like the pubs around here, there is a nice little vibe around here, kind of like arty touch vibe, you don't get any of this in London,.. It's a bit, I don't know, its fun (...) it's just a nice atmosphere (graphic designer from Surrey, works in East London).

Being 'young' appeared to be an important component of Hoxton/Shoreditch's atmosphere. Most interviewees (themselves mostly under 30) said that Hoxton/Shoreditch had a young vibe, almost a 'college atmosphere', as one visitor from Hong Kong called it. The fact of been young seems to be connected with the people who frequent it, but also with the strong night-life scene and the shops mostly targeted at a young audience. When interviewees in the other three areas were asked whether they knew Hoxton/Shoreditch and why, the most common answer (together with 'trendy Hoxton') was 'the night-life' or 'a place to go out'. It must be noted that all the interviews were conducted during day-time only. This choice had two main rationales: firstly, since the research's focus is on the relationship between creative industries and tourism, it seemed sensible to

conduct fieldwork during creative industries' and cultural consumption facilities opening times. Secondly, safety issues led to the final decision of conducting primary research (for all the case studies) during day time only.

Also on Hoxton/Shoreditch visitors' mind maps (or even Spitalfields and London Fields visitors who included Hoxton/Shoreditch in their maps) frequently represented a number of bars and night-time venues. For instance, page 185 shows quite a detailed mental map, on which a designer from North London marked several night-time venues as well as art galleries. Also partly related to the vibrant club and bar scene is the fact noted by some interviewees that Hoxton/Shoreditch is perceived by some as not very family friendly or safe (see for instance quotes 48 and 49 appendix VII). However, not only the night-life seemed to provide the area with a young feel, but also the people who frequent it. 'People' seemed to be a fundamental factor that contributes to create Hoxton/Shoreditch's atmosphere, as this next quote exemplifies:

'What do you like about it? Yeah, I don't know...I guess it has like a vibe and the people walking around and I don't know I just like the positive attitude ... the people that live around here, that come here and like they stick around here I guess...I don't know...I feel like...I like it' (student from France)

Similarly to the case of Spitalfields, interviewees when talking about Hoxton/Shoreditch patrons (in which most times they did not identify) said that they are 'cool, fashionable and trendy'¹, fact that plays an important role in shaping the area's character and atmosphere. What emerges very clearly in Hoxton/Shoreditch is the struggle of some visitors between a feeling of attraction to the area's 'coolness' and a sort of rejection of the superficiality and pretentiousness linked to the world of fashion. For instance, a first time visitor from Frankfurt summarised her first impressions of the area, which seemed to her

¹ As shown in Appendix V, Hoxton/Shoreditch interviews had the highest occurrences of words such as trendy, cool, hip and similar. This group of words in Hoxton/Shoreditch also had more occurrences (namely, 61) than words such as mixed/diverse (18 occurrences), contrived and similar (2 occurrences), rough (2) and alternative/bohemian (9). On the other hand, the number of times words such as arty and creative were mentioned was even higher (76, the highest number for this category across all the four case studies, despite the higher number of interviews conducted in Spitalfields and London Fields).

very trendy and cool compared to her own city. Interestingly, she also claimed to like the people because they are fashionable and she tries 'to be like them':

'[What is your first impression about the area?] I like it

[And what did you especially like about it?] The people, the bars and the atmosphere

[What about the people?] They are cool and trendy and I try to be like them

[And the bars?] They are all right as well, it's just a nice place (...) unique, quite cutting edge, rather than... say, when you are in Frankfurt for example, it's really classic and no cool instead here (...) it's cutting edge and people have pretty haircuts, this is what I like, really' (physiotherapist from Frankfurt, Germany)

Another visitor (a designer from London) discussed Hoxton/Shoreditch in a much more experienced way, like a detached expert, someone who has seen it grow, reach its peak (of trendiness) and then decline. This interviewee pointed out that fashion does not 'bother' him. He explained that he used to live near Spitalfields and has now moved north, to Stoke Newington, where he found an environment more suitable for his age (as, according to him, he is no longer young enough for the East End's noisy life). In this extract, he describes the shift of Hoxton/Shoreditch from artists' hub to 'the new Soho' (which is, supposedly, more commercial). However, he also appreciates the area's social mix and vibrant night-life:

'I did used to really like it [this area], years ago, well I lived on Chester Street off Brick Lane and that was kind of before everything happened (...) and then now it has become really commercialised, (...) I think this has currently become a new Soho which is fine, I mean, there's lots of students in this area...It's a great environment for them to be in, very creative...it's just maybe I've become a little bit older and I just kind of moved on and.. maybe just I'm looking for something quieter (...)' (designer from London)

Visitors' opinions about the area's trendiness seem quite contradictory even within the same interview. One photographer from London declared that in Hoxton/Shoreditch there are too many pretentious people and, few moments later, said that the area is a 'good place to meet people with same way of thinking' (which he repeated twice). It is therefore not clear whether he identified with these

pretentious people or if he recognised two different groups of people, pretentious and non pretentious:

‘[What do you not like?] Too many pretentious people...they think they are more stylish than the rest of them, better than the rest of them.

[If you could change something of this area to make it more appealing to you, what would you change?] Less of those people

[How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?] It’s a easy going area you can do anything you like , there are many tourism things to do, good place to meet people with same way of thinking,...yeah the galleries you go and meet people with same way of thinking’ (Photographer from East London)

Many visitors (including people who were interviewed in the other three areas and were asked whether they knew Hoxton/Shoreditch) seemed to identify Hoxton/Shoreditch with East London’s ‘extreme trendiness’. Clothing and original haircuts seem to characterise the typical ‘Hoxton/Shoreditch crowd’ and ‘the Hoxton/Shoreditch person’ has become a stereotype of the cool, (too) trendy East-Londoner. Dialogue between the researcher and two visitors in London Fields exemplifies this point:

‘[What do you know it [Hoxton] for?] The trendy Hoxton. It’s one of those areas that you would like to go out to. The fashionable crowd. Known for all the wrong reasons but...

[What do you mean by ‘the wrong reasons’?] Yeah, trendy dresses. Wacky headed. Tight jeans. You know what is a Hoxton person [Interviewee’s friend: A Shoreditch twaik!] Yeah, that is said quite a lot. And also they really try hard, too hard... like fashion type of students. They are the people who go to the university... So they can dress up and enjoy the cheap area of Hoxton’ (music PR from London, interviewed in London Fields)

The fame of Hoxton/Shoreditch as ‘ultra trendy’ London area has been long established, to the point that a ‘Hoxton/Shoreditch person’ has become a stereotype, and the ‘Hoxton fin’ a name for a punk hairstyle. A visitor interviewed

in London Fields pointed out the high ‘wanky level’² of Hoxton/Shoreditch, which, according to him, is even above that of London Fields (which he found a bit too pretentious too, especially the market). Interestingly (see quote 58 Appendix VII) he said that in Hoxton/Shoreditch there are too many ‘guys in suits’, which makes it ‘not real enough’. This point reveals how words such as ‘real’ are used differently by different people: while the ‘real London’ is, for some, people going to work in office wear, for others the opposite is true.

The excessive trendiness of Hoxton/Shoreditch is probably the main reason why, in comparison with the other case studies, people mention the fact that the area is authentic and spontaneous less frequently. Although a few overseas visitors did mention its authenticity (an impression probably given by the comparison with more touristic areas), for many others (Londoners in particular) Hoxton/Shoreditch seemed to be quite ‘pretentious’ and therefore less authentic. The area’s pretentiousness probably explains why people seemed to find it also less welcoming, in some cases almost intimidating (although some visitors felt very comfortable in this kind of super-cool environment). The traditional village theme, which was prominent in the other case studies (notably in London Fields and Deptford, but to some extent also in Spitalfields), seemed irrelevant to Hoxton/Shoreditch, where qualitative evidence is also characterised by the absence of other themes such as tranquillity, diversity, segregation/social divide and colourfulness.

Spatial characteristics

Overall, spatial characteristics played a less central role than intangible qualities in the tourist experience described by the interviewees. However, some visitors seemed to appreciate also the urban environment’s general look, especially the architecture (e.g. quotes 61, 64 and 65, Appendix VII). The square, with its (recently refurbished) old buildings, seemed to be a central element of Hoxton/Shoreditch’s built environment, one of the reasons being that it represents the only small green space around Old Street (several interviewees indicate lack

² Wanky: Indulgent, pretentious, simultaneously showy and useless (according to Urban dictionary, www.urbandictionary.com)

of green spaces as a major flaw). The square appears in almost every mental map, and few of are representations of the square only them (for example the one shown in Figure 9.7). This, however, could also be explained by the fact that most interviews were conducted in the square (or very near-by).

In the next extract an architect from South London describes his perceptions of the area, including the beauty of Hoxton Square. This quote also reveals another important theme emerged from the interviews, which is the interest derived from the area's history of (alleged) successful regeneration.

‘Historically this area is controversial because it has always been overcrowded, the typical London with twenty people in one apartment, but now it has this colourful bits, like a design shop, a little restaurant, a trendy bar, there are spots of colour, and this square is very nice also in terms of structure, very typical of London, with a central court and buildings all around, and all the restaurants, it's very, very nice’ (architect from South London)

Although most visitors mentioned the art galleries as a major attraction, the only gallery that seems to recur in many sketch maps is the White Cube. There could be various reasons for this: firstly, White Cube is the most famous gallery in the area, therefore people remembered its name and wrote it on their map. Secondly many people declared to be in the area especially to see an exhibition at the White Cube gallery; therefore they obviously marked it on their maps. One person, disappointed to find it closed, even drew the gallery and wrote ‘closed on Sundays’ on the map. In addition, it must be said that, as it is located in Hoxton Square where most of the interviews were conducted, visitors could probably see it while drawing their maps. Finally, another possible interpretation for its prominence could be the fact that, following Lynch's theory (1960) the look of the building that hosts it is especially memorable.

Several visitors noted that there are many small, independent shops in the area rather than big chain stores -, although this characteristic seems to be less important in Hoxton/Shoreditch than in other areas such as Spitalfields or Deptford. As a physiotherapist from Frankfurt described, Hoxton/Shoreditch ‘is unique, quite cutting edge (...) there are no major shops and things, there are more

independent shops selling funky gear and things, red trainers, rather than H&M'. Also being 'urban', a bit scruffy, with many graffiti on the walls emerged from the qualitative data as an important feature for visitors.

Tourism Development

In terms of tourism development, the picture that comes across from the data collected is one of an emerging tourism area. Londoners seemed to know Hoxton/Shoreditch for its vibrant alternative night-life and for the high concentration of art galleries and trendy shops. The area is therefore quite established as a leisure and cultural consumption hub for a certain target, namely the young Londoner interested in a specific type of culture (contemporary art and underground/house/alternative music). In comparison with traditional tourist areas, which offer a safe and predictable environment, Hoxton/Shoreditch's appeal comes also from the fact of being unpredictable, thus allowing people to discover new things, including less pleasant ones. The following extract from an interview with a tourist from Italy (who works in the marketing department of a fashion company), for example, illustrates the idea of the non-traditional tourist area, an area that 'surprises':

'When I go to Spain it often happens to me to get surprised by what I see, this is something that doesn't normally happen in London, even though I really like it, it's not a city that surprises me, I like it, I feel very comfortable, but it doesn't surprise me. Instead this is an area that surprises me, that I like to explore, that provokes curiosity in me (...) it has a human dimension, it's very authentic, cosy, I feel at home'.

However, Hoxton/Shoreditch is slowly starting to attract also another type of visitor: Londoners or overseas and domestic tourists who want to discover a new area that is 'young', 'rough' and 'alternative', and where the latest trends in contemporary art, music and underground fashion can be seen and consumed. The opening of a branch of one of the most famous commercial galleries in London (White Cube) has also contributed to Hoxton/Shoreditch's tourism development thanks to the inclusion of the area in some guidebooks and travel/art magazines.

Some of the art galleries (as illustrated by quotes 70 and 71, Appendix VII) consider White Cube as the catalyst for the cultural quarter, although it opened in 2000, when the Shoreditch/Hoxton area had already been a creative hub for a long time. From the evidence collected, it seems that the area around Hoxton Square is perceived by some as an embryonic tourist bubble. This also emerges from some of the interviewees' mental maps (for instance figure 7), in which Hoxton Square and its surroundings are drawn as a separate entity (just like a bubble). In one of the mental maps, a German tourist tried to represent gentrification and the divide between poor and rich parts (Figure 9.5 page 184). Most sketches only show a small section of the area, generally Hoxton Square and a few road around it, which they remember for the presence of a restaurant, fashion shop or night-time venue. In comparison with Spitalfields, ethnic restaurants play a much smaller role in the maps (although there are many of them in the area), whereas night clubs seem to be the most memorable places after Hoxton Square and the White Cube gallery.

Being a model for culture-driven regeneration constitutes a magnet for a certain type of visitor, interested in this kind of development. Many visitors who were seeing it for the first time were aware that it used to be deprived and were interested to see the effects of regeneration; for instance, a German tourist (one of the only four interviewees above the age of forty) explained that he had read an article about the area's development which made him curious to visit it:

‘Interviewer: How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?’

Interviewee: I would say it's a very new part of London, it's creative and in development, all these buildings have been reconstructed or refurbished, a lot of things happen in this area, it's London and it's change (...) I don't know the English expression for this, something like... in Germany things have to go to this kind of structure like here and it also becomes a centre for people with money, and this people want to come and live here and they change this character' (bookseller from Cologne)

Similarly to the case of Spitalfields, often in Hoxton/Shoreditch the fact that the area is developing, therefore changing, provokes a sense of nostalgia in those

visitors who know it well. The following quote from an interview with a woman from Switzerland (visiting friends in London, where she used to live several years ago) illustrates this point:

‘I have a lot of memories here because I used to come here say 9 years ago and then there was ‘Metal Heads’ every Monday night there was a ‘drum & bass’ night and it was really run down, it was the place to go out, and it was cheap, a lot cheaper than anywhere else, and it’s still a bit arty but it has changed, it was a shock coming here, now it’s all made up it looks richer it used to be derelict here now it’s totally different (...)’ (graphic designer from Zurich).

The Creative Cluster

As mentioned in the previous section, creative industries seemed to play a major role in the area’s appeal, attracting visitors in several ways. Firstly, visitors appeared to a great extent attracted to the area because of its ‘arty’ feel, which is arguably caused by the presence of many creative people working, living and going out there. Secondly, some visitors were in Hoxton/Shoreditch especially to see a particular exhibition or a particular gallery (often White Cube). Also, some visitors seemed to see the appeal of the small independent shops, many of which are ‘creative shops’ (fashion, design, art, etc.). What is more, some visitors undertaking a ‘creative tour’, looking at more than one creative area on the same day. Finally, some overseas tourists know the area as an example of art-driven regeneration, and are especially interested to see the results.

One of the interviewees summarised some of these points during the interview:

‘I think they [creative industries] did great here. I think there are a lot fashion companies here, which let in the bars, because the way the bar is designed creates the sort of buzz that certain people would come to, and I think little independent shops as well I mean its kind of very new designers lot of creativity here and that obviously brings in certain person and it produces a certain person, you know, that shops lives works drinks around here, so its very important’ (designer from London)

As noted in the first section, the visitors' significant interest towards local creative activities also partially dependent on the fact that many of them worked in the creative industries themselves, as this quote highlights:

'Interviewer: Do you know that there are many creative industries around here?

Interviewee: Yes, you can feel it immediately, you can see it on the signs on the advertisements, tags, trash bins and walls, I mean, you can really feel there is some creative movement but we are very sensitive for stuff like this because we are creative persons as well' (shoe designer from Hong Kong).

Although 'being creative' appeared to be a fundamental characteristic of the area from interviews, surprisingly not many creative industries beside the White Cube gallery actually appeared in people's sketch maps. This could be because for interviewed visitors what really mattered about being in a creative cluster was not the creative industries themselves, but rather being surrounded by what they saw as creative people, having creative shops (which are sometimes drawn in the maps) and, above all, experiencing and enjoying a creative atmosphere.

Visitors perceived the area as a creative cluster, but also all the creative entrepreneurs interviewed said they took advantage of having other creative businesses in the vicinity (as shown in Table 9.2 page 179). Some really felt to belong to a community, for example:

['Are you in contact with the other galleries and other businesses?]

Yes, definitely, even with some other galleries we collaborate sometime, everyone is always helping each other out whether be sometimes other businesses use our space for events, or we go to them and ask if we can use, anything from the ladder to the fax machine...it's a very family feeling especially on the street' (Art Gallery1)

Others, see the advantage mainly in the 'creative flow' or human capital:

'Interviewer: What are the assets of this area for your business?

Interviewee: I think it's the type of people that work and live here, and I wouldn't say it's really the rents, I think the advantage is the attitude, I mean there is an entrepreneurial attitude here, and so you can set up something, you can be unconventional it doesn't really matter, you couldn't have a gallery like this in... well, you couldn't have it in any place in West London because the rent would be

too high and because the attitude.. it's more conventional, whereas here there are thousands of artists so you have the constant in-flock of new people and new ideas, people that are in east London' (art gallery 2)

This same interviewee (the owner of an art gallery, very involved in local activities like production of a map, common website etc.) also said that more collaboration would be helpful, because, although there is a cluster, different businesses do not seem to collaborate much. For her the cluster in Hoxton/Shoreditch is more apparent in the atmosphere and creative feel, but it is not very strong in practice. The other art gallery manager interviewed (quote 81, Appendix VII) saw the main advantage derived from being in a creative cluster as being accessible availability of creative talent.

In terms of joint marketing, the most important tool (mentioned by all the galleries) seems to be 'First Thursdays', a monthly event in which all the participating galleries remain open during the evening (sometimes also organising additional cultural activities, openings, etc.). The First Thursdays event (which involves a wide number of galleries across East London) is organised by Whitechapel Gallery, promoted by the magazine Time Out, and funded by Arts Council England, City Fringe Partnership and Tower Hamlets and Hackney Councils.

According to most of the creative businesses interviewed, a part from First Thursdays, not much is done to encourage creative business development in the area. The art galleries recognise that the Council (Hackney, in this case) has many social problems to address and cannot therefore support cultural businesses as well:

'I say why don't we collaborate? I think there is tremendous potential but no integrated policy, there is no vision and nobody wants to collaborate and it's not Hackney Borough's priority at all, it was but for only about ten minutes.

[so what is their priority?]

Joblessness, worklessness, poverty, illiteracy, and they don't believe tourism is a way out of that' (art gallery2)

However, some creative business also accuse the council of giving priority (in terms of space use) to the most lucrative activities, for instance allowing development companies to build big office blocks, a rise in property values and gentrification of the area as a result (e.g. quote 84 Appendix VII). Another policy problem highlighted by some galleries (also in London Fields) is that, whereas most of Hoxton/Shoreditch lies within the borough of Hackney, some galleries are instead located in Tower Hamlets. This constitutes a problem because the two Councils do not seem (according to the interviewees) to collaborate, making any joint marketing activity or event very difficult to organise (see quote 85 Appendix VII).

Conclusions

The area of Hoxton/Shoreditch is known for its cutting-edge art, music and night-life scenes. During the evenings the area's night-clubs and bars attract a high number of people, whereas during the day art galleries constitute the main tourist attraction. Although not yet renowned as a tourist destination, Hoxton/Shoreditch is now starting to attract some overseas and British tourists who, having seen London's classic tourist sights, are interested in discovering a new, alternative and 'rougher' part of the city. Also some Londoners who would not normally visit contemporary art galleries or participate in the night-life are now being drawn to the area, mainly for its young and trendy atmosphere and because they are interested in discovering new parts of London. Visitors often pointed out that London is a city made of many cities, and that every area is different and worth exploring. Some explained to be on some kind of 'creative tour', meaning a long walk which will take them to several creative areas or to a number of 'creative markets'. From the data collected within this study, the profile of the typical Hoxton/Shoreditch visitor emerges as a young, well-educated person, who has a strong interest in the arts and often in urban culture (e.g. graffiti). Interviewees were often employed in the creative sector and enjoyed discovering new places and cultures. The type of cultural capital visitors seemed to be looking for in Hoxton/Shoreditch includes discovering hidden graffiti, learning about new contemporary artists, gaining knowledge of the latest underground fashion/music trends and learning about gentrification. Interviewees in Hoxton/Shoreditch

seemed especially knowledgeable about local development processes, and showed a specific interest in exploring an area which is often described as arty-farty or gentrified.

The White Cube Gallery, located in Hoxton Square, is the area's most important single attraction. Hoxton Square was considered the area's heart by many; this is illustrated also by its central role in their mental maps, showing its landmark status (Lynch, 1960). More than in any other case study, in Hoxton/Shoreditch interviewees had a specific purpose for their visit, in most cases visiting White Cube or one of the other contemporary art galleries. The people who frequent the area, who were often described as 'ultra-trendy', appeared to be another major tourist attraction, although seen as intimidating by some visitors.

Although some spatial characteristics, such as old buildings, graffiti and small shops, seemed to be important factors in terms of appeal, the atmosphere (or the area's intangible qualities) certainly played a fundamental role. What emerged to contribute the most to the creation of an atmosphere, was the fact that Hoxton/Shoreditch is perceived as young, vibrant, arty and trendy.

Gender	Male: 20	Female: 14	Tot. 34					
Profession	Creative industry /arts (inc. art students): 18	Business/finance: /	Student: 4	Education /research/journalist: 2	Engineer/informatics: 1	Management/accounting/administration: 1	Hospitality/retail: 1	Other: 7
Usual place of residence	London: 17	UK (excl. London): 4	Europe (excl. UK): 10	US & Canada: 1	Asia: 2	Australia & NZ:	Tot. non Londoners:	
Reason for visiting London (non-Londoner)	Holiday/pleasure: 4	Business: 2	VFR: 7	Study/Learn English: 1	Day Visit: 1	Other: 2	Tot. non-Londoners: 17	
Age	<30: 21	30-39: 9	40-49: 2	50-59: 1	Over 60: 1			

Table 9.1- Visitors interviewed (Hoxton/Shoreditch)

Type of business	Role of interviewee (owner, manager or employee?)	Years since business started (in this location)	Number of people working in the businesses	Main reasons for locating in the area	Advantages of this location
1) Contemporary art Gallery	Manager	2	7	Good gallery space	People coming to the area are interested in art, availability of resources at a local level, presence of creative people
2) Contemporary art gallery	Owner, manager	5	1 (plus interns)	It's the centre of contemporary art	Type of people who work here (creative people), constant flow of creative people and ideas, entrepreneurial attitude
3) Theatre and theatre school	Owner, manager	1	16	Affordable space, good space for theatre purposes	Being near Hoxton Square which is considered arty, being central but not central at the same time
4) Fashion designer's shop	Employee	5	6	The owner/designer had a studio here first, there are many creative people, right type of customers (alternative)	Art feel, hippy customers
5) Moroccan art studio and gallery	employee	2	2	affordable rent, presence of undiscovered talent in the area	A lot of artists and undiscovered talent
6) White Cube gallery	employee	8	80 or 90	/	Many offices around so people can come during lunch break

Table 9.2 - Creative entrepreneurs interviewed (Hoxton/Shoreditch)

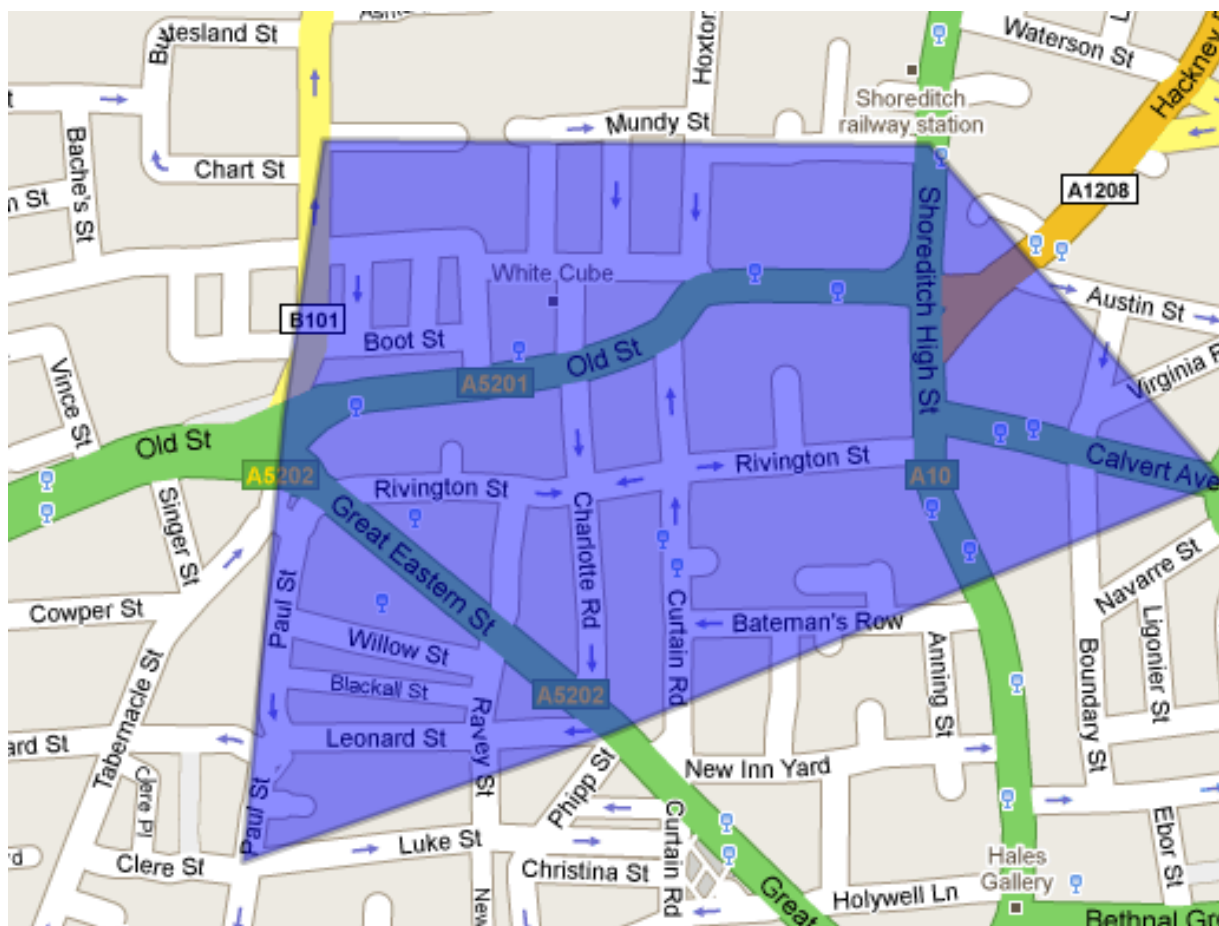


Figure 9.1 - Google map showing case study area

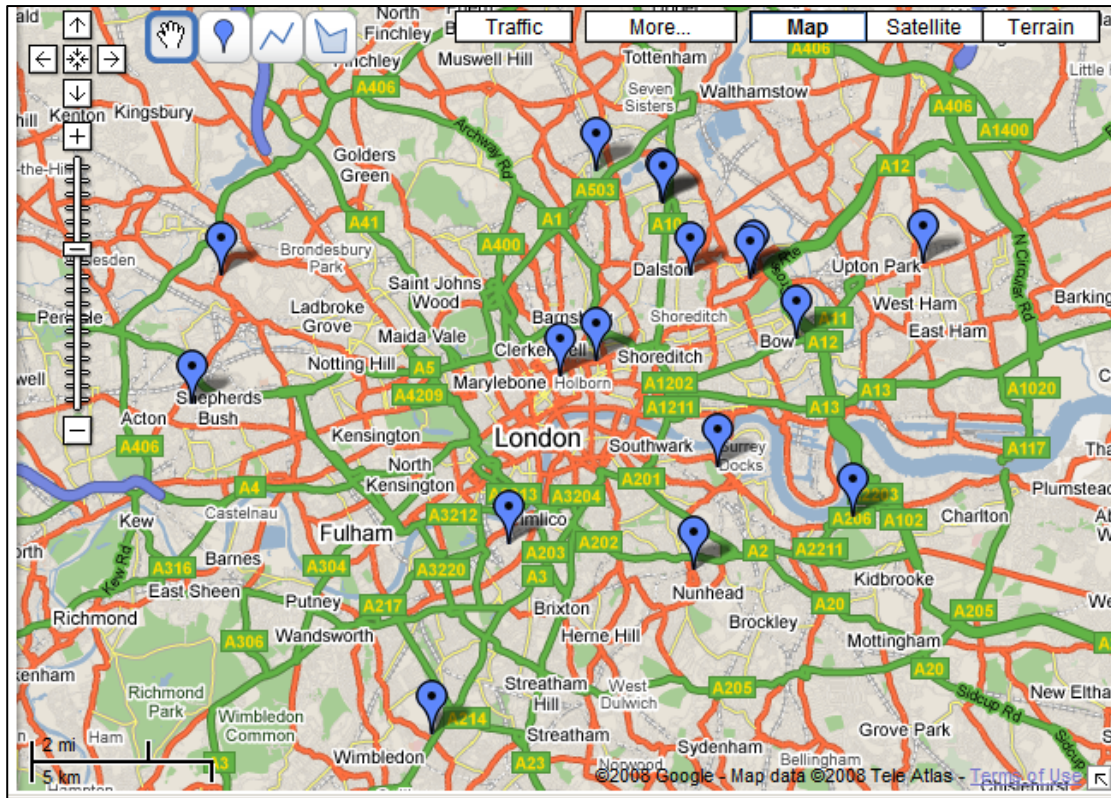


Figure 9.2- Google Map showing Hoxton/Shoreditch interviewees' place of residence (if within Greater London). Postcodes: SE16, NW10, E9, N1, E8, W10, SW9, W3, SE15, E7, E9, N4, E3, N16, SW17, N16, SE10.

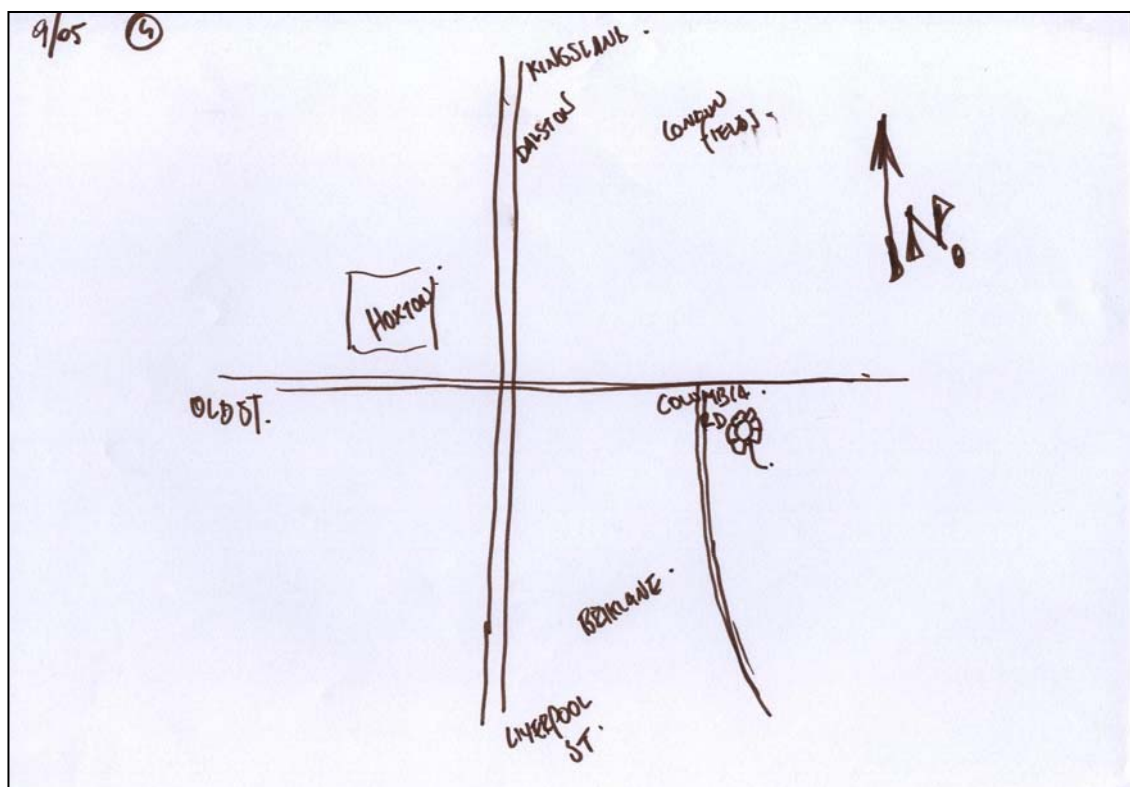


Figure 9.3- Sketch map drawn by an architect from London

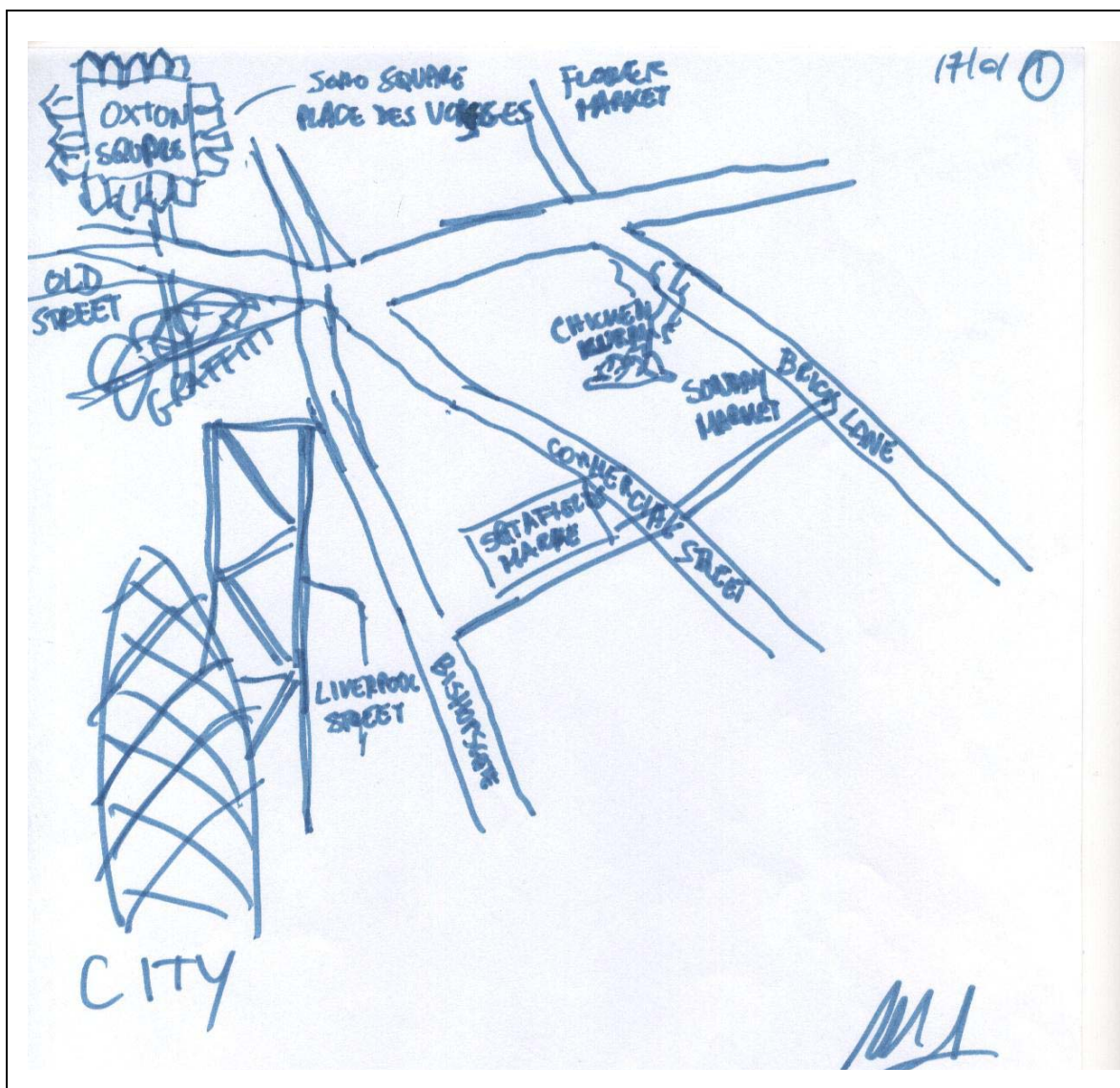


Figure 9.4- Sketch map drawn by an architect from London

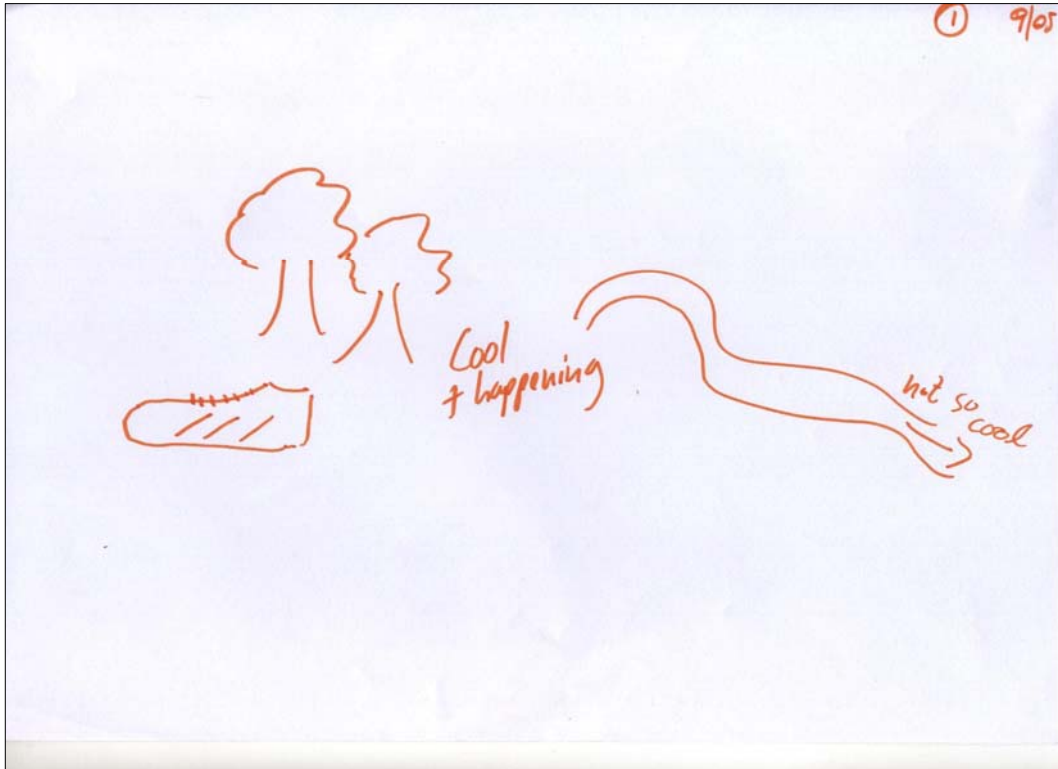


Figure 9.5- Sketch map drawn by a physiotherapist from Germany

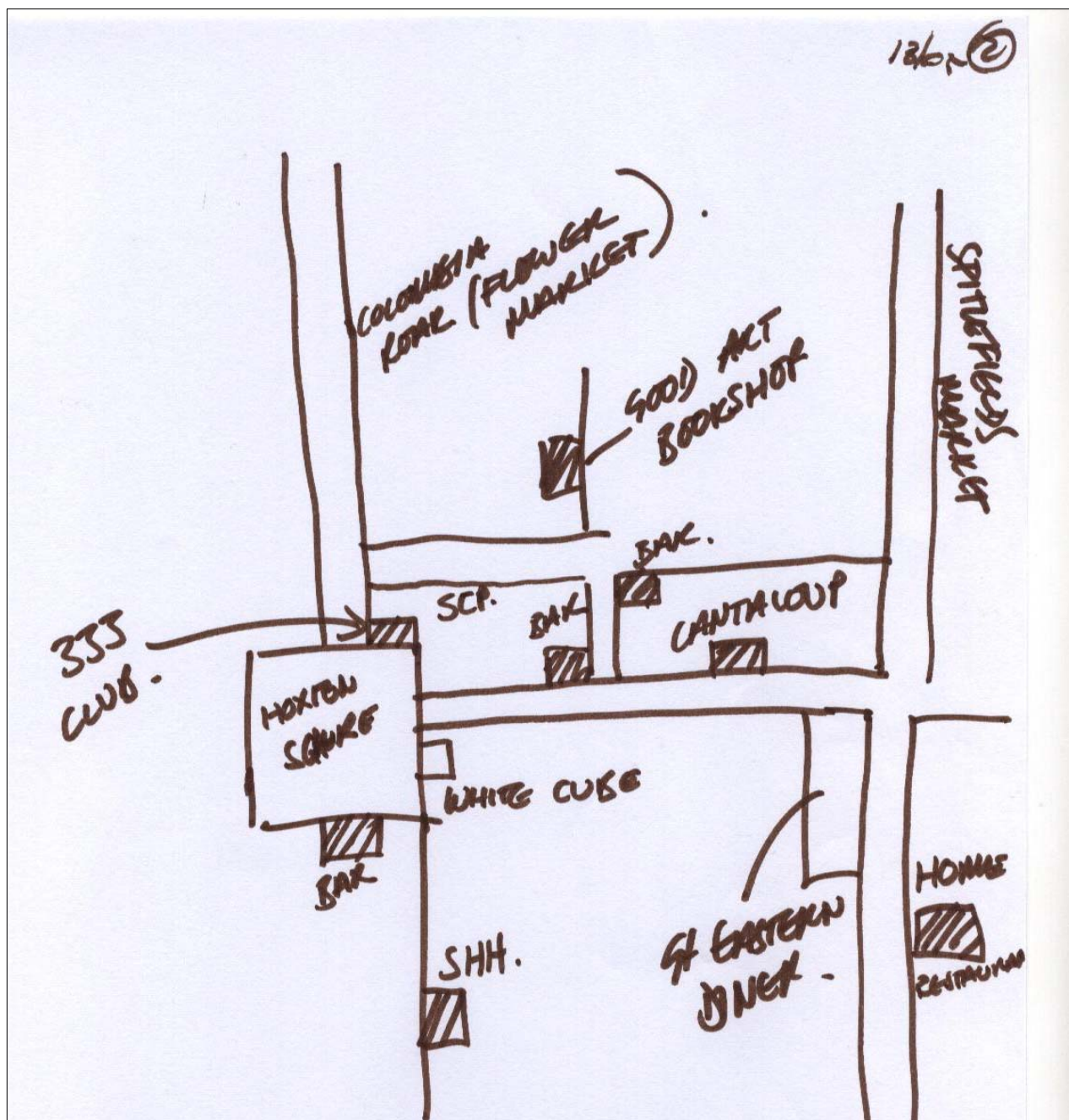


Figure 9.6 - Sketch map drawn by a designer from North London

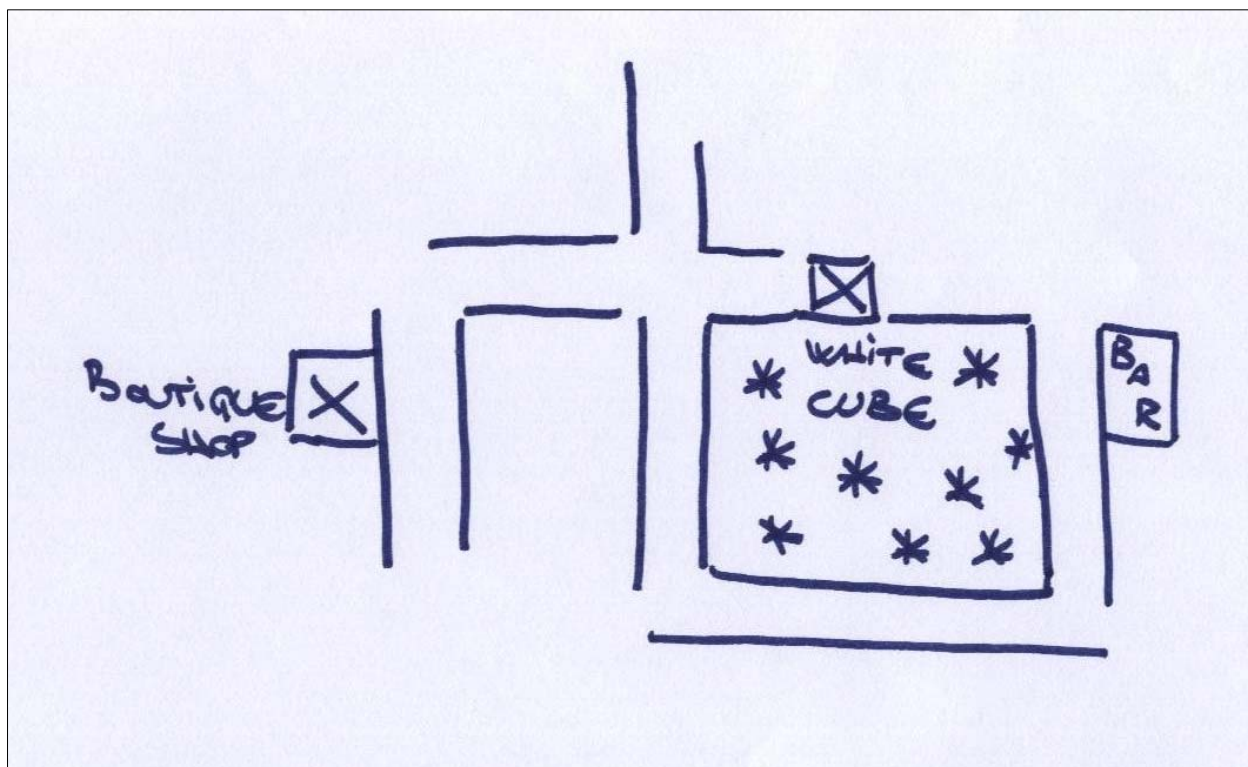


Figure 9.7 - Sketch map drawn by a fashion designer from Italy

10. LONDON FIELDS – EVIDENCE ANALYSIS

The London Fields area

The majority of London Fields, which stretches from London Fields park to Regent's canal (see map page 210), is located in the East London Borough of Hackney, Queensbridge ward. Only a very small part of London Fields, including Vyner street, lies in Tower Hamlets.

Queensbridge ward ranks as the 11th most deprived ward in London and, on average, appears to have a poorer social and economic profile than the rest of Hackney (Hackney Council, 2007c). The area has been home to social housing estates since the early 1950s and currently about 60% of Queensbridge households live in socially rented accommodation (Hackney Council, 2007c). Although a number of regeneration programmes have been implemented, they have to date failed to bring up the life standards for the local population. According to an independent assessment carried out in 2009 on behalf of Hackney Council (Audit Commission, 2009), historically regeneration in the Hackney borough 'has mainly been focused on major physical developments with a limited emphasis on employment and a local neighbourhood based approach (...) there have been a variety of initiatives aimed at tackling deprivation at a local level but with limited results' (p.7).

Despite the well-known social and economic problems affecting London Fields, the area has seen a slow process of gentrification developing since the 1980s. By then, the area had already become popular with artists thanks to the availability of affordable studio space, and was starting to appeal to some young professionals who bought their homes there (Green, 1999). In the late 1980s the opening of a few pioneer galleries (Flowers East, in 1988, being one of the first) contributed to the development of a creative cluster and to the area's attractiveness.

The development of a strong creative sector appears to be to a great extent an unplanned process (Green, 1999). As Foord (1999) points out, ‘in the 1980s, when other cities and neighbourhoods were marketing themselves on the basis of their strengths, Hackney chose to go for a strategy of tragic realism. Hackney campaigned for government funding as ‘Britain’s poorest borough’ (p. 50). It was Only in the early 1990s that Hackney started to recognise its strengths, including a rich ethnic mix and strong cultural and creative sectors. However, apart from the 1990s strategy ‘Hackney: Cultural Workshop of London’, which included the opening of cultural venues like the Lux Cinema (now closed) and Circus Space (Evans and Shaw, 2004), Hackney Council lacked a specific cultural policy plan until 2002.

Consistent with the local socio-economic situation marked by deprivation, crime and a deep social separation between long-time residents and the new ‘yuppie’ community, the main aim of Hackney’s cultural strategy was (and still is) ‘*to encourage all residents to participate in some form of cultural activity whether as producers or consumers of culture*’ (Hackney Council, 2002: 9). In spite of the lack of a specific cultural industries development strategy, the growth of cultural consumption in London Fields continued, with the opening (from 1998 to the present day) of a sizable amount of galleries most of which are clustered along Vyner Street. Meanwhile, in 2004, with the support of Hackney Council, Broadway Market was opened.

Fieldwork

Interviews with visitors of London Fields (a total of 39, as shown in Table 10.1 page 208) were conducted between June and July 2008. A great majority of the interviewees were London residents, suggesting that tourism development in the area is at a very early stage. The interviewees who did not live in London were all visiting friends who either lived in London Fields or who brought them there. Even among Londoners, it must be noted that most visitors were residents of East London or had previously lived in Hackney. Among visitors interviewed in the other three areas, only a few people knew London Fields, and again, these were often Hackney residents (present or past). As in the other case study areas, the

majority of these interviewees were aged under 30 and employed in the creative sector (or art/design students). Beside visitors, also six local creative entrepreneurs were interviewed -, two ceramic artists, a textile artist, the owner of a photography shop, the owner of an art gallery and a curator of another art gallery (see Table 10.2 page 209 for more details).

Visitors' characteristics

London Fields, as described in the previous section, appears to be largely obscure to people who do not normally live in London (and, more precisely, by people who do not live in east London). Of the seven non-Londoners who were interviewed in London Fields, six were visiting friends or relatives who lived in the area and this was the main reason for their visit. The only overseas visitor who was not a VFR tourist was a student from Copenhagen, staying in London Fields for two weeks while attending a drama school in central London. She decided to stay in the area because she had the opportunity to stay at a friend's house while her friend was on holiday overseas. Compared to interviewees from London, VFR tourists knew the area less well, and probably for this reason they gave less detailed interviews and mental maps. All the same, it was interesting to explore the views of some visitors who chose to visit the area only because a friend lived there. In addition, most other interviewees worked in the creative sector, whereas only two of the 'non-Londoners' were creative professionals (a media officer and a film student), a fact that possibly distinguished their contributions from the others to an even greater extent.

In comparison to visitors of Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch, Londoners interviewed in London Fields appeared to have slightly different characteristics. Firstly, while in Hoxton/Shoreditch and Spitalfields interviewees (including Londoners) came from a variety of national backgrounds, in London Fields a great majority (with very few exceptions: an Italian young man and a Swedish woman), were originally British. In addition, more often than in other areas people declared not to be frequent travellers, and in some cases they said that in London they normally prefer to remain in their own area (or near-by). While in Hoxton/Shoreditch and Spitalfields visitors were often interested in exploring

places in search for cultural capital, in London Fields more frequently visitors were in the area to meet up with a friend, to relax in the park or to walk/cycle along the canal. Also, when describing themselves, their interest in nature came up more frequently than in other areas, and, on the contrary, an interest in art and culture, although mentioned, was not a dominant theme in their interviews. For instance, although the graffiti art was mentioned in some of the interviews, urban culture was not especially sought after in London Fields.

The Tourist Experience

Londoners visiting their own city like a tourist would, emerged as one of the most important themes: most interviewees were from London itself, and all the others (except one) were VFR visitors and were exploring the area with a local. A visitor from London, for instance, explained that, when she travelled, she either went abroad or tended to remain in London and explore it:

‘If I visit the UK I tend to always stay in London, because why move to London and then not enjoy London (...) I just walk around. Look for the vibe, restaurants, pubs and how much it has gentrified it is in the last 12 years that I have lived here’ (events exam coordinator, from London)’ .

Although everyday tourism has been researched also in other contexts (see for instance Fenner, 2008), in London this phenomenon appears to be especially important, also due to the number of Londoners who are originally not from London. These (often short-term) residents still feel motivated to explore new areas, as the previous quote shows. However, whereas in Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch visitors were often found carrying on activities that are normally considered very typical of cultural tourism (such as taking photographs or visiting cultural venues), in London Fields this happened to a much lesser extent. Even tourists (not London residents) did not seem to be experiencing the area in a typical ‘touristy manner’. As mentioned earlier, they were almost all VFR visitors, of which two came to London Fields guided by their host to relax in the park, have a drink or see the market, and all the others were staying in London Fields during their visit to London. In this sense, visitors seemed to be experiencing the area like a local would. Whereas in Spitalfields this appeared to

happen in a conscious, even declared way, with interviewees clearly stating that they wanted to do what Londoners do and see them in their natural environment, in London Fields this seemed to happen in a less reflexive manner. For example a young psychologist from Paris, said that she already knew London quite well and during her four-day trip she spent most of her time in London Fields (where her friend lived) just going to the park and to the local swimming pool. Her impression of London Fields was of a well-off area where you can find green spaces with ‘all the facilities a city can provide’. The swimming pool seemed to play an important role to several visitors, and frequently appeared on their mind maps (see for instance, Figure 10.2, Figure 10.3 and Figure 10.6, pages 211-214). The importance of water and nature will be further discussed in the Spatial Characteristics section, page 197.

Whereas for some people the area of London Fields (referred to by the interviewer as ‘this area’) just seemed to mean the park, for others it meant Broadway market (see for example quote 91 Appendix VII). Visitors’ opinions about the market, however, were not consistent. Whereas certain visitors really liked it, and some even visited London Fields specifically to see the market, others did not like it because they found it ‘wanky’ (a word that recurred a few times in relation to the market), ‘too posh’ or ‘too central London’ (e.g. quote 92, Appendix VII).

The theme of the creative tour, which emerged most prominently in the Hoxton/Shoreditch case study, did not seem to be as relevant in London Fields. Rather, visitors of London Fields mentioned the possibility of walking or cycling along the canal. Also the consumption of cultural products, as previously discussed, appeared to be a much less important element of the tourist experience in London Fields than in Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch. For instance, only one interviewee (a journalist from London) had been to an art gallery on the day. However, galleries and other cultural consumption venues appeared in some visitors’ mind maps: in the map shown in Figure 10.9 page 216, for instance, a visitor drew an art gallery, in Figure 10.3 the Vinyl shop and in Figure 10.6 the film shop.

Also links between the area's characteristics and the interviewee's job were made less frequently than in other areas (although it happened in some cases, for example see quote 93 Appendix VII). Only a graphic designer from London mentioned the theme of getting inspiration when asked what he normally looked for when visiting new areas in London (quote 94 Appendix VII).

The 'small, independent shops', which seemed to be a fundamental pull factor in the first two case studies, were instead rarely mentioned in London Fields. However, some visitors did mention the importance of the 'nice small restaurants and not chains, independent [shops]' (see quotes 105, 113 and 114 Appendix VII). Nonetheless also in London Fields shopping emerged as an important part of the tourist experience, mainly thanks to the market but also to the shops clustered on Broadway Market. Pubs also seemed to constitute an important day-time activity (on week-end days), and played an equally important role on mental maps. For instance the importance of local pubs is represented in a very allegoric way in the map shown in Figure 10.6 page 214, where two big pints of beer have been sketched as London Fields icons. Also Figure 10.3 and Figure 10.4 (page 212) include representations of pubs, which seem to remain impressed on visitors' memory more frequently than cultural consumption venues. Most of the interviewed people declared that they had been to a local pub or were planning to go later. Some had bought drinks and food and were picnicking in the park or along the canal, showing consistency with the idea, discussed above, of people mainly doing 'everyday activities' rather than cultural tourism in London Fields. This is an interesting finding because it re-connects to the idea of everyday tourism, which could be interpreted as behaving like a tourist in one's own city as well as undertaking everyday activities while on holiday. This, for Londoners, would mean, for example, visiting a different area of London 'just' to go to the local pub; and for a tourist, going to a local pub with their host.

Atmosphere

As in the previous two case studies, atmosphere (meaning the sum of the intangible qualities that make up the overall feel or mood of a place) emerged as the most prominent source of appeal to visitors (see, for example, quotes 96, 104, 108 and 116, Appendix VII). However, in London Fields, differently from the other three case studies, the area's atmosphere seemed to be provided by two slightly independent characteristics: on one hand, its quiet, relaxed, countryside feel; on the other, its young creative energy. For clarity of discussion, these two subthemes will be discussed separately.

a. The peaceful countryside village feel

In London Fields relaxation¹ and peacefulness emerged as fundamental aspects of the tourist experience and area's atmosphere (see, for examples, quotes 102, 103 and 116 in Appendix VII). These feelings seem to be to a great extent linked to the impression the area gives of being seen as like a countryside village or a traditional old neighbourhood: it connects, therefore, with the area's spatial characteristics discussed in the next section.

For some interviewees (e.g. quotes 90, 97, 99 and 100 Appendix VII) being in London Fields felt like being out of the city, or like a village (see also next section). Visiting the area appeared almost as a form of escapism from the urban noise and routine, as if going to London Fields was like making a trip out of town:

'I love this area. It's really pretty. It's quiet. I think it's quite old. Oldy worldy, quite original out here even though you have got those great flats here. But for the most part... You don't feel you are in London as well. Somewhere far away (music PR from London)'.

This villagey feel transmits to people an impression of safety and approachability, which are arguably seen as the reverse of what a large city can normally offer.

¹ Across all interviews with visitors in London Fields the term 'relax' was mentioned 17 times, 'chilled' 6 times and 'laid back' 5 times (See Appendix V). The same words occurred noticeably less in the other case studies: in Spitalfields, 7, 1 and 2 times respectively; in Hoxton/Shoreditch 8, 1 and 0; and in Deptford 5, 2 and 1 time.

This contributes to create a relaxed atmosphere, as the next quote illustrates. Here the area is described precisely like a rural destination, where ‘stuff to look at’ and people’s friendliness are more important than things to do:

‘[this area has] got a lot of stuff to look at, even if you don’t do anything (...) here one feels really, really safe. It feels safe, friendly and approachable. And that’s interesting, it feels like you are in a local village. It feels like a town. It definitely feels like that (events exam coordinator from London)’.

Also in some of the sketch maps, people drew little houses, trees, the canal, bicycles, animals, children playing: the resulting picture seems to represent a countryside village, almost a metaphor for the area’s relaxed feel and atmosphere (see as, an example, map shown in Figure 10.3 page 212). Also, if we look at the maps sketched by visitors (for instance, Figure 10.2 and Figure 10.9, pages 211-216), in London Fields people were able to draw fairly complete maps and rich of details. If we compare these maps with the ones drawn, for instance, in Hoxton/Shoreditch, we can see how in London Fields people seemed to have a much clearer picture of the area and its physical components. Several reasons could be identified as possible explanations for this. Firstly, most interviewees in London Fields were Londoners and a number of them declared to be frequent visitors: this could be a first reason why the maps appeared to be richer of details. Also, there are elements such as the canal and the park that are especially memorable and may help to make the area more ‘legible’ (allowing people to better orientate). The fact that the area seemed to be especially legible and easy to represent could be, as argued by Lynch (1960), a factor that contributes to make the area more attractive. Also the ‘villagey feel’ could in fact be partly caused by the area having some clear, memorable elements such as the park, canal and market, which make people perceive it as a whole (and not as part of a bigger city). On the other hand, also the reverse could be true: the countryside atmosphere (or villagey feel) could contribute to make people feel more comfortable and therefore have a clearer mental map.

This idea of the villagey feel recurs also in several interviews made in Deptford (see Deptford discussion). Very interestingly, three London Fields interviewees who knew Deptford (because they lived in South East London), when asked

whether London Fields reminded them of any other area, spontaneously mentioned Deptford. For instance, according to a London Fields interviewee both Deptford and London Fields are authentic places where you can still see the old, traditional London:

‘[Does this area remind you of any other areas in London or other cities?] Deptford, yeah, because you can still see the current of the normal London, you know, what it was. That’s what I like about it. It’s got a lot of new stuff, but it’s not obliterated, it’s not completed, so yeah, Deptford (events exam coordinator from London)’.

b. The young, creative energy

In apparent contrast with the relaxation and village feel discussed above, some visitors to London Fields (similarly to the previous two case studies) described the atmosphere as lively and energetic:

‘It’s so different. It’s got a really nice atmosphere. Yeah! It’s really good (...) It’s a completely different atmosphere. You walk down there and it’s quirky beside down there. Its just.. Hmmm.. Its completely different. Its got life... It’s little... ha... its got life (graphic designer from London,)’.

Although the relaxation and buzz concepts may seem in strong contrast with each other, evidence showed that they can coexist, as for example illustrated by quotes 103 and 104. The ‘life’, liveliness or ‘buzz’ (as some interviewees described it) seem to a great extent linked to the fact that the area is both young and creative (see quotes 104, 106, 111, 119 and 123 in Appendix VII). Similarly to Deptford and Hoxton/Shoreditch, in London Fields some visitors linked this young creative energy with the potential for new ideas to be created and the opportunity for young talent to grow:

‘[What do you like?] Hmm... the fact that fresh and creative, because there are new ideas, young elements, enthusiastic, who want to do something new and creative (manager from London,)’

Interestingly, this theme could also be linked to the area’s ability to provide creative inspiration, since, as some creative entrepreneurs also confirmed, being

surrounded by young creative talent is a source of inspiration in itself (see for example quote 127 in Appendix VII).

It should be noted, however, that often visitors identified London Fields with Hackney. This, being Hackney a very large and varied borough, could possibly provide an additional explanation to the fact that interviewees tend to describe the area in so many different ways. In the next quote, for instance, the interviewee mixes different aspects of London Fields: the fact of being young and creative, its safety, fashion and its attractiveness as a tourist destination. Interestingly she clearly makes a connection between young, creative and the consequent ‘buzz’:

‘The main thing is the amount of young people that live here. And they all seem to be creative people. So, it has a nice buzz around it. It also feels safe even though it is in the middle of Hackney. It feels a like bubble of some young, creative... And, sometimes, in some ways it’s a bit too much. An ultra-trendy... Wanna be creative places. But, as compared to the place where I live [New Cross] it’s quiet, nice there is a university there, creative people there. Yeah! As, I was saying earlier there is nothing like this area really. The amount of young people concentrated in one area’ (photography technician from London). ¹

This extract contains several interesting points. Firstly, it is worth noting how she described the area almost like a safe tourist bubble for creative people in the middle of a dangerous place (see further discussion below). Also, this interviewee compared London Fields to New Cross (a South East area very near to Deptford): she noted that, in comparison, London Fields feels ‘ultra-trendy... Wanna be creative place’, whereas New Cross appears to be quieter although creative too. Later in the interview she also stated that ‘aspects of New Cross and Deptford remind me of here, maybe in five years it will be like here’ (something interestingly noted by another interviewee, see quote 122 Appendix VII). In the same interview, she also suggested that London Fields would be the ideal off the beaten track destination for a London visitor: ‘it will be a good tip to give someone who is in London for a week. Come here which is off the tourist trail’. However, similarly to several other visitors interviewed in London Fields, Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch, she also commented on the fact that the area is ‘an ultra-trendy... Wannabe creative place’ (see also quotes 104, 106, 107, 108,

109 Appendix VII). A characteristic common to many interviews (also in Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch) is represented by the difficulties people encountered when explaining why they found the area ‘cool’ or why they saw its trendiness as a negative aspect. The interviewee quoted in the next extract, however, seemed to be able to explain better than others why he considered London Fields slightly ‘set up’. When asked what he did not like, he pointed out that people ‘are a bit superficial’ and ‘posy’. He felt completely detached from the world of fashion and even declared that ‘It’s interesting to come down and observe (...) how people live here what is their fashion or their lifestyle’. Similarly to several cases in Hoxton/Shoreditch and Spitalfields, it seems that eccentric fashions represent a real tourist attraction for this visitor. Notably, he was also able to describe in more details than other visitors London Fields’ fashion style, which he called an ‘indie kind of scene’.

‘[What did you not like?] Maybe there is this thing where people are a bit superficial a bit posy, that kind of thing but it’s interesting to come down and observe that

[why is it interesting?] Just to see how people live here what is their fashion or their lifestyle (...) [How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?] I’d say it’s like, set up, gentrified, probably a cool place to hang out if you are into that sort of thing [what sort of thing?] You know, I don’t know how to describe it, indie kind of scene, a particular scene’ (personal assistant from Sevenoaks, UK).

Spatial characteristics

In terms of spatial characteristics the canal and the park seem to play the most important role in the visitors’ experience of London Fields: one interviewee even described London Fields as ‘a field in the middle of Hackney’. For instance, when a visitor (from London) was asked if any other area in London reminded her of this one [London Fields], interestingly she immediately thought of Hampstead, an up-market area (traditionally seen as arty) that contains an open green space which is actually more than twenty times as big as London Fields park (see quote 90, Appendix VII). The connection, according to her, was that both look like the countryside (see discussion on this topic above). However, this interviewee also

noted that Hampstead ‘is not as arty’ as London Fields, showing that for her art and nature are the two most important characteristics of the area:

‘[Does it [London Fields] remind you of any other area of London?] I think the only parallel that you could draw is the Hampstead area which is like countryside area. But then it’s not arty like this area’ (music PR from London)

Consistently with this finding, water (such as the pool and Regent’s canal) and green spaces, together with Broadway market, seemed to be the most common elements that people could remember and drew on their maps. This is exemplified, for instance, by Figure 10.2, Figure 10.3, Figure 10.4, Figure 10.5, Figure 10.6, pages 211-214. Similarly to Brick Lane in Spitalfields and Hoxton square in Hoxton/Shoreditch, London Fields park was an almost constant element on visitors’ mind maps. The visitor quoted in the next extract, for example, when asked what he looked for when visiting areas in London different from the one where he lived, mentioned water as his first thought:

‘[What do you look for when you visit other areas?] water, music, beautiful people, fun things to do [what do you mean by water?] canals, rivers, swimming pools, lakes and anything else that is wet and moving (...) I’m here for the beauty of Broadway market [why is it nice?] Because it’s near the canal and it’s near-by the gasworks which looks wicked, I like the gasworks (...) it [the gasworks] featured in the cover of the latest Editors album [see Figure 10.10, page 217], and a local artist took the picture that was used in the album cover, so they are local history, here you go, that’s why I came’ (product manager for a record label, from London’.

In this interview extract, this visitor provided a description of his mental image of London Fields, a physical landscape made by the pool, the market, the canal and the gasworks on the other side. The latter had emotional importance for him also because they featured on a musical record’s cover (see Figure 10.10 page 217). This same image was reflected on his mental map (Figure 10.3 page 212), in which he represented precisely these elements. Gasworks were represented also by other visitors in their maps (for example, Figure 10.6 page 214 and Figure 10.7 page 215) and seem to represent an important element of the area’s landscape. Another element of the urban environment that appeared on people’s mental maps

(but was not mentioned as frequently in the interviews) is a block of council flats that stands out near the park (e.g. Figure 10.4 page 212).

An engineer from West London, interviewed in Spitalfields, when asked whether he knew London Fields and Deptford made an interesting comparison, pointing out that London Fields is more appealing because ‘there are lots of Georgian houses not block flats like in Deptford’:

‘[and what about London Fields, do you know it?] I’m going there later, lots of friends of mine live there, it’s so different from what it was fifteen years ago, when it was hot Hackney, there are lots of Georgian houses not block flats like in Deptford, there are two societies there, the Afro-Caribbean people and the people who moved there recently, who are mostly young professionals’ (engineer from West London, interview conducted in Spitalfields).

This comment about ‘block flats’ shows once again the complexity and variety of visitors’ perceptions, since also in London Field visitors often commented about the presence of block flats (which are quite prominent in the area’s landscape), and even drew them on their maps (see for instance Figures Figure 10.4, Figure 10.5, Figure 10.7, page 212-215). Social housing blocks in London Fields were seen by some visitors as a downside, whereas others) described them as ‘nice big buildings’.

In contrast with the other case studies (notably Spitalfields and Hoxton) the area’s cultural diversity was not a recurrent theme in the interviews: on the contrary, only three visitors remarked on the area’s cosmopolitan character.

A teacher from York who was visiting friends and came to see a concert in London, however, remarked on the fact that the area is diverse and cosmopolitan, which, for him, meant ‘classic inner London’ (as in opposition to the mainly white suburbs). This finding is very interesting as it relates and contradicts the observations of those who found the area more similar to a suburb or a countryside village than inner London:

‘[How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?]
I would say classic inner London, cosmopolitan, mixed, different ethnic groups,

all sorts of people. [In what way is it classic?] The fact that it's such a mixed community, it's typical of inner London not the suburbs (teacher from York)'

On the other hand, evidence from interviews with a local artist and with a visitor interviewed in Hoxton/Shoreditch seemed to highlight a divide between the 'diverse' traditional local population and the almost entirely 'white' population of visitors and new residents. As a local ceramic artist, who worked in a studio space near the canal and lived in the area, noted:

'I live (...) west of London Fields and I walk here from there past the Lido, in London Fields it's a different area, different type of people depending on where they are, like young local kids that hang out in one bit, then mid 20 to mid 30 up and coming young trendy people clustering in one area near Broadway market... it's nice that it's not so so segregated, I mean, everyone gets along, but white middle class people kind of cluster together and the others on the other end, it's like they don't have so much to share with each other, which is kind of a shame really (ceramic artist1)'.

Also a visitor that was interviewed in Hoxton/Shoreditch cited London Fields as example of divide between two communities:

'the other day we went to Broadway market, and definitely its kind of gentrified, you have city council buildings all around and you see that the poor people don't come to the bars, same way this is a nice place and all around is pretty poor, and these poor people they don't come here, and the same way I had lunch at some kind of Turkish restaurant in one of the streets over there and no one from this part, the galleries part, would go there' (screenwriter from Paris, interviewed in Hoxton).

Tourism Development

According to the evidence collected within this research, London Fields appears to be growing in popularity with Londoners. However, following analysis of interviews undertaken in the other three case study areas (where visitors were asked whether they knew London Fields), the number of London residents who are not aware of London Fields is still high (unlike Spitalfields and

Hoxton/Shoreditch, which are fairly well-known by visitors of the other case studies). Repeated visits made by the researcher in the area on different days of the week suggested that from Monday to Friday tourism is basically nonexistent, a part from the occasional art collector visiting galleries (generally upon appointment). On week-ends however, especially on fine days, the small area between Regents canal and London Fields Park becomes busy with both locals and visitors. The two main (physically separated) points of attraction are Broadway market (including the near-by canal and park) and Vyner street, where most art galleries are clustered. Some frequent visitors and local artists interviewed spoke about the incredible change in popularity of this small area in recent years. An interesting theme to investigate with regards to London Field's growth in popularity, is how the area is perceived in terms of tourist development by some of its visitors and by the five creative entrepreneurs that were interviewed. Firstly, how the area is seen in terms of location (central, on the edge, out of town, easy or difficult to access, etc.). Secondly, whether or not it is recognized by people as a touristy destination. Finally, it will be interesting to explore visitors and local creative entrepreneurs' feelings in regards to its development.

In terms of access, lack of public transportation was recognized as a problem by some visitors, since London Fields is not served by the London Underground system, but only by overland trains (to Hackney central) or buses. However a visitor from Seven Sisters (London) saw this as an advantage for him, because if the area were easy accessible 'it would become a lot more crowded and busier'. Other visitors also highlighted the fact that, although not easy to access by public transport, it is in fact easily accessible by bicycle or on foot through the canal walk. In terms of location, most people identify London Fields with Hackney and often, when asked questions referring to the area as 'this area', they tend to speak about 'Hackney' (e.g. quotes 88, 103, 104, 115, 116 and 117). One person, however, described how London Fields stands out from the rest of Hackney for its peculiar characteristics (as discussed above: liveliness, quirkiness and atmosphere):

'I came here before and I went through Hackney. It's so, so different all around. And then you go around this area and it's like a small, it's like a small

(...). It's so different. It's got a really nice atmosphere. Yeah! It's really good (...)' (graphic designer from London,).'

On their sketch maps visitors tend to represent a very circumscribed area. Many represent the canal and the park; few extend it to Dalston and very rarely to Shoreditch as well. Differently from maps of Spitalfields and Hoxton, there are never elements of central London such as the Gherkin, as to show that the area is separated from the rest of the city (as discussed earlier in regards to the village theme).

The seven interviewed visitors who did not normally live in London, certainly did not perceive London Fields as a touristy area, but rather as the neighbourhood in London where the friend they were visiting happened to live. Similarly, Londoners seemed to see it as a non touristy place, and they described it as quiet, relaxed and outside of the busy central areas. As the interviewee of the next quote noted, whether London Fields should be considered touristy or non-touristy varies upon the point of view. For someone who comes from outside London, London Fields may seem quite remote, whereas for some Londoner it may be perceived as a fairly popular place:

'[how would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?]
Probably sort of non-touristy, well, less touristy than the centre, it depends if you are talking to someone who comes from London or someone who comes from abroad, I would probably tell them about touristy artiness around the galleries, the great shoes in Broadway market, probably the areas not here but not too far from here where you can go out at night and generally they are, like, atmosphere (journalist from London).'

Also in the next extract a musician from London highlighted the fact that the area is interesting because it is not touristy. In her interview, she interestingly described it as a mix between the tranquillity and comfort of the local neighbourhood (with young families) and the vibe of a creative place:

'Its just slightly outside normal touristy London. Quite local. You can get to see a lot of young families here which is quite cool. Maybe you can meet quite

a few artists, creative people as well... The area got a quite a mixture of families and creative people (musician from East London).

However, as seen earlier (page 196), London Fields was perceived by another interviewee like a small oasis of young creative population in the middle of a scary area, Hackney. This, seems to be consistent with what other visitors noted, although not so explicitly, about London Fields. Namely, that it constitutes a small corner of affluence and trendiness located in a very poor part of London. Similarly to the cases of Hoxton/Shoreditch and Spitalfields, opinions are divided between those who find it local and authentic, and others who think it is contrived like a tourist bubble.

Similarly to the cases of Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch, the fact that London Fields is ‘a bit chi chi’ or ‘gentrified’ is a cause of concern among visitors (see for example quotes 88, 89, 105, 109, 120, 123, 124, 126). Broadway market (both the actual Saturday market and the shops on the street) probably constitutes the most visible sign of the area’s gentrification. In this regards, it seems relevant to compare these views with an interview made in Deptford. There, the interviewee declared that he would not be especially keen on frequenting Deptford on a regular basis, because the high street is ‘a bit scruffy’ and there are not appealing shops. Interestingly, another London Fields interviewee (a graphic designer from Kilburn, London), knowing both markets, spontaneously made precisely this comparison, stressing the authenticity of Deptford’s market against the touristification of London Fields:

‘[How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?] A bit shishi (...) the closest would be Deptford market but not as (...). I like it there. It’s more a market for the normal people, this is more touristy. (...) And here I think you find a lot of people that somehow are locals but they haven’t lived here for that long. Maybe they have lived here for a few years but Deptford is more people that have lived there, like, forever’ (graphic designer from Kilburn, London)

Another interesting point about this quote is the interviewee’s mention of the fact that, whereas in Deptford you find locals who have lived there ‘forever’, in

London Fields residents have been there only ‘for a few years’. This seems to confirm the finding that London Fields, and particularly Broadway market, is perceived by this interviewee (and by several others) as non-authentic because its patrons are either visitors or ‘new residents’. The area has gone through a process of gentrification, with old houses being refurbished and newly designed developments being built along the canal. This attracted a number of new middle-class residents with higher spending power than the traditional population mostly made of disadvantaged families and young artists. This new population (together with visitors from similar social backgrounds coming from surrounding areas) is the main target of the market and the shops on Broadway market, which, according to one of the local artists interviewed, have been developed using Borough market (a well-established food market located in Southbank, London) as a model. According to one of the artists, the opening of Broadway market has been the real trigger that made the area more popular (quote 123, Appendix VII).

Like in Hoxton/Shoreditch and Spitalfields, in London Fields the inconsistencies in both visitors’ and creative entrepreneurs’ feelings towards gentrification appear quite clearly. Whereas the great majority describe these areas with enthusiastic words, on the other hand they also complain about the fact that these places are changing and so many ‘posh cafes and shops’ are being opened. One of the local artists interviewed in London Fields (who was also quoted in the previous extract) noted the hypocrisy behind this, and remarked on the fact that, although she regrets the area losing its original character, on the other hand she must admit that the new cafes match in fact their taste much more than the old, local ones:

‘Interviewer: and are you happy about that [the area becoming more popular]?’

Interviewee: I think it’s just inevitable really, I don’t know if it’s a good thing, there is a lot to be said, people complain that the old traditional pubs get done up and become very expensive with expensive food and people who have drunk there for 20 years and they can’t afford to go there, but I probably like them and I wouldn’t want to go there the way they were before so it’s kind of hypocritical (ceramic artist1)’

Also one of the visitors (the only one of all the interviews done for this research) thought that gentrification is a positive process:

‘I know it’s really bad, but I think gentrification in a way can bring up the standard for a lot people, in fact, I know that you get the old school that gentrification (?) but everybody wants nice stuff if they have the option to have it, like a posh organic shop is something that will pay their staff and treat them a bit better than a dodgy pub or something. Do you know what I mean? No I do like it, I think it’s a good thing (events exam coordinator from London)’.

The Creative Cluster

Although many visitors were creative professionals and described the area as ‘creative’ and ‘beautiful’, the theme of creative inspiration seems to be less prominent than in other areas such as Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch. On the other hand, creative entrepreneurs seem to particularly appreciate being located in a creative area (see Table 10.2 page 209), and the theme of place as a muse for creative work did appear while talking with a local artist:

‘I was going to say it doesn’t make a lot of difference to me what area I’m in, but then again, walking here, walking down the road, and seeing interesting things, like street art of some weird poster people have put up, which happens a lot around here, seeing things that is quite inspiring and makes you start thinking about what you can do and you want to be more creative or just seeing people around that look interesting, you know, cool, puts you more in the mood for working and being creative yourself, you know, it’s just a very nice area and definitely it makes you sort of inclined to be creative’ (ceramic artist 1)

This artist’s evidence brings up two important themes in relation to London Fields as a creative cluster. On one hand, the existence of a creative environment: working near other artists seems to afford benefits regardless the actual collaboration among them. On the other hand, this artist remarked on the lack of a network among them. As she noted later in the interview, she found it easier to network with other creative people while doing a market in the Spitalfields area or

through the Hidden Art² website. Similarly, another creative entrepreneur said that business collaboration between artists does not occur, at least not in an organic way. However, according to her, artists do network in an informal manner (quote 128 Appendix VII).

This view is shared also by the people who work in the art galleries. They constitute a different type of creative entrepreneur from studio based artists for the fact that gallery space is open to the public (and often visible from the street). As a consequence, they are much more in favour of tourism development. The following extract (from an interview with the owner of an art gallery) illustrates the advantages for art galleries of being clustered together despite the lack of an organic networking practice among them:

‘it’s sort of strange because a hairdresser next to another hairdresser is bad, but for us is good, the more galleries there are it becomes more vibrant and, you know, even if the collectors are not particularly familiar with the galleries they are passing, if they have got 3 minutes they can come in (art gallery 2)’

In the case of London Fields, art galleries have created a cluster in the cluster: whereas creative industries (especially artists’ studios etc.) can be found everywhere in the area, art galleries seem to be to a great extent clustered on Vyner Street. In the next extract an employee of an art gallery explains why they chose to locate in Vyner Street (moving from Shoreditch):

‘The reason why we located here is that Vyner street was already an established contemporary art destination, (...) we liked the idea that here there was already some traffic of people such as collectors and curators who come here especially to see the exhibitions, this is a very important thing because obviously in Shoreditch (...) it was more spread, there are galleries in Hoxton and Shoreditch but they are less concentrated, instead here they are concentrated in one street, Vyner street has become a destination and we wanted to take advantage of this’ (art gallery1)’

² Hidden Art is an initiative started in 1994 as part of a ‘City Challenge’ regeneration programme. It now comprises a number of activities such as an open studio event, a website and workshops; and aims to both enhance Hackney’s cultural profile and promote local artists’ work (for more details see foord, 1999).

For the art galleries, similarly to the case of Hoxton/Shoreditch, the First Thursdays event seems to be the main form of collaboration, although not organised by the galleries themselves (they only choose to participate and thus keep the gallery open late once a month). The other form of collaboration pointed out by one gallery is the fact that, occasionally, several galleries on Vyner street decide to have their exhibition openings all on the same day, so that collectors and curators can attend more than one event in one day. As the interviewee pointed out this is ‘even more interesting than First Thursdays, which is planned, because it’s spontaneous, a unique phenomenon’ (art gallery1, Vyner street)’

Conclusions

A great majority of the visitors interviewed were London residents. In comparison with Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch, London Fields interviewees appeared to have slightly different characteristics and to be attracted to the area for different reasons. Frequently, they declared to be there to meet up with a friend, to relax in the park or to walk along the canal. ‘Nature’ (green spaces and water) appeared to be a much more prominent theme in the interviews than art and culture. Rather than by typical cultural tourism activities such as visiting galleries or observing cultural differences, in London Field the tourist experience seemed to be characterised by other leisure activities such as meeting up with friends, picnicking in the park or walking along the canal. Even the few non-Londoners interviewed (all VFR) seemed to be enjoying the area’s neighbourhood life rather than visiting specific venues. Several Londoners interviewed remarked on the fact that going to London Fields feels like visiting a village out of the city’s hustle and bustle. The themes of relaxation, nature and escapism from the city appeared as dominant in the London Fields interviews. On the other hand, some visitors associated the area with Hackney, which is seen as both a dangerous place and a hard-core party and trendy area. As a consequence, there appears to be a contradiction between the images of an authentic traditional village and a contrived super-fashion party area, both associated with London Fields. Interviewees also remarked on the fact that the area is becoming very gentrified, with the shops and cafes on Broadway market (and the market itself) being increasingly targeted at the new middle-class population. Similarly to the other

case study areas, these changes are received by visitors and creative entrepreneurs with mixed feelings. In particular, the Broadway market is often mentioned as the main cause of gentrification.

Gender	Male: 12	Female: 27	Tot. 39					
Profession	Creative industry/arts (inc. art students): 23	Business/finance: /	Student: /	Education/research/journalist: 4	Engineer/informatics: /	Management / accounting / administration: 3	Hospitality/retail: 1	Other: 9
Usual place of residence	London*: 32	UK (excl. London): 3	Europe (excl. UK): 2	US & Canada: /	Asia: /	Australia: 2	Tot. non Londoners: 7	
Reason for visiting London (non-Londoners)	Holiday/pleasure: /	Business: /	VFR: 6	Study/Learn English: 1	Day Visit: /	Other:	Tot. non-Londoners: 7	
Age	<30: 24	30-39: 12	40-49: 2	50-59: 1	Over 60: /			

Table 10.1- Visitors interviewed (London Fields)

Type of business	Role of interviewee (owner, manager or employee?)	Years since business started (in this location)	Number of people working in the business	Main reasons for locating in the area	Advantages of this location
1) Ceramics artist's studio	artist	3	1	Cheaper, friends living in the area	Inspiring environment, lots going on, interesting things that make you think
2) Ceramics artist's studio	artist	/	1	Just chance, I found a place to live near-by at the same time	Creative people that you can meet when you have a coffee down the road
3) Contemporary art gallery	employee	5	3 (plus intern)	Vyner street already cluster of art galleries, presence of other galleries	Good flow of collectors, Vyner street renown for contemporary art
4) Contemporary art gallery	Owner/curator	4 months	1	It's in the heart of the gallery district	Good transport links, good art shops, good cafés and bars (to meet people after work)
5) textiles artist studio	artist	2	1	Feel of the area, mix of creative and normal people	Cheaper (opportunity to buy), availability of resources (e.g. framers)

Table 10.2- Creative entrepreneurs interviewed (London Fields)

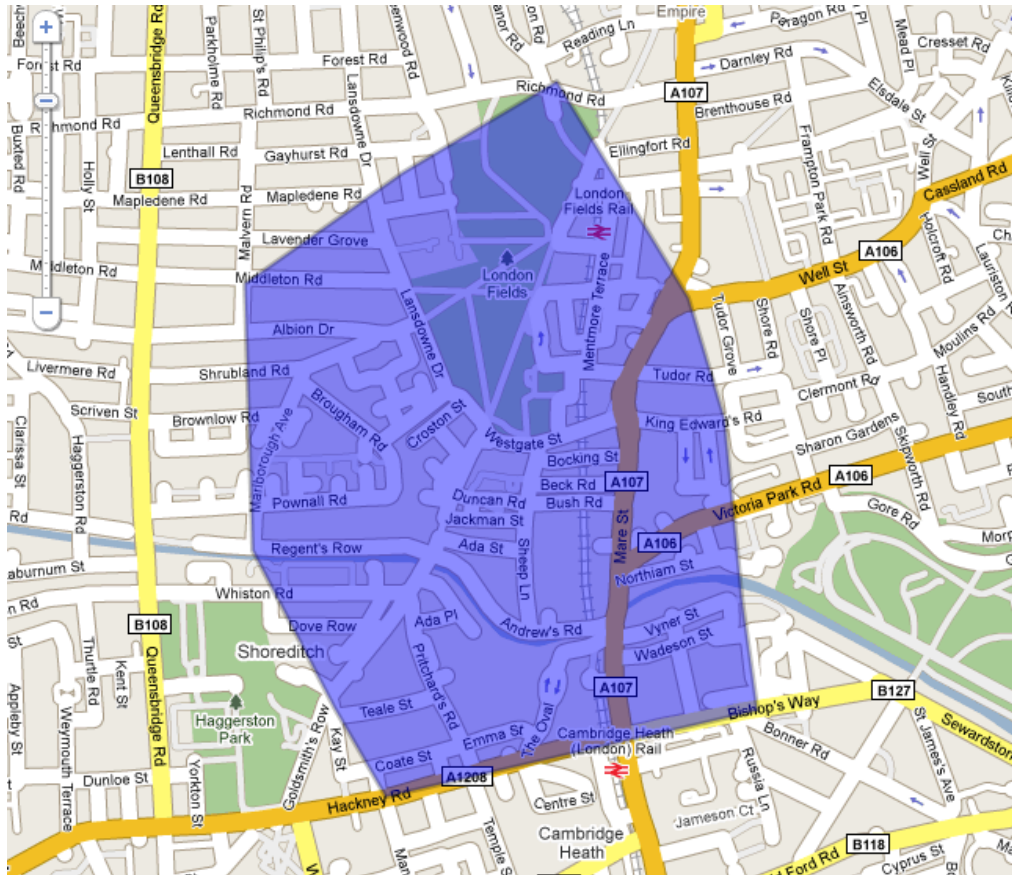


Figure 10.1a – Google map showing London Fields case study area

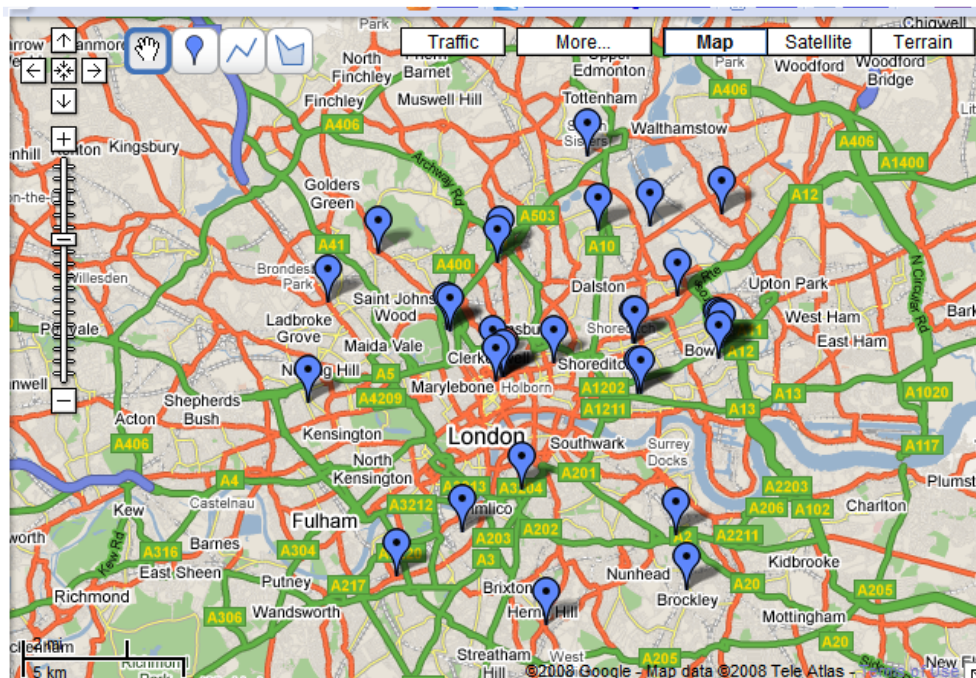


Figure 10.1b - Google Map showing London Fields interviewees' place of residence (if within Greater London)

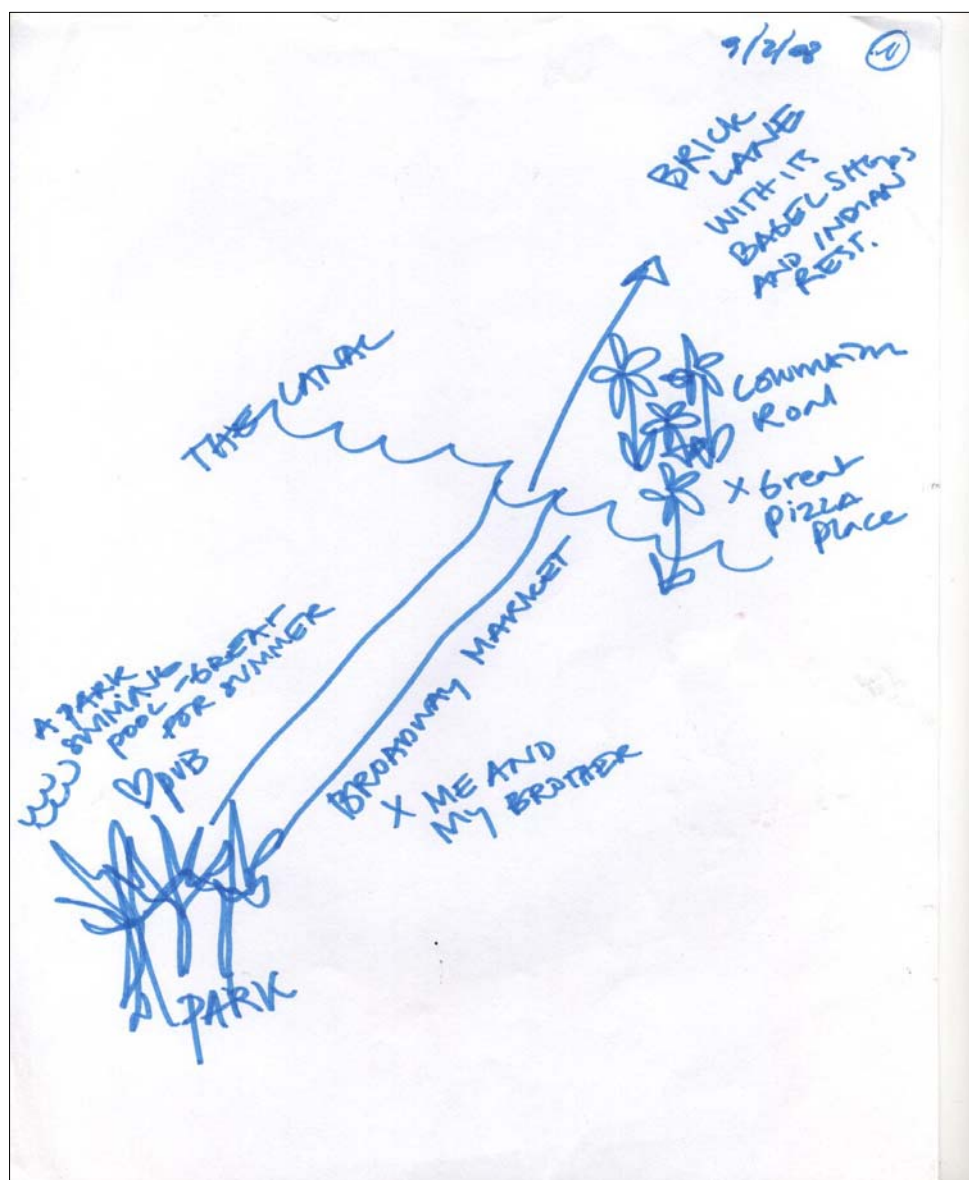


Figure 10.2 -Map of London Fields drawn by a sales assistant from East London

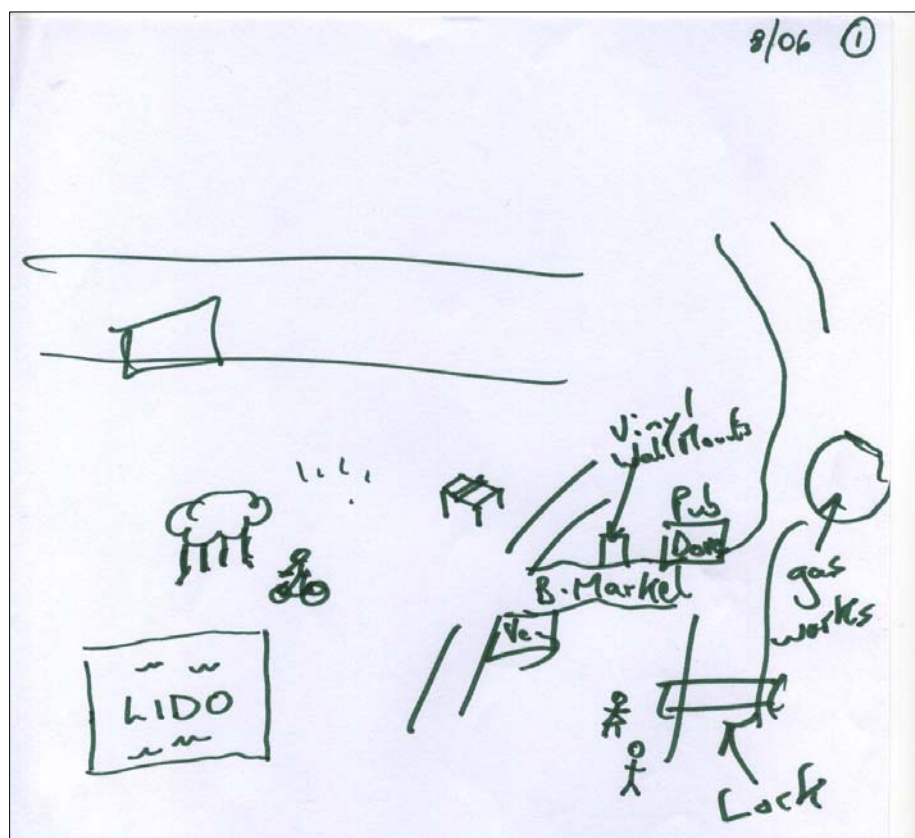


Figure 10.3-Map of London Fields drawn by a product manager (for a record label) from East London

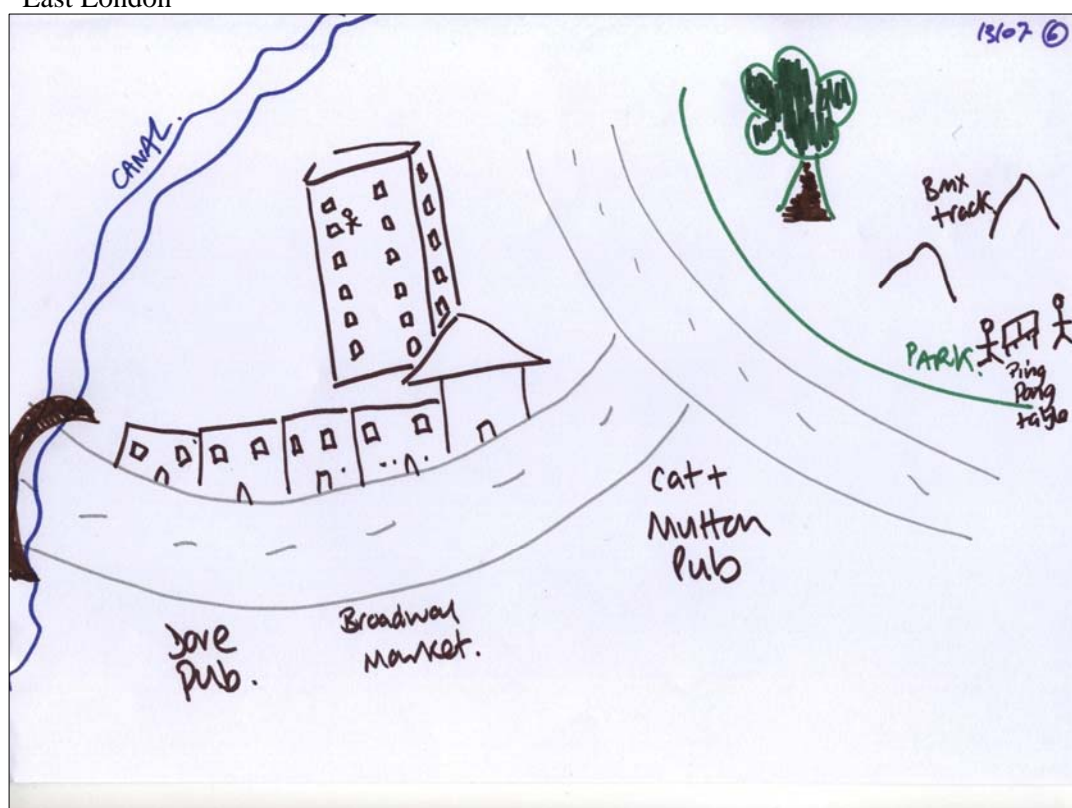


Figure 10.4 - Map of London Fields drawn by music PR from East London

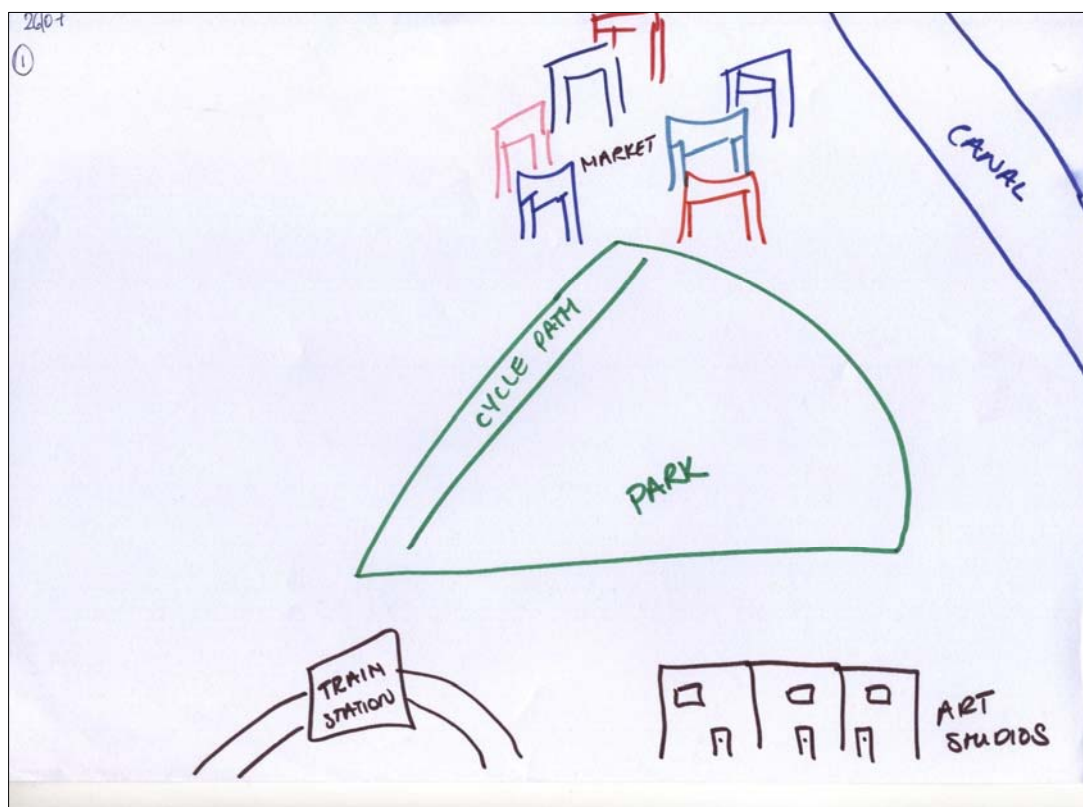


Figure 10.5 -Map of London Fields drawn by a recruitment researcher from Croydon (Greater London)

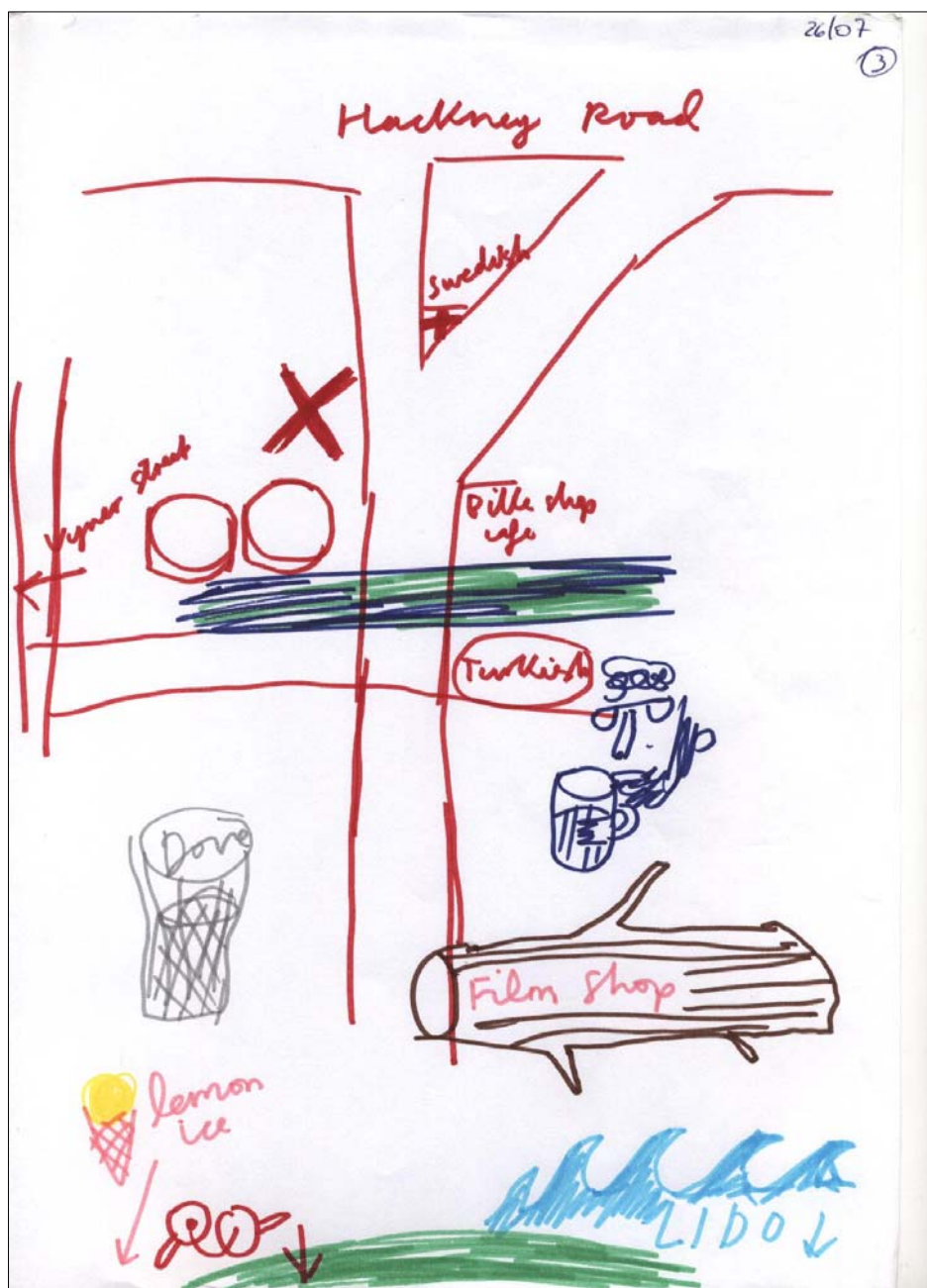


Figure 10.6- Map of London Fields drawn by a visitor from North London

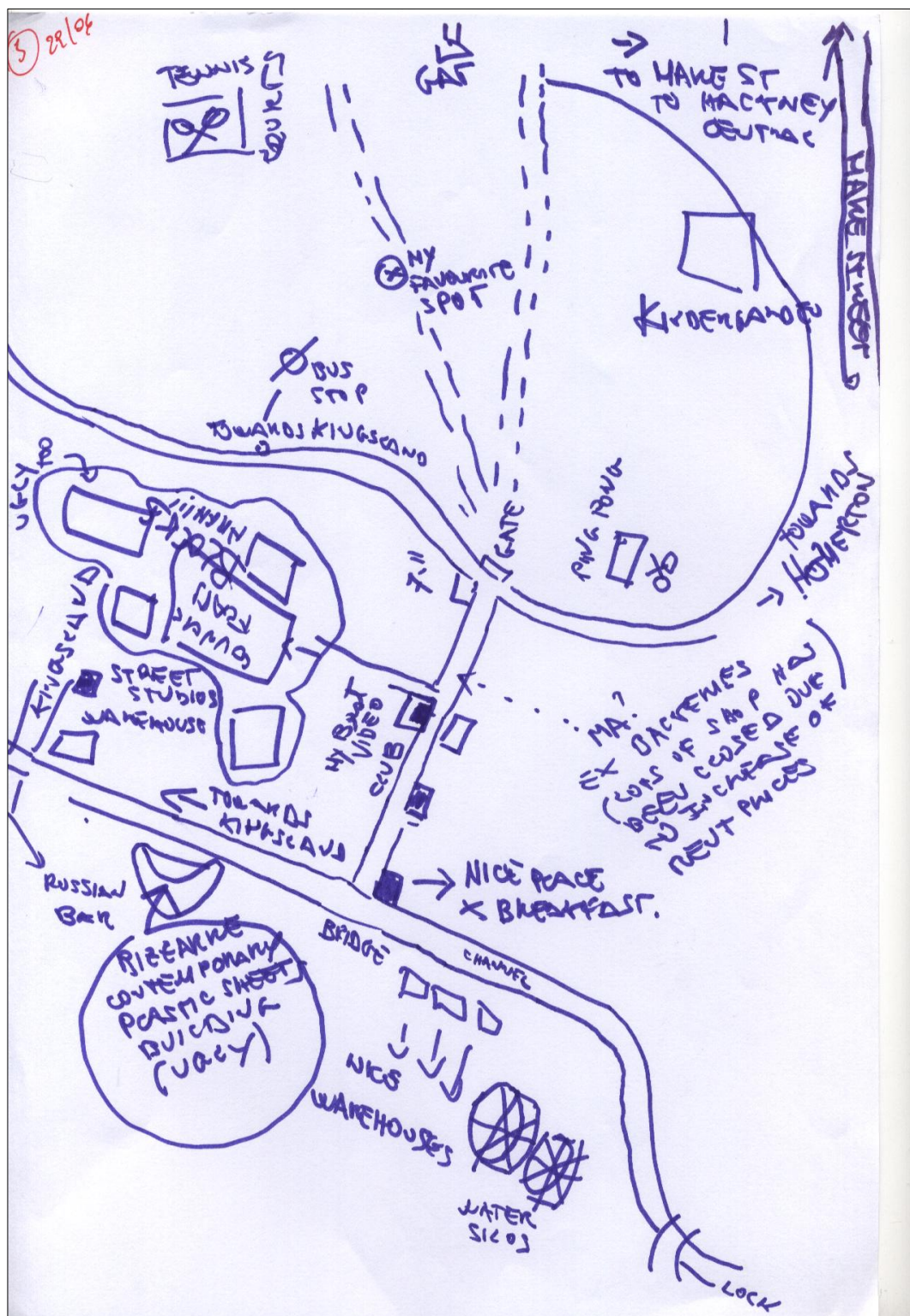


Figure 10.7 -Map of London Fields drawn by a visitor from East London

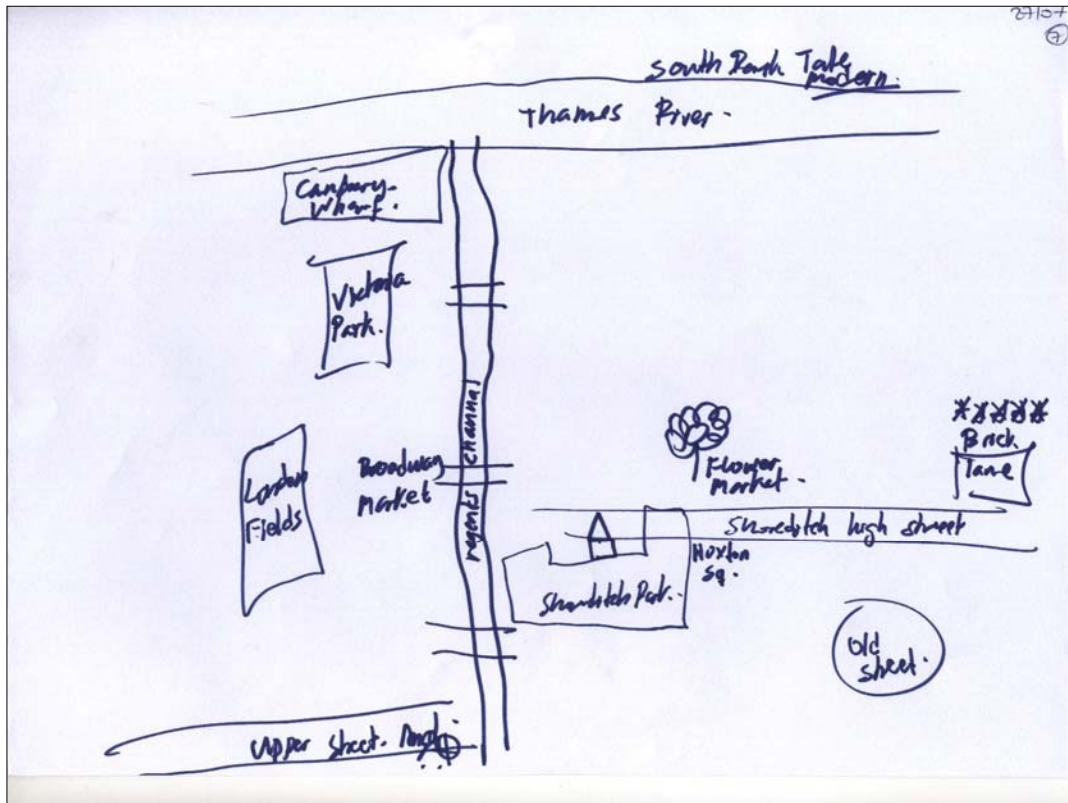


Figure 10.8 -Map of London Fields drawn by an architect from North London

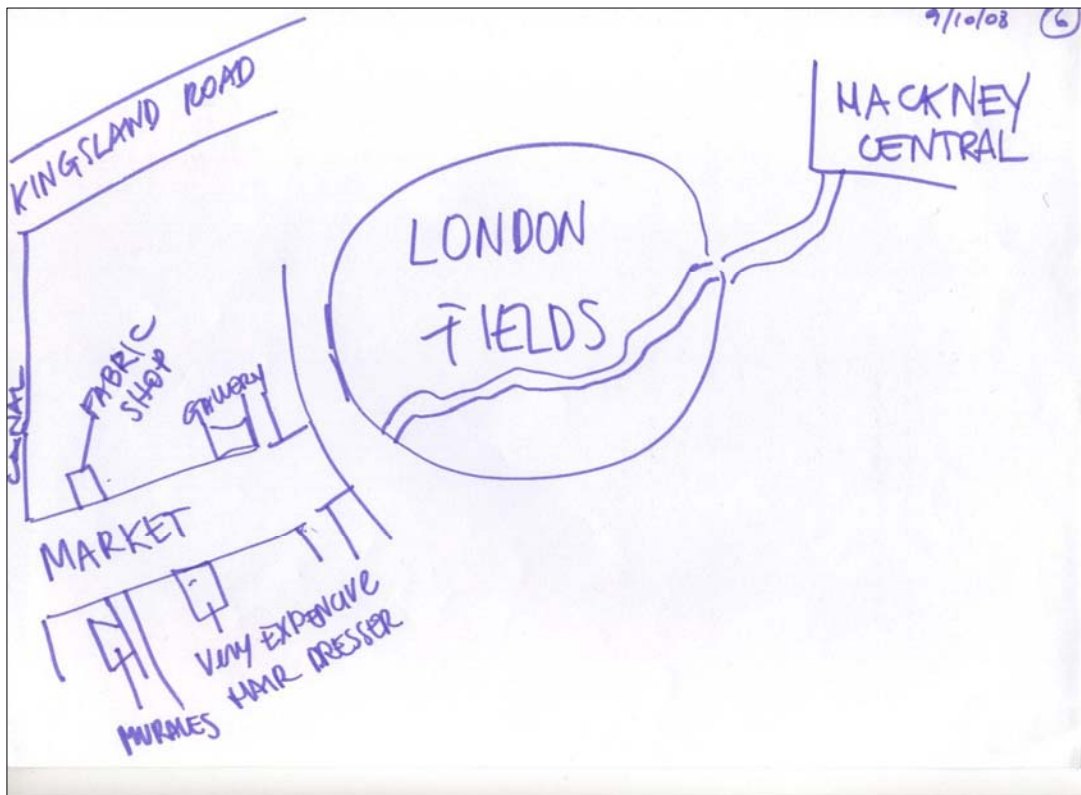


Figure 10.9 -Map of London Fields drawn by a document controller from London

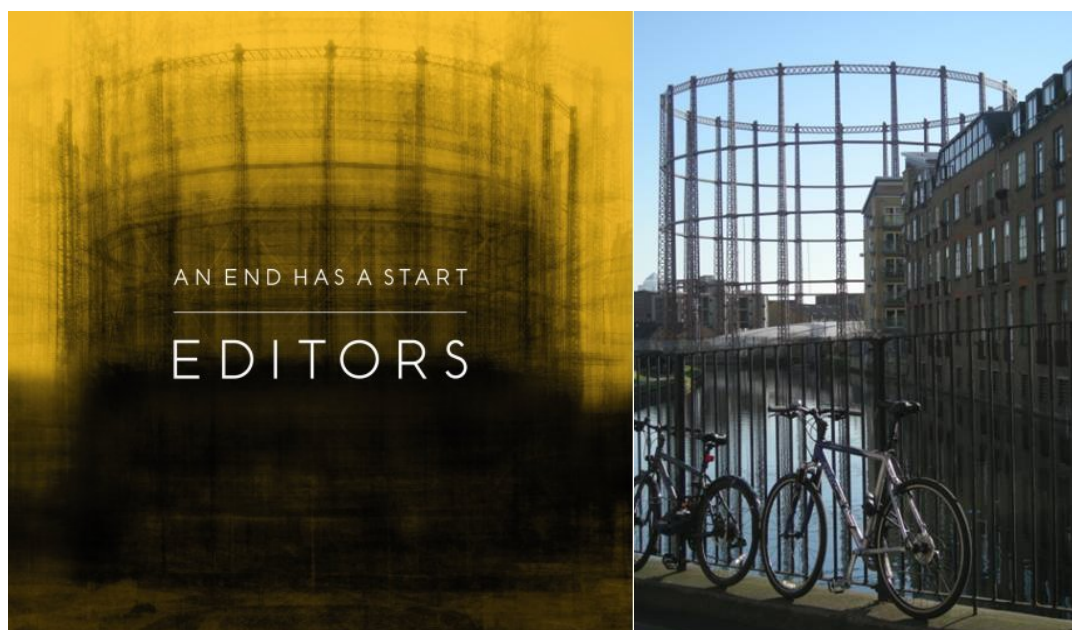


Figure 10.10 –Editors album cover featuring London Fields gasworks (as drawn by a local artist) and London Fields gasworks (photographed by the researcher)

11. DEPTFORD- EVIDENCE ANALYSIS

The Deptford Area

The area of Deptford, located in the East side of London, south of the river Thames, is characterized by a maritime history. From the 16th century Deptford was an important port for England, but it went into decline following the transfer of shipbuilding and dockworks southwards in the late 20th century (Smith, 2008). Lewisham Borough, where Deptford is situated, is the third largest London borough, but also one of the smallest in terms of size of its economy. Like most other London boroughs, Lewisham faces social and economic problems. For instance, 23% of the population have low numeracy and literacy skills (Lewisham Council, 2002).

However, the situation in Deptford is not as gloomy as it may appear, and its socio-economic condition has certainly been improving in recent years. Since the early 1990s the area has been the subject of a continuous stream of regeneration projects, from the work of the Deptford City challenge (a £37.5 million government funded urban regeneration agency, operational between 1992 and 1998) to the present redevelopment plans involving the construction of apartment complexes and new public spaces. In 1999 the connection to Canary Wharf (London's new financial centre) by DLR linked the area to central London.

The proximity of Goldsmith's College, one of London's most important arts universities, together with the availability of cheap studio space, enabled the attraction and retention of a high number of artists, adding to Deptford a new role as creative industry cluster. According to Creative Lewsham Agency (2005) there were, in 2005, 434 creative businesses and organisations (including artists' studios) in Deptford. This fact was soon seized as an opportunity by the London Development Agency, which designated it as a cultural hub. Lewisham's local authority then nominated a Culture and Urban Development Commission and,

following their report (Landry, 2001), a Creative Lewisham agency, which funded the 'Deptford Urban Design and development framework', was established in 2002.

Starting from this point, a programme of development projects based on culture, creative industries and tourism attraction began. This included both soft and hard intervention projects. 'Soft' ones ranged from the creation of annual festivals, which were initially created by (and for) the artistic community, but are now aimed at promoting the area as a creative hub (e.g. Made in Deptford, Deptford X, festival of Design), to the staging of wider public events such as the 'grand depart' of the 2007 Tour de France and London Marathon. 'Hard' ones included the construction of landmarks such as the Laban Dance Centre, a £24 million project designed by world famous architects Herzog and Meuron (who also designed the Tate Modern Gallery on Bankside) which opened in 2003 (Blackwood, 2007). However, more inclusive community-based projects aimed at involving the local community in the area's cultural buzz were also developed, such as the Art of Regeneration project at the Albany Deptford (in partnership with the National Theatre).

Private developers, having seized the opportunity created by the existing artistic community, are now trying to use the arts to increase property value. For example, a joint scheme by the developer Lane Castle and the arts consultant Futurecity Arts will see the development of not only apartments, bars and restaurants, but also a large gallery space and a strategy to encourage the growth of networks within the artistic community (Blackwood, 2007). The Deptford Project is a £57 million public-private partnership regeneration project, which involves the restoration of the old Deptford train station (the oldest surviving railway structure in London), the building of a new station, a new apartments' complex, a shopping piazza, and the development of an image and promotion strategy (Cathedral Group, 2008). The latter includes the creation of a trendy organic café in a refurbished 1960s train carriage aimed at providing an appealing meeting point for artists, students and visitors, the opening of a creative products market and the creation of an open-air exhibition space near the station.

On the public policy level, a full-time Town Centre Manager, employed by the council, is responsible for maintaining the town centre vitality and for tourism development of the area.

Fieldwork

In the Deptford area fieldwork consisted in seventeen interviews with visitors (see Table 11.1 page 239 for details) and six with creative professionals (see Table 11.2), conducted between August and October 2008. Creative professionals included two photographers, a visual artist, the manager of an art space (who is also artist and musician), the owner of a newly opened art gallery (who is also an artist) and an employee of Albany Deptford (a theatre space and community centre).

With regards to visitors a first consideration needs to be made: in Deptford, visitors appeared to be much more difficult to find than in the other areas, even on week-ends. Beside Deptford high street market, which attracts a high number of people every Saturday (mostly locals or people coming from near-by neighbours), to encounter a visitor in Deptford revealed to be a fairly difficult task. For this reason it seems impossible to draw general conclusions on the profile of the Deptford's visitor. In the following paragraphs, however, interviewees' relevant characteristics and motivations to visit Deptford will be described.

Visitors' Characteristics

Only five of the seventeen people interviewed were in Deptford with the specific intention of getting to know the area or one of its facilities. These five (all London residents) were also the interviewees who resembled to the greatest extent the visitors interviewed in the other three case studies in terms of motivations and lifestyle: driven by an interest culture (namely art and architecture), they were frequent travellers and, when in London, enjoyed exploring new parts of the city. Three of them worked in the creative sector. Of these five, two had been to Greenwich on the same day and had decided to extend their tour until Deptford (one on foot the other one by bicycle). One of them, for instance, told the

interviewer she had cycled from central London to Greenwich and then continued to Deptford with the intention of visiting the Laban Dance Centre and the market. She and her partner had seen on the Internet an image of the Laban and they wanted to see it in real life. One other visitor said to have come to Deptford especially to see the Laban: being an architect, she explained, she had a specific interest in this building. The Internet was the source of information about Deptford also for another interviewee, who had read a review about the recently opened Deptford Project café and had decided to go to Deptford especially to see it. Another interviewee, an art director from South London, had come to Deptford with his partner to see the open art studios during the Deptford X festival. He revealed a keen interest in arts and culture, both through his mental map (Figure 11.3 page 242) and during the interview, and the desire to explore:

‘I’m quite interested in culture interested in experiencing architecture and nice place to be its quite it about finding nice things, experience new things that I haven’t experienced before I’m not especially interested in shopping or anything like that but it is about being somewhere that I haven’t been the novelty of being in a new environment that I haven’t enjoyed before’ (Art Director from South London).

Five interviewees (four from London and one from Kent), on the other hand, were in Deptford to visit friends or relatives who lived there. They said they normally travelled within London and the UK to visit their friends and relatives, and they did not travel much abroad. Only one of them declared to be interested in art and other forms of culture. However, quite interestingly, he said that Deptford, although interesting for its diversity, was not the kind of place where he would go for culture (quote 132 Appendix VII). The other seven interviewees were all students or young overseas travellers staying in Deptford for a period ranging between one week and six months. Their evidence is especially interesting because, despite not having chosen to stay in Deptford for a specific interest in the area, they all got to know it quite well and therefore provided rich accounts of their experience. Three were living in Deptford for two weeks as part of a National Youth Theatre summer workshop happening at the Laban Dance Centre. They were all young actors or performing arts students and declared to be frequent travellers. The other student interviewed was a German design student on

a 6 month University exchange with Goldsmith's College. He could be described as a 'global member', having studied in three different countries and being especially interested in encountering new peoples and cultures. Also, he had a strong interest in the arts and enjoyed creating art products himself (photography, design). Another cosmopolitan person was the Spanish traveller interviewed in one of Deptford's two youth hostels. She was on a gap year and, after studying Chinese in China, she had come to London for six weeks staying at the Bird's Nest hostel in Deptford (because of its affordable price). In the Bird's Nest two Canadian travellers were also interviewed. They were travelling around Europe together for a month and stayed in Deptford for one week (advised by a friend who suggested that youth hostel to them). One of them did not seem at all interested in cultural activities: in her eight days in London, according to her interview, she had only visited Oxford Street and Greenwich. She described her holiday in London/Deptford mostly as a pub hopping vacation. Her friend, a young waitress from Saskatoon, seemed instead much keener on exploring new places, and she also revealed an interest in art and music.

The Tourist Experience

Except for two interviewees who had close relatives living in Deptford, all the others were first time visitors and they had almost no knowledge of Deptford at all prior to their visit. As evidence collected in the other three case studies shows (people were asked whether they knew Deptford and why), awareness of Deptford was extremely low among interviewed visitors.

Visitors to Deptford came without particular expectations: sometimes attracted by a specific amenity or event (namely, the Laban Centre, Deptford Project café or Deptford X festival), to visit a friend, or as a base to spend a holiday or short study period in London. All the visitors interviewed declared to really like Deptford, and in many cases they had a feeling of surprise about it. Having come without particular hopes, they appeared to be positively surprised of what they found. For example a visitor who was in Deptford to meet up with a friend said:

'I'm very surprised and really didn't expect this
[What did you expect?]

I really couldn't tell you what I expected, but I didn't expect something that was so, I like it here, quite relaxed laidback, a lot of different stuff going on, quite creative, good atmosphere and I'm very pleasantly surprised'
(assistant manager in a theatre, from London)

The only interviewee who was in Deptford especially to attend the Deptford X festival seemed quite pleasantly surprised by what Deptford had to offer. Nonetheless he said 'I'm not sure I would come here on a regular basis to do shopping or anything like that...'. However, when asked what he liked about it, he also declared:

'It's, again, that novelty, its quite vibrant, its strikes me that it's a very interesting area, mix of different cultures and people and that, I always like that about an area, its seems very colourful'. This concept of a 'colourful' place appears to be important to Deptford visitors, since it recurred in several interviews. The area's colours seem to be provided by the numerous ethnic shops (and, on Saturdays, market stalls) selling fruit, vegetables and ethnic clothes. The market seems indeed to be a very important element in some visitors' tourist experience, although only five out of seventeen drew it on their maps. Even in the case of people interviewed in other areas (who were asked whether they knew Deptford), the very few who recalled the area knew it because of the market (see for instance quote 134, Appendix VII, discussed in the previous chapter).

One visitor (a dentist from central London, who had come to visit the Laban and the market) remarked on Deptford's lack of 'points of interest':

'[How would you describe this area to someone who never been here?]
Residential, quiet, I don't really know, it's ok (...) it doesn't really have any real point of interest (...) I think it is just suburban residential area, very typical of any outside of a big city, I would say it's like that' (dentist from West London).

This theme of 'everydayness' emerged in a number of interviews (e.g. quotes 135, 137, 142, 155 and 162 in Appendix VII) and can be linked to the idea, discussed later, of authenticity (or 'real London', real life). Whereas for several interviewees this represented a positive characteristic, one of the Laban students (from Stanmore), when asked what she had been doing in the area, compared Deptford

and Greenwich, providing a description of Deptford as a dull, uninteresting and run-down (see quote 136 appendix VII). She described it as ‘quite eerie and dull (...) dark and not a bright area at all’, in contrast with several other visitors who highlighted it being very colourful. However, this same student, later also described it as a welcoming place, although for her ‘welcoming’ seemed to just mean ‘nothing too bad happened’. In conclusion, she declared to consider it not too bad but not too good either, in her words, ‘standard’ (quote 137 Appendix VII).

Whereas the interviewees from London found Deptford very local, a typical London suburb, the Spanish traveller interviewed in the hostel said it did not represent what she expected to find in London:

‘[If you had to describe this area to someone who never been here, how would you describe it?]

I would say not typical, not the thing you think about London when they say London, but it’s quite good if you don’t have enough money to live in the centre of London, and its not so stress[ful], its quiet, its hip and relaxed, and for me the river is quite close, it’s so beautiful, you can go for a walk without people’ (visitor from Spain)

This latter observation is especially interesting if we compare it with findings of Spitalfields: there, Londoners found the area unique, whereas tourists thought it was ‘typical London’. Here, exactly the opposite: Londoners find it ‘typical’, whereas the few interviewed overseas tourists (quotes 138, 139 and 147 in Appendix VII) think it is different from their image of London (which can be arguably associated with the centre). This can be explained with the fact that overseas tourists who were interviewed in Deptford were not off-the-beaten track visitors nor experienced London visitors. On the contrary, they were all first time visitors to London who chose Deptford as a basis for its convenience in terms of price and accommodation (see quote 138 in Appendix VII).

Also visitors’ sketch maps confirm the finding that overseas visitors perceive Deptford more as a place to live, as a base to visit other areas in London or to study near-by (Goldsmith’s, Laban). The map (Figure 11.5 page 243) drawn by

one of the students of the Laban theatre workshop (in Deptford for two weeks), shows precisely the type of amenities sought in Deptford by one of these visitors: the laundry service, supermarket, a Chinese takeaway, public transport, a local pub and the market. Also the interviews confirmed this finding: when asked what they had been doing in the area, the Laban workshop students (as well as the Spanish traveller and one of the two Canadians) mentioned their trips to central London and Greenwich, or activities such as going out for dinner or to local pubs. Only one of the two Canadian tourists said she had explored the area thanks to a little tour a local (who worked at the hostel) had given to her. She sounded quite impressed when she described the area, and the fact that it was surprisingly arty and cool, different from what tourists normally get to see in central London, but also poor and dilapidated:

‘You can go into the main part of London and see what everyone else sees there, cool, but coming here you see things you would never see, that a lot of people wouldn’t see, the graffiti around here this pretty cool you can catch it on buildings just the old buildings, this area in general (...) Poverty, dilapidated (...) lots of different things that you might be in, art scene creative hidden’ (waitress from Canada).

As previously highlighted, Deptford differs from the other case studies of this research in many ways. One of the most remarkable differences is the absence, in the qualitative data collected, of a theme that was instead central to the other three case studies (especially Hoxton/Shoreditch and Spitalfields): the area’s trendiness. In Spitalfields, Hoxton/Shoreditch and, to a lesser extent, London Fields the areas’ conspicuous and extravagant fashion trends are seen, by some visitors, as a tourist attraction, and by others as a threat to the areas’ authenticity and laid-back character. What emerged from the analysis of the first three case studies is a portrait of some super-trendy liminal places where, according to some, eccentric fashion has gone too far. Also in the case of Deptford interviewees’ descriptions of the area varied greatly, showing a complex pattern of feelings and place perceptions. However, whereas in the other three areas descriptions made by visitors varied between bohemian, gentrified, trendy, too trendy and even touristy or contrived, in Deptford the range of qualities named by visitors was rather different (See Appendix V). Perceptions of place ranged from negative ones such

as dilapidated and dangerous, through more clement images like bohemian and ‘real’, to positive ones such as peaceful, interesting and creative.

Atmosphere

Intangible qualities of place are central in visitors’ descriptions of Deptford. However, it must be noted that atmosphere does not seem to be as important here as it is in other areas such as Spitalfields or London Fields. In comparison with these other areas, visitors in Deptford did not mention the ‘vibe’ or ‘atmosphere’ as much as they did there; also, their opinion often differed substantially when it came to evaluating whether the area was welcoming, creative or vibrant. For instance, whereas in Hoxton/Shoreditch and Spitalfields visitors especially liked the fact that these areas are very young and lively, in Deptford (similarly to London Fields) visitors tended to rather describe the area as quiet, calm and relaxing (e.g. quotes 133 and 138 Appendix VII).

In terms of the area being welcoming, a quality that was mentioned by visitors of the other three case studies, visitors to Deptford did not seem to have consistent opinions (see quotes 137, 140, 141, 150 Appendix VII). For instance, the young Spanish woman interviewed at the hostel noted that the local (non white) community did not seem very open to mix with white, European visitors. Also one of the British students studying theatre at the Laban Centre pointed out that Deptford, although interesting for its cultural diversity, is not as welcoming as Greenwich, which she mainly linked to the fact of not feeling safe at night:

‘I think Greenwich is a really nice actually (...) but Deptford’s not as nice, it’s a bit more, I don’t know, not rough, its not as welcoming as Greenwich is, Greenwich is a bit more chilled with nicer places

[Is there something you like about Deptford or nothing at all?]

Oh no, I did like it, during the day I love it, it’s got the attitude different cultures and its constantly mixing but at night time it’s a big dodgy’ (Laban Student 1, from North Davon)

On the other hand, one of the two Canadians, described Deptford’s locals as very friendly and welcoming. Also she remarked on the fact that the area is very ‘old’, a theme later discussed:

‘[How did you find this area different from other areas you’ve seen in London?] A lot older, like the oldest part of town not as posh as central London that we have gone to (...) a lot friendlier people in the smaller areas of town, everyone seems to know each other which is cool and everyone wants you to meet everyone, so that really cool’ (waitress from Canada)

Local people and the fact that the place feels very authentic, not adulterated by the desire of attracting visitors, are the elements that seem to contribute the most to create Deptford’s character, which people often described as very local, genuine and real. Also, as previously noted for London Fields, this authenticity is linked to ‘real life’ (or, more generally, to ‘life’). For example, a visitor from east London, made the interesting comment that Deptford is ‘real London, I’d say, it’s real London without all the corporates who haven’t been in yet to make it soulless, its got soul (...) it’s nice, its got character’ (visitor from east London, works in marketing).

A student recently arrived in Deptford from Germany described in a very interesting way how he started to discover Deptford’s local community when he first arrived:

‘In the beginning of the year I was not sure what all these little streets, how it spreads over, all the multinational people, a big change, and then I realised this kind of people they really lived here, they were not tourists (...) I really like this kind of.. how do you say... real people’ (student from Berlin)

This interesting quote can be linked with the theme of everydayness discussed above, and the idea of seeing ‘real people’ as a tourist attraction or a sign of authenticity. This is precisely what visitors seem to like the most about Deptford, and most notably its villagey feel (see quotes 141, 143 and 144 Appendix VII, see also discussion of this theme in the previous chapter). A visitor from London, for example linked precisely Deptford’s villageyness to its strong community feel: ‘I’m picking up a community thing here (...) we might hit some little villages of towns little pockets in London where they have got almost like little villages’ (assistant manager in a theatre, from London).

Also mental maps (see for instance figures Figure 11.3 to Figure 11.6) seem to be representations of a small self-contained area. Only two people represented in their maps points of reference belonging to central London (the London Eye –see Figure 11.6- and Canary Wharf –Figure 11.4 page 243). However, as noted for the other case studies, this could be also due to the fact that visitors tend to arrive by rail and therefore struggle to connect the area to other parts of the city. Four interviewees (out of sixteen who drew a map) also represented Greenwich in their sketches of the area. As discussed earlier in this chapter, many visitors associate and compare Deptford and Greenwich.

In the next extract, a visitor from East London, who went to Deptford to see open studios at the Deptford X Festival, interestingly compared Deptford's villageyness to Hoxton and Shoreditch before they 'got really gentrified':

'Um it reminds me a bit of, sort of, Hoxton and Shoreditch ten years ago before they sort of got really gentrified (...) More of a village feel, it does sort of feel edge of the city' (marketing officer from East London)

Evidence shows that the small local shops along Deptford high road and the market play an important role in creating Deptford community and villagey feel (e.g. next extract). Also, visitors like the fact that the area is very diverse, which adds to its charm and makes it more colourful. The next extract is a good example of how the area is perceived by an overseas visitor who got to know it very well (student from Berlin). It summarises the idea of villagey, locality and independent shops, adding the idea that the area is also creative (quality noted by some –but not all- the interviewees):

'[Can you tell me a bit more about what you especially like about the area?]
Like a big change, there isn't the big store that everybody knows, it's more independent little kind of stores local people go to, I really like that they try to get more art scene here, art galleries and little art studios and there is this market I like to go to, and the park (...) Like multinational, multicultural, not that over-owned by big chains, big brand names, small streets, local people' (student from Berlin).

As previously mentioned, in comparison with other case studies where the area's creativity was a predominant theme, in Deptford interviewees did not seem to find this aspect especially important. Creative industries seemed to have played an important role within the tourist's experience for only for three interviewees, one of the two Canadian travellers, the German Goldsmith's student and the art director who went to Deptford for the Deptford X festival. In the next interview extract an art director who was in Deptford for the Deptford X festival describes how creative industries contribute to make the area interesting and make him feel like visiting and exploring it further:

'Well particularly the area that we passed there's a lot in it, there's a real sense of artist community and sort of like feel a lot of artist living in the area and working in this area and that is quite interesting but also it feels quite run down in some ways but also feels like it might be improving like its regenerating, and that's quite interesting but I kind of feels like its a vibrant place (...) its all adding the colour and vibrancy' (visitor from South London)

As discussed above, when visitors interviewed in North East London were asked about Deptford, except for very few cases, they had either no awareness of Deptford or a negative image. For instance, an engineer from North West London, interviewed in Spitalfields, when asked whether he knew Deptford and London Fields replied:

'[...Deptford?] Yeah, people who come from London call it 'low life city', it's mostly known for people who smoke drugs, crack, cocaine, it's one of the poorest areas of London, I think it has a maritime history, they used to build ships there, it's changing now some friends of mine that have a lot of money just bought a house there, by the river. [and what about London Fields, do you know it?] I'm going there later, lots of friends of mine live there, it's so different from what it was fifteen years ago, when it was hot Hackney, there are lots of Georgian houses not block flats like in Deptford' (engineer from West London, interview conducted in Spitalfields).

This quote appears especially interesting if related to the type of visitor with whom the interview was conducted: a passionate 'everyday tourist' who often travelled and explored new areas of London (especially by bicycle), and showed

good knowledge of a number of places, including Deptford and London Fields. This interviewee, unlike most others, appeared to have some specific knowledge of Deptford ('I think it has a maritime history, they used to build ships there') although his image of the area seemed to be the one of a dilapidated neighbourhood ('people...call it 'low life city', it's mostly known for people who smoke drugs, crack, cocaine, it's one of the poorest areas of London') which is now gentrifying ('it's changing now some friends of mine that have a lot of money just bought a house there').

Although the image of Deptford among people who do not really know it appeared to be fairly grim (if it existed at all), visitors who knew the area pointed out that the area is '(...) rough and dangerous if you don't know it, but when you get to know the place it's like any other place, if you know it, you become quite comfortable' (project manager from South East London)

This interviewee, coming from Greenwich, was quite familiar with the area. However, even visitors who came from much farther afield, such as an interviewee from Canada, noted that, although you need to 'hold onto your purse really tight (...) if you get to know the area it is nice'. Interestingly, however, evidence collected from interviews made in Deptford also shed some light on the sometimes subtle line existing between a rundown and a cool, edgy place. An art director from South east London explained that, for him, the ingredients which provide an area with a bohemian feel are the combination of 'a real sense of artist community' with a rundown look. This interviewee was interviewed during the Deptford X festival and he had been touring various artists' open studios and other festival attractions. The exceptionality of the event could perhaps represent an explanation as to why he noted the area's artistic community more than others. Artists' studios are generally closed to the public, with the consequence that it is more difficult (than in the other case study areas, where there are more public galleries) for visitors to note the feel of 'artistic community'. For instance, the two Canadian tourists staying at the hostel explained that they had discovered the area's artiness only thanks to a local (a woman who worked at the hostel). This woman took them on a brief explorative creative tour of Creekside, where most art studios are clustered (see quotes 151 and 152 Appendix VII). Although they found most studios closed, one of these two Canadian visitors remarked on the

fact that they are very important to the area, because ‘without that I’m sure it would have just been dirty, wouldn’t be as lifelike’. However, in comparison with the other case studies, in Deptford visitors did not seem to find area particularly ‘trendy’ (although creative and bohemian) or to notice that it is becoming (too) popular. The only interviewees who commented on this aspect were the creative entrepreneurs, who pointed out that the area is ‘in transition’, although this transformation (from deprived into hip) is happening exceedingly slowly (quotes 153-154 appendix VII).

Consistently with the evidence collected in other areas, where the trendiness or alternative fashions were sometimes seen as a sign of the area becoming ‘contrived’ or even intimidating, in Deptford the absence of this element is seen as a positive quality. In London Fields for instance, the fact that there are many ‘new residents’ was pointed out by someone (see quote 122, Appendix VII, discussed in the previous chapter) as a downside, and the area was compared to Deptford where ‘you find (...) a lot of local people’.

Spatial characteristics

While atmosphere and intangible qualities play a major role in visitors’ positive accounts of their experience in Deptford, physical space seems to be more often mentioned in terms of what people did not like or would change in Deptford. For instance, despite the big investment that was made to provide Deptford with a prize winning contemporary building, very few of the interviewees seemed to be especially enthusiastic about the beauty of the Laban Centre. Five drew it in a recognisable way on their maps (but four of them were actually interviewed within its premises). However, also on this matter opinions were by no means uniform. For instance, a visitor from south London gave a very positive picture of his perception of Deptford’s physical environment, characterised, according to him, by the river and the contrast between new and historical buildings:

‘I suppose what I like is the proximity to the river very peaceful, mixture between old and new what I like is the whole spectrum of new buildings or business to what we are connected to here the studio art and then around the corner you will have a very old building, its very surprising to see very old,

extremely old buildings, there's one back there that is built in the 1500 so that made me quite excited and then next to that is the new council houses with new offices' (civil engineer from South London)

The small, independent shops, different from the high street chains are, in terms of spatial characteristics, what most people noted. Beside this, people tend to speak of Deptford's physical environment more in terms of what should be improved. For instance, the poor conditions of the river seems to be a major concern for most interviewees (e.g. quote 157, appendix VII). Several people also remarked on the fact that there is not green enough, especially in comparison with near-by Greenwich, which is seen by many as Deptford's prettier neighbour. Also, some interviewees remarked on the fact that the area looks a bit scruffy, even deprived (e.g. quotes 136, 139 and 158). This, according to some, is part of the Deptford's beauty, whereas for others the area needs some money invested to regenerate it:

'Like some of the High street looks a bit scruffy in parts it looks like there's not much money in the area, but that sort of adds to the charm as well, but my friends that live here said it can be a bit scruffy a bit of a mess around a bit smelly so yeah... but other than that I hear it's a very nice area (marketing officer from East London)'

Some visitors linked the area's scruffy look with crime (e.g. quote 159 appendix VII), saying this made them feel not as safe, especially during the night. One of the two Canadian tourists, for instance, when asked what she did not like of Deptford, said 'the fact that I feel I may or may not get stabbed at any moment'. She then explained this feeling of danger saying that 'there is a lot of crazy guys' and that the area is 'a bit on the ghetto rough side'. Probably also the fact that the area is not very lively at night (see next section) contributes to create this perception of danger.

Tourism Development

As discussed earlier in this chapter, Deptford seems to be at the very early stage of tourism development. Most of its visitors are either VFR or use Deptford as a base to visit other areas in London. However, this research revealed that an initial small

number of off-the-beaten-track visitors are approaching Deptford too. These, according to the evidence collected, are still only Londoners, interested to discover a new part of London, or attracted by one of Deptford's amenities: the Laban Dance Centre, the market, the very recently opened Deptford café and Deptford X festival. For instance, a civil engineer from South London visited Deptford while walking with his partner from Greenwich to Canada Water and described to the researcher his surprise in finding something more than industrial buildings:

‘Its much more popular than I thought, I thought between Canada Water and Greenwich was nothing but industrial estates and there are a lot of very vibrant council houses and active football and playgrounds and safe feel to it’ (civil engineer from South London)

Also the four local artists who were interviewed, confirmed that tourism does not seem developing very fast. However, they can see the area slowly becoming more popular, especially following Lewisham Council's, LDA's (London Development Agency) and private developers' efforts to promote it. However, all of the creative professionals interviewed said that 'people' have been talking of Deptford's development for many years and yet the results fail to become visible. A local artist, who recently opened an art gallery in Deptford, explained that when he first moved to the area in 1998 some people already thought it would become 'the new East End'. According to him this cannot happen as long as there are not many art galleries in the area. However, although Deptford is still not considered a focal point for contemporary art, he can see the area developing and, having recently opened an art gallery, clearly hopes in a grow in popularity in the near future (quote 161, Appendix VII). Also one of the visitors noted that Deptford reminds her of Shoreditch before it became very popular.

One of the local artists (a photographer) explained in rich detail some of the development dynamics happening in the area. Similarly to the other interviewed artists, according to him the area is becoming more popular, but this is happening very slowly. However, he believed that Deptford is at a turning point: in the last year the area has been growing especially fast in terms of consumption facilities (art galleries, cultural events and cafes) and this, according to him, will soon boost

the area's image and attract more visitors. As shown by the next interview extract, he also mentioned gentrification as one of the consequences of this development. However he did not see gentrification as a problem: on the contrary, he thought that being in the area when the development process is happening is actually the ideal situation for an artist, because it allows them to enjoy the place's vibrancy and facilities without the drawbacks of yet to come price increases.

'it's been happening for some time, very slowly, and in other places as well, restaurants and tapas bar, and the pubs and the music, it's sort of maturing now, it's been happening for some time now, very slowly, but now it's going to get more mature I'd say, which means for us in a few years everyone elsewhere because we cannot afford it anymore

[So you are not so happy about it?] No, I'm quite happy, actually I think this is the ideal time to be in a place like this, because it's not compromised and it's already living on its own as well, and in so many years ahead it won't be like that anymore it will be un-payable and hectic as well, but for the time being the opposite, I like it (local photographer II)

Whereas some of the interviewed artists seemed quite content about the area's development in terms of visitors and consumption facilities, one remarked on the fact that this process is not happening in a spontaneous way, but just as a result of public policy. He pointed out that 'they' (meaning policy makers and developers) are hoping to replicate the model of Shoreditch, where the presence of many artists raised the area's profile encouraging a rapid development process and the attraction of visitors and investment. For him, although making Deptford more vibrant would represent a positive change for local artists, cultural policy feels sometimes imposed and for this reason not so effective (quote 164 Appendix VII).

Artists also noticed that now culture-driven regeneration is not being encouraged only on a public policy level, but also private developers are trying to capitalise on the 'creative cluster' to develop the area. One of the interviewees (local photographer II) explained that some private construction companies have now been involved in funding local cultural development projects in the hopes of improving the area's image with the final objective of increasing property prices (quote 165 Appendix VII).

The Creative Cluster

In terms of creative cluster, all the interviewed creative entrepreneurs declared that they perceived Deptford as a very creative area. However, no one mentioned the area's creativity as a reason to locate there. Whereas in other case studies (Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch especially) several artists said they chose to locate there because it was creative (or because their friends/colleagues were living in the area) in Deptford the reasons for locating were mostly two: price, and accessible location from their homes or place of study/work (see Table 11.2, page 240). In this sense, Goldsmith's college revealed to be a very important element in the development of a creative cluster in Deptford, since several interviewed artists (and one visitor, who was studying there for 6 months) were Goldsmiths' ex-students or teachers.

When asked whether they felt connected with other local artists or there was any collaboration between them they generally say that, yes, there is, although 'it's not an everyday practice'. In particular they mentioned the Deptford X festival as an important occasion for networking and collaboration. Also a website (dontsaynothing.com) seems to work in fostering networking between Deptford artists (see quote 166). One of the artists, however, had a slightly different opinion, and explained that there is a cluster but it becomes evident only during big events such as the Deptford X festival, whereas normally people can work next to each other without any real connection or exchange:

'...yeah, there is definitely a creative cluster of people working, but you can have that without people actually knowing about each other, you know, you can work in a big studio, coming to work, go past all the other closed doors and go into your bit and then come out again' (local artist/musician)

The aspect that, according to this latter artist, makes networking and mutual exchange between artists more difficult is the lack of public places where they can meet, talk and befriend each other. In particular, he described how desolated and dead Deptford is on a Saturday night and compared it to the liveliness of Shoreditch which is, according to him, the key to its success:

‘I was cycling back from Borough Market last night, and I just came back down Deptford High street and it’s very very dead, there is nothing happening on Deptford High street on Saturday, I mean, there is, but in terms of the arts, you know, what happened in Shoreditch and stuff, that’s why it became such a popular place, it really built up and there is a real economy to it, because all of a sudden, yeah, there is a lot of artists living in the area, starting up clubs, starting up little new venues and now (...) there is a real kind of social life to it’ (local artist/musician).

It seems thus that night-life is still not very developed in Deptford, or at least not enough to retain a community of artists on a Saturday night. This could partially explain why in Deptford both visitors and creative entrepreneurs did not feel the ‘buzz’ felt in the other three case studies. However, some of the visitors interviewed at the youth hostel said the music scene is quite vibrant, and the area is also interesting in terms of traditional pubs. According to interviewed creative professionals though, the area offers some other cultural opportunities as well, and the majority of them said it is also a cultural quarter, where culture can be consumed as well as it is produced (quote 169, Appendix VII).

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, visitors did not often mention the creative industries in their descriptions of the area’s amenities or on their mind maps. However, when specifically asked about it, in most cases they revealed to be aware of the presence of many creative industries and this, according to them, was important in adding charm to the area (see for example quote 170, Appendix VII, discussed earlier).

Another interesting aspect of the role played by creative industries in the visitors experience, which emerged in other case studies as well (Hoxton/Shoreditch in particular), is the impression the area gives of being a place that encourages the development of creative activities. This quality, which is obviously an especially important factor for those visitors who work or study in the creative field, is mostly provided by the presence of many small businesses (such as small shops owned by the same people who make the products, individual studios and market stalls where artists sell their artwork). These elements give visitors the impression

that the place allows creativity development, in contrast with other areas that are dominated by chain shops and big companies. This process was for instance described by a German visitor (a graphic design student, in Deptford for six months), who also pointed out that such an area is probably bound to develop in the next few years:

‘[Does it remind you of any area of London or of other cities, like the city where you come from for example?] Yeah definitely, it reminds me of Berlin, because in there there’s a particular area where you can feel that they want to create something new but it’s in the very beginning, it’s not finished, and you can do something new and you could arrange something without much money to grow your own ideas, so a place that in the next 5 years will change (student from Germany, p.24)’

Conclusions

The analysis of evidence collected in Deptford shows substantial differences between this area’s characteristics, appeal to visitors and tourism economy, and the other three previously analysed. Whilst the artists’ community and the occasional visitor seem to appreciate the area’s features, most people in the outside world, including other Londoners, appear to have either very low or no awareness of the area, or to possess a negative image (i.e. gritty, poor, ugly). However, the few who do know it (residents, ex residents and visitors) actually like the fact that its development is happening very slowly, allowing this liminal period of time in which it is still possible to appreciate the buzz of an artistic community, without overcrowding and gentrification. To a great extent, visitors to the area are VFR or overseas/British tourists who use it as a base to visit London. However, a small number of off-the-beaten-track visitors, mainly Londoners interested in exploring new parts of London, are starting to appear, and evidence collected showed that they were pleasantly surprised by what the area has to offer. The area is especially loved for its strong feel of community or ‘villagey feel’, which is linked to authenticity and the idea of real life. Also the small independent shops and almost total absence of shop chains contribute to this villagey feel. The music scene also appears to quite important, whereas the art scene, despite its

strong artists community, still remains rather hidden (except during the two annual open studios festivals).

In terms of creative cluster, artists feel to be in a creative area, but networking does not seem to be an everyday practice, but rather an occasional occurrence (it happens in particular during the Deptford X festival). A major reason for this is the lack of an interesting night-life or other leisure venues where artists would have the chance to meet and network. This is however a problem the Council and the local development agencies have noticed and which they are trying to address. Artists have witnessed in the last couple of years the area's change towards a more developed cultural and leisure economy. Therefore they predict a rise in the area's profile and consequent speeding up of the tourism development process.

Gender	Male: 6	Female: 11	Tot. 17				
Profession	Creative industry/arts (inc. art students): 5	Business/finance: 1	Student: 2	Engineer/informatics: 1	Management/accounting/administration: 2	Hospitality/retail: 1	Other: 5
Usual place of residence	London: 10	UK (excl. London): 3	Europe (excl. UK): 2	US & Canada: 2	Asia: /	Australia & NZ: /	Tot. non-Londoners: 7
Reason for visiting London (non-Londoners)	Holiday/pleasure: 3	Business: /	VFR: 1	Study/Learn English: 3	Day Visit: /	Other: /	Tot. non-Londoners: 7
Age	<30: 9	30-39: 6	40-49: 1	50-59: 1	Over 60: /		

Table 11.1 – Interviewed visitors (Deptford)

Type of business	Role of interviewee (owner, manager or employee?)	Years since business started (in this location)	Number of people working in the business	Main reasons for locating in the area	Advantages of this location
1) photographer's studio	Artist (photographer)	13	1	Space for 16 artists available	Location (near home, near the centre), kind of people that walk in, kind of area, good parking
2) photographer's studio	Artist (photographer)	4 or 5	1	Cheap, near Goldsmith where I teach, presence of other artists	Location, affordable, big creative community, range of food
3) painter's studio	Artist (painter)	5	1	Cheap, good transport connections	High street is good to buy small things for my work
4) art gallery	Owner, curator, artist	1 month	1	cheap rent, near home, presence of other artists (initially, located there as an artist 10 years before because studying at Camberwell)	price
5) studio and exhibition space	Manager/artist/musician	1	7 (artists sharing the space)	Good space, cheap	/
6) Albany theatre and world music centre (charity)	Employee	26	30	(the Albany Institute based in the area since 1899)	Culturally diverse, many creative businesses based here

Table 11.2 Creative entrepreneurs interviewed (Deptford)



Figure 11.1 – Google map showing Deptford case study area



Figure 11.2 Google Map showing Deptford interviewees' place of residence (if within Greater London). Postcodes: WC1, E14, SE3, E14, HA7, SE15, SE15, W1K, SE10, SE10, SE16

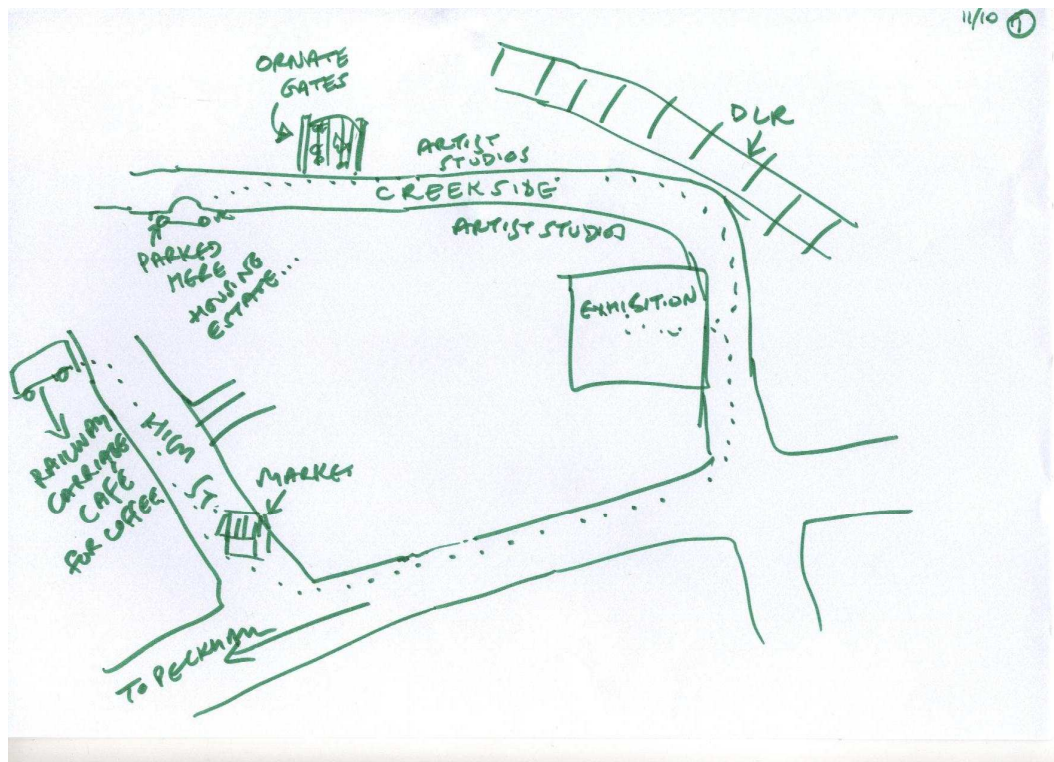


Figure 11.3 – sketch map of Deptford drawn by an art director from South London

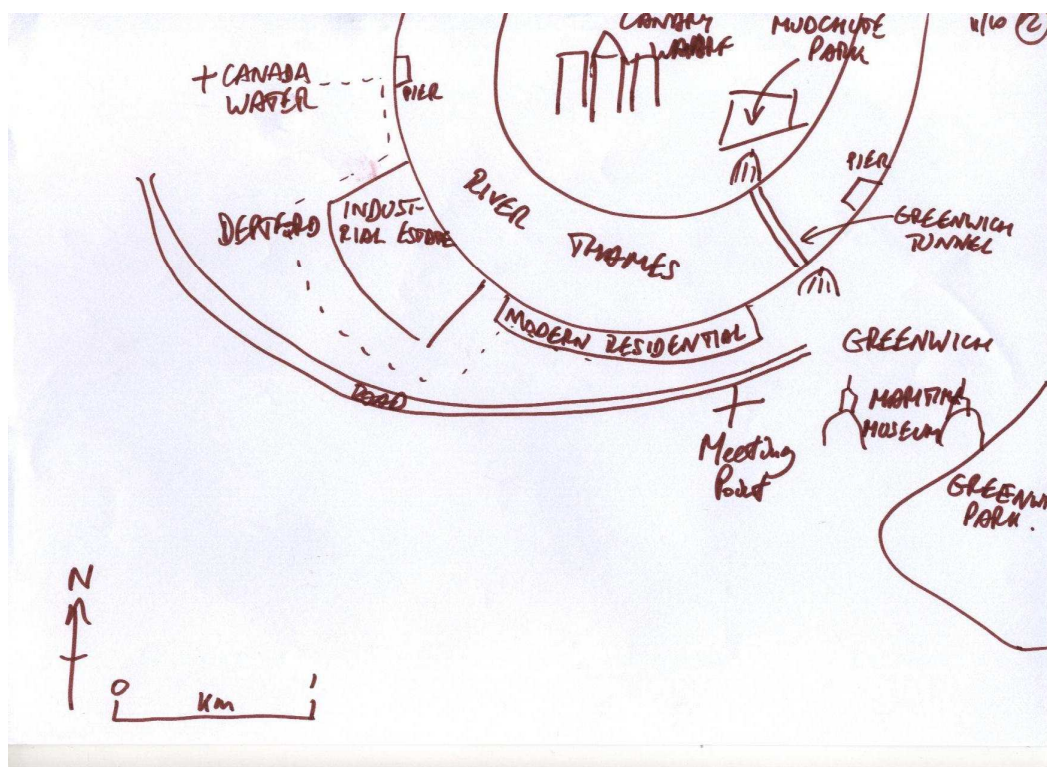


Figure 11.4 – sketch map of Deptford drawn by a visitor from Kent

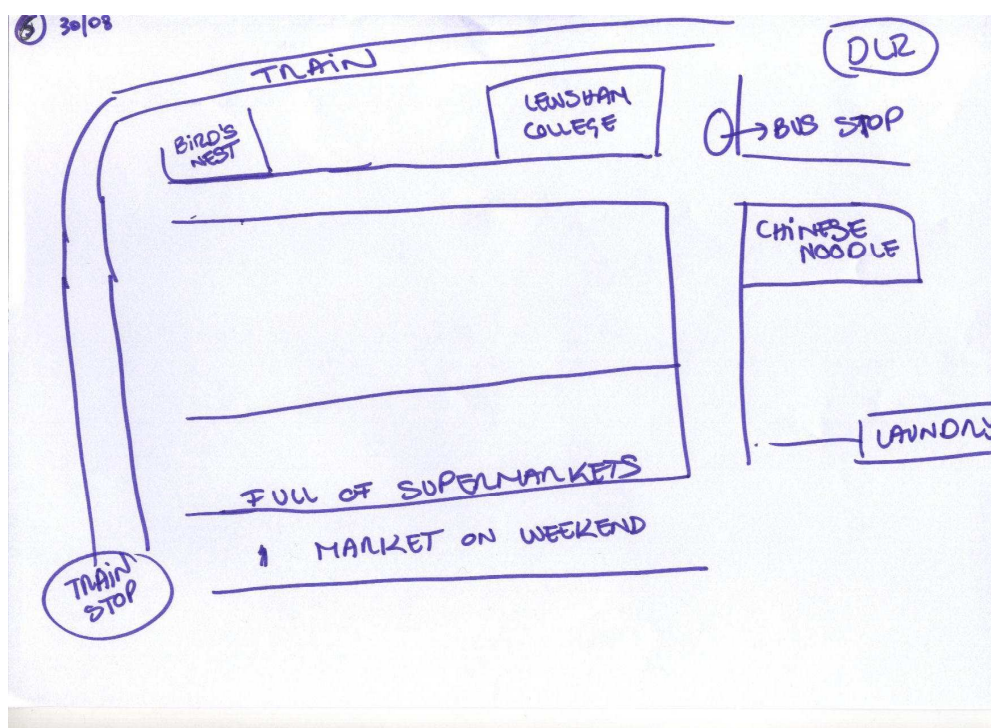


Figure 11.5 – sketch map of Deptford drawn by an actor from South London (on the National Youth Theatre Programme)

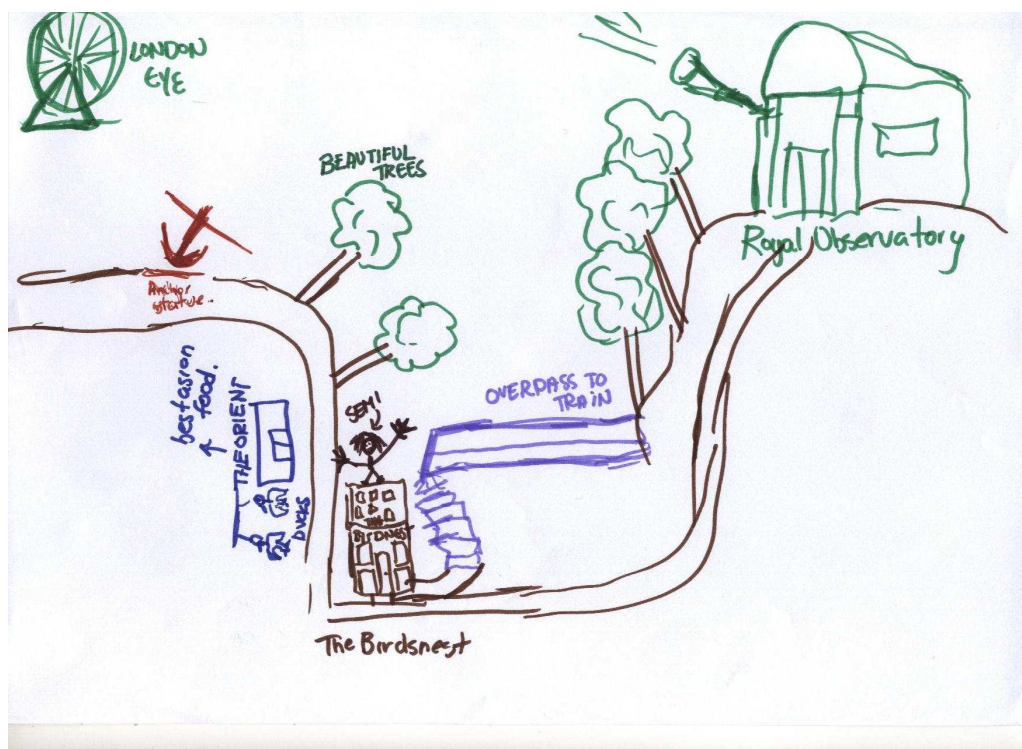


Figure 11.6 – sketch map of Deptford drawn by a tourist from Canada

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12. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

The main objective of the present study is to investigate the role creative industry clusters play in the development of urban tourism through the analysis of four creative areas in London. The four case studies are characterised by being non-central, yet inner London neighbourhoods, and by having a particularly high concentration of interconnected creative companies and institutions.

Despite having common characteristics, the four case study areas are very different in some ways, including levels of tourism and leisure economy development. Marketing research conducted shortly before the beginning of the present study on behalf of LDA and Tour East London (Tour East London 2005a and 2005b; Tabje 2006) highlighted that, at the time, awareness of Deptford among Londoners and tourists to East London was extremely low. The same study also found that most interviewees held a negative image of both Deptford and Hackney. Hoxton/Shoreditch, on the other hand, despite being located in Hackney, emerged as an up and coming night-time area, and Spitalfields was identified as a new East London tourism destination (Tour East London 2005a). In both Hoxton/Shoreditch and Spitalfields, however, the creative industries did not emerge as important attractions: while the former was best known for its night-life, the latter appeared to derive its growing popularity from its markets, shops and ethnic restaurants (Tour East London 2005a). In terms of awareness, similar results emerged from the present study, with Spitalfields the best known of the four areas (among visitors of the other three), Hoxton/Shoreditch mainly recalled for its night-life and London Fields and Deptford largely unknown by interviewees.

Therefore the existing differences between case studies represented a central aspect of the present research, allowing a comparison between four areas which

are all creative clusters, but which have developed differently in terms of tourism. For this reason, having presented the findings of each case study separately, the present chapter is specifically dedicated to the discussion of the four case studies together. As in the four previous chapters, the discussion is organised in six sections, reflecting the macro-themes that emerged from the evidence analysis: visitors' characteristics, the tourist experience, atmosphere, spatial characteristics, tourism development and creative cluster.

Visitors' Characteristics

Personal characteristics, such as cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984), lifestyle and past experiences, represent a significant factor in determining the visitor's choice in terms of destination. For this reason, '*What are the characteristics of tourists visiting these areas? Can they be described as creative themselves?*' were seen as important research questions in order to investigate the role of the creative industries in the development of tourism in the four case study areas.

In terms of profession, in all the four case studies about half of the interviewees were (or were studying to be) employed in the creative sector. As a comparison, a study conducted in one of London's most touristed areas, Covent Garden, found for example that only 9% of overseas and domestic visitors to Covent Garden were employed in the creative sector (Guachalla, 2009). Especially in Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch a link can be made between visitors' profession and their choice to visit the area; some visitors, for example, said they were there for a specific reason related to their job, such as checking the latest fashion trends or getting inspiration for an artistic project.

Not only are half of interviewed visitors employed in the creative sector, but almost all of them expressed a keen interest in art and culture. In Hoxton/Shoreditch this characteristic emerged as particularly prominent, as in many cases the interviewee's visit is motivated by a specific art exhibition or a particular gallery (often White Cube). However in Spitalfields and London Fields, visitors do not reveal a specific cultural objective. In these two areas, meeting up with friends, exploring, relaxing in the local cafes and visiting the markets are

mentioned more frequently as reasons to visit. Nonetheless, Spitalfields and London Fields visitors (Londoners, domestic and overseas alike) often describe themselves as art lovers or as being very interested in taking part in cultural activities. The interpretation of culture that visitors employ while talking about their own cultural interests is broad and includes contemporary art, urban art, ethnic products and fashion.

Several Londoners interviewed in Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch are frequent visitors to both areas, and in some cases they planned to visit both on the same day. As shown by their sketched maps, some Londoners perceive these two areas as one, whereas domestic and overseas visitors often only knew the area where the interview was taking place. Compared with the other two areas, a higher number of overseas visitors were found and interviewed in Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch. This can be explained with these areas being the most developed in terms of tourism.

Interviewed overseas and domestic visitors' profiles reflect that of the typical cultural tourist: experienced travellers, with a high level of education, and interested in gaining cultural capital (Silberberg, 1995). The only significant difference with visitors of more established cultural destinations (e.g. Silberberg, 1995; Guachalla, 2009) seems to be their age, which is significantly lower. However, it should be noted that, whereas interviewed Londoners were in most cases under 30, the few interviewees above the age of 50 (across the four case studies) were domestic and overseas tourists. These older visitors presented slightly different characteristics and motivations to visit than their younger counterparts. Less interested in creative products, fashion and cool hotspots (see further discussion in the Conclusions chapter), their visit to a creative area appeared as more accidental, as their choice was motivated by having a friend or relative who lived near-by. Only in Hoxton/Shoreditch the two interviewees aged above fifty identified their motivation to visit with the intention to see art galleries or a museum (similarly to younger visitors to this area).

In London Fields, although they describe themselves as culture lovers, interviewees were rarely motivated by a desire to undertake cultural activities. To

relax, spend time in the park, walk along the canal or drink at a local pub are more frequently cited motivations to visit (also shown through their sketched maps).

Reasons for this include:

- the presence of natural elements such as the park and the walking path along the canal (not present in any of the other case studies), which may attract visitors who are specifically in search for a place to relax in a natural environment;
- the fact that the art galleries and creative shops, although present in the area, are less well-known than those in Hoxton/Shoreditch and Spitalfields, and therefore they attract a smaller number of visitors;
- the fact that most interviewees were in most cases from East London or visiting friends who lived in the area, and therefore more likely to undertake everyday weekend activities such as relaxing in the park or having a beer at a local pub.

In comparison to Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch, in London Fields interviewed visitors appear to be less experienced travellers. Most London Fields interviewees are originally from UK, whereas in all the other case studies the range of nationalities (of Londoners, domestic visitors and overseas visitors alike) varies significantly. These two latter points can also be related to the fact that this area is a less well-known destination than Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch, and therefore it attracts fewer international cultural tourists and short time London residents (from overseas).

The profile of most interviewees (across all the case studies, although more notably in Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch) is *cosmopolitan* (Hannertz, 1990). Admittedly, cosmopolitanism (including its various interpretations recently adopted by an increasing number of social scientists, e.g. Thompson and Tambyah, 1999; Rofo, 2003; Urry, 2005) is a wide-ranging category, which could be easily applied to a large number of contemporary lifestyles. As previously illustrated (see Chapter 4), cosmopolitanism is an orientation or a lifestyle characterized by a willingness to engage with the Other (Hannerz, 1990) and to consume cultural differences (Thompson and Tambyah, 1999). Many visitors interviewed for the present research are expatriate professionals living in London, a category mentioned by Thompson and Tambyah (1999) as the typical example of the cosmopolitan lifestyle. Several others are Londoners living abroad (and

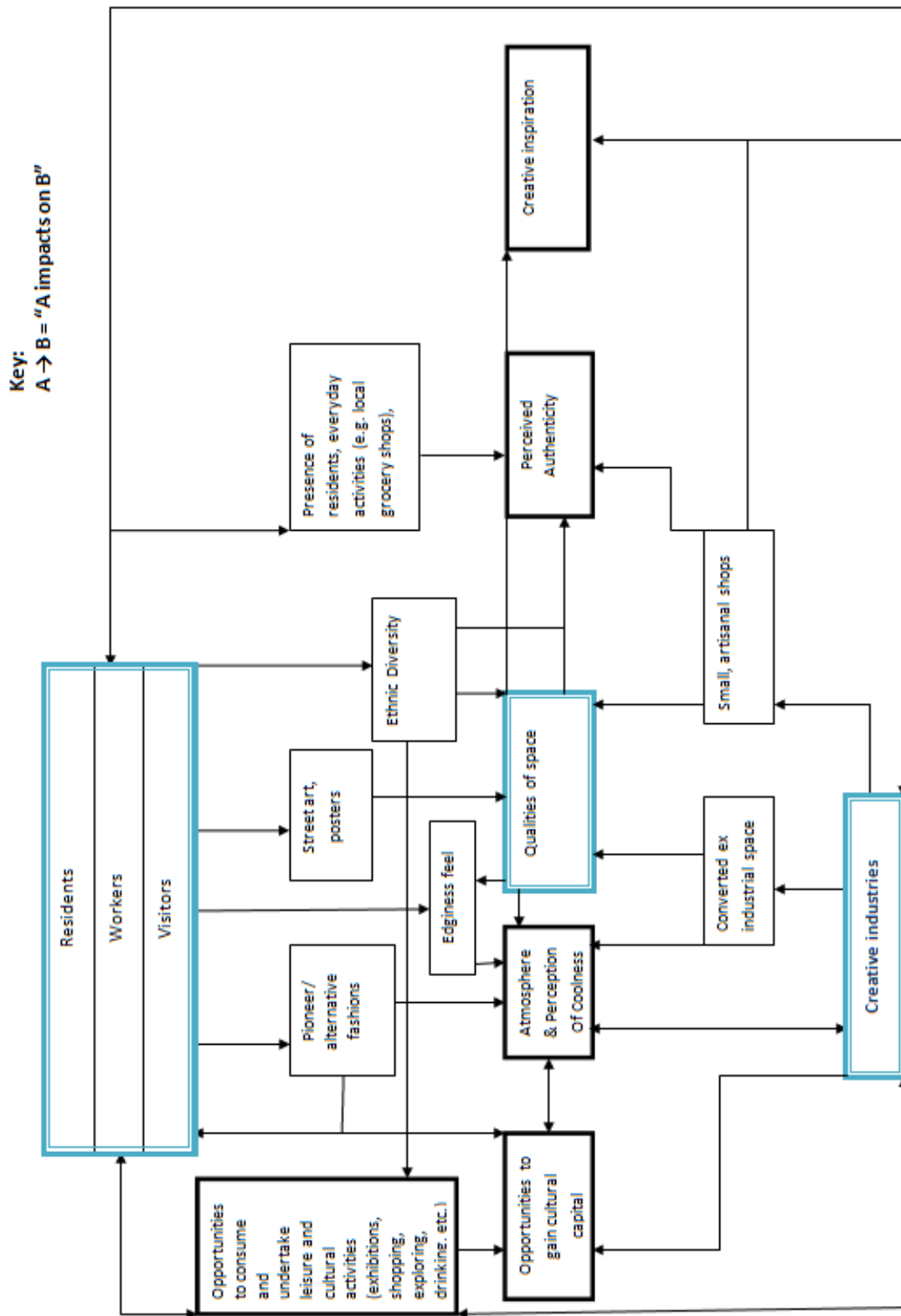
VFR visitors at the time of the interviews) or foreigners who had previously lived in London for a period of time. With the exception of London Fields visitors, interviewees (Londoners, domestic and overseas) described themselves as frequent travellers and pointed out their interest in discovering new places and getting to know different cultures, even in their own city. Also, many interviewees appear to value the encounter with other cultures as an important aspect of their personal development. They speak about this with a certain pride, suggesting their view of cosmopolitanism as a form of social distinction (Bourdieu, 1984). Similarly to Urry's *aesthetic cosmopolitans* (2005), visitors to these areas are willing to take risks and travel outside the tourist bubble, and, as the Singapore expatriates studied by Thompson and Tambyah (1999), many of them wanted to differentiate themselves from tourists and affirm a sense of superiority. In the context of the creative area this sense of superiority emerges, for some visitors, through the display of their knowledge of the latest trends in alternative fashion, niche artists and counter-cultural venues (what Thornton, 1995, named sub-cultural capital). Others, on the other hand, seem to look for distinction through the overt disdain of fashion and of anything they consider 'contrived' (e.g.. eccentric hairstyles and clothes), an attitude that echoes the backpackers' approach described by Edensor (2001). These two attitudes not only suggest two different ways of affirming superiority in the creative social field (Bourdieu, 1984), but also reveal different interpretations of what is to be considered as *cool*.

Cool (an adjective often used by interviewees) is associated by some interviewees with the distinction from the mainstream thanks to the possession of an insider's knowledge (Nancarrow et al., 2001) of specific trends and styles which are started and developed within the creative environment of London's East End. For this reason, some overseas visitors even declared to be in the area specifically to observe and learn about such styles, because '[people here] seem quite informed and up to date (...) very fashionable'; which constitutes a unique form of cultural capital they can take home. For other visitors (mostly Londoners), on the contrary, *cool* means the detachment from any form of conformism, including alternative fashions and styles. A musician from Birmingham, for example, talking about Spitalfields commented: "it's very trendy, which I don't like, you know, everyone is in all the gear (...) it's the fashionable part of town and I find it a bit

intimidating (...) it annoys me just that everyone is in their gear, and they like to go to fashionable bars and all that'. Similarly, a music PR from London said about Hoxton/Shoreditch: 'trendy dresses. Wacky headed. Tight jeans. You know what is a Hoxton person (...) they really try hard, too hard'. As Rofe (2003) suggests, gentrifying spaces such as Spitalfields, Hoxton/Shoreditch and London Fields seem to represent the ideal environment for the cosmopolitan persona, providing a space where identities constructed through the development of aesthetic and cultural sensibilities can be displayed, along with the ability to distinguish authentic products (for instance those created by local designers) as forms of cultural capital.

The case of Deptford presented significant differences from the other three case studies from many points of view, including visitors' characteristics. Whereas in the other case studies most interviewees were attracted by the areas' amenities or reputation, or advised by a friend, in Deptford only five people (of the seventeen interviewed) had come for such a reason. All the other interviewees were in Deptford to study (short course or exchange programme), to visit relations who lived in Deptford, or because they were accommodated in one of Deptford's two youth hostels while visiting London. Clearly, the different motivation for visiting the area (and the fact that, in many cases, visiting the area was not part of their plans at all), partly skews the analysis of their characteristics as possible push factors which facilitated the choice of destination. Also, as discussed in the next section, the tourist experience here is different.

Figure 12.1- –main factors affecting the tourist experience in a creative urban area



The Tourist Experience

Tourist experience is one of the macro-themes which emerged from the interviews and sketched mental maps as prominent. Indeed, the evidence concerning the visitor experience of creative urban spaces represents a valuable way of understanding better the dynamics of tourism development in such areas.

It is interesting, for example, to find out what elements contribute to create the tourist experience in a creative area. Figure 12.1 (page 251) is a representation of these elements and their interactions, as emerged from interviews and maps (and discussed in this section). The diagram shows that all the components which contribute to the tourist experience are mutually interrelated, and each factor has an impact on a number of others. Ultimately, three place elements seem to have the most prominent role on the tourist experience, by determining all the others: the people (residents, workers and visitors), the qualities of space (such as natural and built environment) and the presence of creative businesses. The diagram also shows how each of them is affected by the other two; for instance, the presence of creative industries affects the quality of space as well as the range of people who chose to visit, work and live in the area (these points are further discussed below). The social dynamics, spaces and products originated by these three core elements (such as alternative fashion, ethnic diversity, edginess feel) in their turn produce other key elements of the visitor experience: opportunities to consume and undertake leisure and cultural activities, atmosphere and perception of coolness, perceived authenticity and creative inspiration.

In this section, the dynamics and elements affecting the tourist experience (as shown in Figure 12.1) are discussed, with specific attention to the role creative industries play in their development. Atmosphere and qualities of space are discussed in the two following sections, as they represent two of the macro-themes identified by qualitative analysis.

a. Opportunities to consume and undertake leisure and cultural activities

The presence of a concentration of creative industries generates a variety of consumption opportunities for visitors, which constitute an important aspect of the tourist experience. On one hand, as with most business agglomerations (see Porter, 1998), a cluster provides consumers with the opportunity to buy the products made by local businesses, with the advantage of having a wide range of similar products available in a small geographical area. In the case of Spitalfields this is particularly evident: initially, local artists and other local creative entrepreneurs (such as two of the designers interviewed) have opened their own shops in the area or started a stall in the local market. Subsequently, the concentration of specialised shops and, as a consequence, of visitors interested in such products, have encouraged other creative entrepreneurs to set up new businesses, reinforcing the creative cluster.

In addition, it should be noted that, as shown by the present research, people working in the creative sector are voracious consumers of creative products themselves. This contrasts with most other sectors, where workers are not necessarily stronger consumers of the same product they produce. This characteristic of creative professionals, which certainly facilitates the rapid development of this type of cluster, must be related to the symbolic nature of many creative products and to their close link with cultural products (such as artworks, music, etc.). As Marshall (1930) first noted, cultural goods are characterised, in contrast with most other products, by a growing marginal utility curve. As a matter of fact, whereas in most other sectors the benefits derived by the possession of a specific product decrease with the quantity already possessed, in the case of cultural goods the opposite is generally true. This helps explain why creative professionals are great consumers of creative and cultural products. In addition, as already extensively described by literature on gentrification of cultural quarters (e.g. Zukin, 1982), the presence of new types of consumers in dilapidated (and therefore affordable) inner city areas, such as the ones researched for the present study, attracts a whole range of other businesses and opportunities for consumption aimed at new, middle-class targets. It is interesting to note at this point that, within the present research, this phenomenon was noticeable only in three of the four case studies: Spitalfields, Hoxton/Shoreditch and London Fields.

As discussed later in this chapter, in Deptford the presence of a high number of creative producers (and thus consumers), including several art colleges and a university, have not to date triggered great investments in leisure and night-time facilities.

b. Other people

The agglomeration of creative businesses (and therefore of consumption opportunities for creative people) attracts a brand of cultural intermediaries who are often pioneers in setting new trends. These cool cultural intermediaries (such as artists, musicians and designers), in their turn, attract other visitors in search for style models and for a certain ‘arty vibe’. It is relevant to note that ‘the people’ emerged as one of the most important attractions of Spitalfields, Hoxton/Shoreditch and London Fields. In this sense, consumers (visitors, workers, residents) co-create the value that can be derived from the experience of these areas (Etgar, 2008; White et al., 2009) and *others* represent an important aspect of the visitor experience.

Enjoying others, however, does not only involve the observation of other patrons, but also spending time with friends, partner or relations, as Harvey and Lorenzen’s co-tourism concept illustrates (2006). On the other hand, for some visitors the presence of other tourists or of people who are considered ‘pretentious’ or ‘posy’ is seen as a negative side. As Hayllar and Griffith (2009) poignantly expressed, the visitor experience simultaneously means ‘time *away* from and time *with* others’ (p.131). Spitalfields, in particular, was perceived by some visitors as crowded and touristy (especially on Sunday, when the markets are on), whereas others described it as non-touristy and ‘away from the West End crowds’. Clearly, in terms of crowdedness, some visitors (often young and employed in the creative sector) make judgements based not so much on the sheer volume of people, but rather on the nature of the crowd: a crowd of creative, arty young people (typical of the East End) is not seen as disturbing, whereas the crowd of mainstream tourists (typical of the West End) is. Also, it is interesting to note that, differently from other similar studies (e.g. Maitland and Newman, 2006; Hayllar and Griffith, 2009), in the present research actual interactions between hosts and visitors seem far from being central to the tourist experience. Visitors

(overseas tourists in particular), however, enjoy the idea of being surrounded by locals, although interactions do not necessarily occur. The only exception to this is, again, the case of Deptford, where two Canadian visitors declared to have realised the area's creativity only after a local took them for a tour.

c. Creative Inspiration

As one of the interviewees nicely expressed, for many visitors the opportunity to draw creative inspiration from the visit represents an important component of their tourist experience:

‘it’s very inspiring, it’s like a documentary of the everyday (...) and it’s a very crowded place, vibrant, every time I’m here people are different, I like especially artists, it’s inspiring, maybe I’ll go home and something will happen’ (artist from Poland)

Getting inspiration for one's own creativity, and therefore exercising one's own creativity in the tourist experience (Richards and Raymond, 2000), depends on a number of factors including the presence of creative businesses and creative people in the area. Creative shops, creative products, people's creative styles, and interesting surroundings are all sources of creative inspiration. Another important factor which, according to some interviewees, is conducive for individual creativity is the quality of space (which will be discussed later in this chapter). In particular, the lack of major attractions, the narrow streets, and the small consumption spaces that ‘encourage diversions’, facilitate an exploratory visit. This, according to some interviewees, can be very inspiring. As a Londoner visiting Spitalfields described: ‘I walk, because I like walking and thinking, so I walk and think, I get lost and then look for the way back’. In Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch, for example, several interviewees declared to be on a *creative tour*: for instance, looking for graffiti or other interesting hidden corners. In some cases the creative tour included more than one creative area, often Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch and/or London Fields. Arguably, visitors keen on exploring (such as most visitors to off-the-beaten track creative areas) would discover new creative spaces precisely through this process of random exploration, showing the disadvantage Deptford suffers from being located far away from the traditionally creative East End.

d. Opportunities to gain Cultural Capital

As with most forms of cultural tourism, the opportunity to gain cultural capital seems to be (as also shown in Figure 12.1) a fundamental element of the visitor experience of creative urban areas. On one hand, these areas offer access to forms of *objectified cultural capital* (Bourdieu, 1984), such as bookshops, art galleries and independent music/film shops. In Deptford, for example, although opportunities for consumption are remarkably more limited than in the other three areas, one of the interviewees (an art director from London) was interviewed precisely after buying an artwork from a local artist during an open studio event. However, as discussed earlier in this chapter, more frequently visitors look for *embodied* forms of cultural (Bourdieu, 1984) and subcultural (Thornton, 1995) capital. For Londoners this mainly means, for example, knowledge of the latest fashion trends, cool bars or alternative bands. The fact of knowing a shop, a corner, or even a whole area unknown to the mainstream, such as London Fields or Deptford, represents for many Londoners a way of achieving status in their social field. The same musician from Birmingham who expressed his disdain for fashion, for example (see above), proudly listed and drew on his map his favourite venues in Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch, which were very different from the most popular places and included a local pub with table-football, some strip shops and ‘the best bagel shop [in London]’.

Also for less experienced visitors to London, such as overseas visitors, these creative areas offer a wealth of opportunities to accumulate cultural capital. For many of them, these post-industrial, diverse and creative areas represent ‘real London’, and travelling off-the-beaten-path is a way to enrich their cosmopolitan persona as well as a mean to discover something not yet available to the mainstream (which represents the essence of cool, according to Nancarrow et al., 2001). Interestingly, in the Spitalfields and London Fields case studies, it emerged that, while for Londoners the area (where the interview was taking place) seemed very unique, for overseas visitors it was ‘typical London’. In Spitalfields, overseas tourists talked about their visitor experience in a very reflexive way, pointing out their desire to do what Londoners do and see them in their natural environment. In London Fields, this seems to happen in a more subconscious way: the overseas

and domestic visitors interviewed were visiting friends or relatives, and, not aiming to visit the typical tourist sites while in London, they were spending a quiet weekend with their host (who lived in London Fields or in the surroundings). In London Fields and Deptford the apparent presence of many residents (and of facilities for residents such as local grocery shops) provided the impression of them being very authentic areas, thus enriching the visitor experience.

e. Perceived Authenticity

The area's perceived authenticity represented an important component of the tourist experience in all the four case study areas. As shown in Figure 12.1 (page 251), creative industries contribute to this perception in a number of ways: for instance, an important role was played by the presence of shops that are managed by the same people who make the products they sell (e.g. shops run by independent fashion designers and artists). Also the areas' 'shabby look', in contrast with the clean and tidy environment of more central tourism precincts, strongly adds to this perception. This look is partly linked to street art and wall posters, thus to local artists and creative businesses. In a tourist bubble such as a converted waterfront or a regenerated city centre, the cleanliness and perfection of the physical environment create a sense of safety allowing the visitor to enjoy the discovery of a new place yet keeping an impression of familiarity and security. As a consequence, for an experienced traveller (such as most interviewees were), an area's rundown look can represent a sign of authenticity as it means that the place has not been engineered to satisfy the visitor's needs. However, as mentioned before, the most important factor which contributes to the authentic feel appears to be the visible presence of local residents and workers who, along with visitors, take advantage of local facilities and participate in leisure activities. This, although quite typical of most large urban areas, contrasts for example with some tourism precincts where locals run commercial activities only aimed at tourists (such as souvenir shops).

Following MacCannell (1973), authenticity and its role in tourists' motivation and experience have been widely discussed in sociological studies (see Wang, 1999 for a review). The range of contrasting research findings and views, however, shows the dependency of this term's meaning on a variety of factors, including

research context, philosophical standpoint of the researcher, and subjects' personal views. Notably, visitors interviewed within this study seem to perceive as authentic anything (e.g. grocery shops, traditional pubs, ethnic shops) that does not seem conceived or produced specifically for the visitor. For example, Broadway market in London Fields is seen by several visitors as non authentic, because, according to them, it is aimed at a different audience than the working-class local community. Deptford market and the shops on Deptford High Street, on the other hand, are perceived as very authentic because, as a visitor pointed out, 'it [is] more a market for the normal people'.

Since the interviewees' perception of authenticity is linked to what appears as adulterated by an attempt of attracting 'outsiders', the view on what is –or is not– authentic clearly varies according to who is seen as an outsider. The case of Spitalfields provides a good example of this point. Whereas domestic and overseas visitors pointed at it as 'real London' and described it as very authentic, Londoners remarked on the fact that 'it's losing its authenticity' because many of the commercial activities are now aimed at a non-local audience, such as people who work in the City of London (which are instead seen by overseas visitors as locals). In this sense, it can be argued that the type of authenticity here discussed is *constructive* (Bruner, 1994), meaning a quality projected onto toured objects by visitors rather than a measurable quality (Wang, 1999).

Hoxton/Shoreditch seems to be, of the four case studies, the only area where authenticity does not play an important role in the tourist experience. Three factors can be identified as main reasons for this difference.. Firstly, whereas in the other three areas visitors rarely motivated their visit with a specific attraction, in Hoxton/Shoreditch art galleries and exhibitions represented a prime reason to visit. As a consequence, in this area the objective of visiting a specific venue was, for many visitors, more important than authenticity. It seems therefore that authenticity emerges as more significant when, rather than a specific attraction, exploration and the discovery of an everyday destination (such as 'real London') constitute the main purposes of a visit. Secondly, in all the case studies except Deptford (and in Hoxton/Shoreditch in particular), people's extreme trendiness was seen as something interesting to observe, but also as a sign of the area's lack

of spontaneity, associated with authenticity. This is again linked to the association of authenticity with the local community, which in Hackney visitors (especially Londoners) expect to be poor working class families (such as those living in social housing), or bohemian artists and students. Also in Spitalfields and London Fields some visitors linked cool clothes and styles with the concept of ‘contrived’, arguably the opposite of authenticity. Similarly, trendy bars and shops, including art galleries, are seen by some visitors as targeted at a different audience than the local population, and therefore less authentic.

f. Atmosphere and Perception of Coolness

Finally, all the above elements combined produce one of the most important factors determining the visitor experience in a creative area: the perception of coolness and the arty/creative atmosphere, which are discussed in the following section.

Atmosphere

Although one of the study’s research questions is focused on physical characteristics of place, to allow people to freely express themselves as to what aspects were most important to them interviewees were not asked directly to speak about either physical or intangible qualities. Results for all the case studies show that intangible elements such as atmosphere are perceived as most important, although these (as discussed in this and the next sections) can be linked to tangible qualities, such as presence of certain types of people and characteristics of the urban landscape. As space is here seen as socially constructed (Lefebvre, 1974), the physical environment and the meanings attributed to it by its users should not be separated. This is clearly shown also by visitors’ sketched maps, where symbols and written comments were often used to link specific places with the feelings attributed to them by the drawer (see for instance Figures 8.7 and 8.8 Chapter 8). Although the two are closely intertwined, atmosphere, defined as the sum of the intangible qualities that make up the overall mood or feel of a place, is discussed in the present section, whereas physical characteristics are analysed in the next.

Atmosphere, similarly to authenticity, is especially important to visitors who, rather than visiting a specific attraction, are aiming to explore an area, experience it like a local, and get inspiration for their own creativity. Nonetheless, also visitors who justified their visit with the desire to see a specific exhibition (as happened in Hoxton/Shoreditch), seemed to appreciate and value the creative atmosphere or the ‘vibe’. In all the case studies atmosphere was mentioned by the majority of interviewees as the most important attraction, but details about its features slightly changed from case to case. In Spitalfields, the atmosphere was often portrayed as vibrant and unique, two qualities often associated by visitors with the mix of diversity and creativity in one same place. In Hoxton/Shoreditch attractions such as the art galleries had more importance than the general mood of the place, which was described as arty and exciting, and not very-family friendly. The two latter characteristics must be seen in the context of Shoreditch’s reputation as a cutting-edge night-life destination, a factor that was not explored within the present study. In addition, Hoxton/Shoreditch’s ‘vibe’ was associated with excessive trendiness, extravagant haircuts (such as the one known as the ‘Hoxton Fin’) and alternative music. London Fields instead appeared to have a double image: quiet and relaxed like a village on one hand, and young and creative on the other. Finally in Deptford, where intangible qualities were mentioned slightly less than in the three other areas, atmosphere was generally seen as calm and relaxed.

Despite the subtle differences between case studies, following individual analysis some common elements which appeared to contribute to the creation of an appealing atmosphere can be identified. The two overarching qualities that seem to coexist (although to different extents) in people’s perceptions of all the case studies are ‘vibrant’ and, on the other hand, ‘relaxing’. To a degree, both qualities can be related to the high presence of creative industries. As seen in previous chapters and widely discussed in urban studies literature (e.g. Landry, 2006), the agglomeration of a high number of creative industries in one area can lead to a transformation of the economic structure of post-industrial, deprived neighbourhoods. In Spitalfields, Hoxton/Shoreditch and London Fields, for example, the strong presence of creative professionals led to the development of a range of commercial and leisure businesses initially targeted at this new segment.

In particular, leisure, cultural and night-life venues such as bars, cafes, music and art exhibition spaces, which are by nature frequented by people in their free time, highly contribute to the perception of a relaxed -and the same time vibrant- atmosphere. In Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch in particular, the number of bars, music venues and art spaces where people meet other people, discuss, drink, eat and dance is remarkably high, with the consequent increase in the perception of 'buzz' (Storper and Venables, 2004). Also, it should be noted that those venues are normally located at street level and therefore easily visible by any visitor. In Deptford, on the contrary, there is an evident lack of public leisure spaces (as noted also by some creative entrepreneurs) and some of the ones available are not visible from the street. As a consequence, the vibrant atmosphere (vibe or buzz) is less manifest, and, as some visitors interviewed noted, the arty feel becomes apparent only to those who know about the existing art studio blocks and cultural venues.

Another element that contributes to the areas' atmosphere and 'buzz' is the perception of youthfulness. This aspect is linked to the presence of creative industries in two ways. Firstly, people employed in the creative sector are, on average, younger (Meethan and Beer, 2005). This means not only that these areas' populations are generally younger in terms of people who work there, but also that commercial and cultural facilities which develop in response to their demand attract an even higher number of young visitors. In Hoxton/Shoreditch this seems to be also reflected in the residents' population, which is younger than in the rest of England, with a particularly high proportion of people in the 20-30 age range (Hackney Council, 2006). Secondly, the type of products and services offered by most creative industries and shops, such as design, new media and contemporary art and music, often attract younger consumers. Overall, the younger people who frequent these areas, the leisure/cultural facilities aimed at such targets, and many of the products developed and sold at a local level, all contribute to the perception of the areas being 'young', a factor which is perceived positively by most interviewees. Only a few interviewees (in the 30-50 age range), talking about Hoxton/Shoreditch, commented on the fact that local bars and clubs are not appealing to an older audience, and that people, as they grow older, could feel intimidated or out of place and choose to frequent other areas. A visitor from

London, for example, said: 'I'm not 21...now I like to go somewhere that is just more grown up, like Stoke Newington for example'.

As seen earlier, the people who frequent these areas represent a very important element of the visitor experience. One of their major contributions is precisely in terms of atmosphere: in particular fashionable people, with their extravagant clothes and haircuts, play a fundamental role in providing what visitors describe as an arty and creative atmosphere. Also, as noted by some interviewees (in Hoxton/Shoreditch and London Fields), in these areas it is rare to meet 'people wearing suits'. This clearly contributes to the perception of relaxation (again linked to leisure time); in addition, some visitors seem to associate the apparent absence of suits with a creative environment. In London Fields for example, a visitor noted that '[this area is] my cup of tea, whereas if you go to the City you see the City boys'. This is an example of how people wearing office wear may represent the stress or dullness of the financial City, whereas creative areas where 'everyone is wearing absolutely anything and everything' are symbols of leisure, relaxation and creativity. The creative and young atmosphere, which was described by a creative entrepreneur as 'young energy', is also one of the sources of inspiration that some creative visitors found in these areas. The combination of young and creative atmosphere, together with the presence of small creative businesses (including market stalls, in Spitalfields and London Fields), contributes to the impression that these areas are conducive for personal creativity and creative enterprise. As a student from Berlin interviewed in Deptford put it: 'you can feel that (...) you could arrange something without much money to grow your own ideas'.

The arty or creative vibe, linked to creative people, alternative fashion and creative spaces (i.e. industries, shops, markets), in combination with a run-down look of the physical environment, seems to provide what was described by some interviewees as a 'bohemian feel'. The idea of bohemian places, originated in Paris in the nineteenth century, has always been linked to a romanticised image of deprived artists, as well as with their freedom and countercultural experimentation (Hubbard, 2006). This point really shows the close link between physical environment (rundown buildings and streets, unclean surroundings. etc.), creative

industries (including creative people and their styles) and the perception of leisure, arty atmosphere and vibrancy. It seems important to note, for example, that in Deptford, although fashion was far from being an important component of the visitor experience, the area was nonetheless perceived by several interviewees as creative, bohemian and vibrant. In that specific case, the presence of creative industries together with the physical environment contributed to this perception, although leisure spaces, opportunities of consumption and fashionable people are remarkably fewer than in the other three areas.

The next sections look at these factors and their dynamics more closely.

Spatial Characteristics

Creative urban areas are often characterised by very heterogeneous physical environments, which seem to well reflect Jacobs' (1961) formula for a lively and healthy urban space (see chapter 3). Interestingly, visitors interviewed for the present study seemed to note and praise precisely the same spatial qualities: for example, historic buildings next to contemporary ones, the mix of different styles and sizes (of streets and architecture), and the diversity of commercial activities. Also, some Spitalfields interviewees remarked on the fact that the area encourages walking and exploration (as advocated by Jacobs). Most important for the present study, however, appears to be the remark made by most visitors that the shops are small and unique (as opposed to chain shops). The small business size is not only a peculiar characteristic of the creative sector (Scott, 2000), but also a quality that, according to Jacobs (1969), is conducive for innovation and creativity.

According to people's sketched maps, some specific buildings, such as Christ Church and the smokestack of the Old Truman Brewery in Spitalfields, are particularly memorable. These two buildings possess some of the characteristics that, according to Lynch (1960), facilitate memorization, such as a recognisable shape which stands out in the landscape. For this reason they are treated by some visitors as landmarks (and used, for example, to find their way around). Others, however, such as White Cube Gallery in Hoxton, beside having a recognisable shape, are also remembered thanks to the meanings attributed to them. For example, both the Great Mosque of London and the Old Truman Brewery (both in

Spitalfields) represent transition, ‘the new London [which] tries to accept the ancient London’ as a Spanish tourist put it. The former represents the history of immigration in Spitalfields, having been a church and then a synagogue, before becoming a mosque. The latter, on the same line, used to be a brewery and it has now been converted into a creative space which includes studios, exhibitions, bars, shops and several Sunday markets (the area’s main attraction on weekends).

Two other spatial qualities that seem to contribute strongly to create these areas’ image are the arty and rundown looks, which together provide a ‘bohemian feel’. Elements that contribute to make the area look (and feel) arty are the creative shops and markets, cultural spaces and galleries, people’s clothes and street art. In this sense the street plays a key role, thanks to the movement of people (especially in Spitalfields, London Fields and Deptford when the markets are on), the graffiti art and posters which advertise concerts and other cultural events. However, the four case studies would not have the same bohemian look if the arty elements were not combined with deprivation: for example, decaying buildings, unclean walls and streets, run-down shops all contribute to these areas’ appeal. Although, as a visitor to Deptford noted, the rundown look ‘adds to the charm’, this aspect is also linked by some visitors to danger and lack of safety. Interestingly, however, danger is seen by some visitors as a positive factor too, contributing to the perception of authenticity and to the positive impression these visitors have of being the explorers of an undiscovered and dangerous territory (see discussion about authenticity above). Certainly, while grittiness contributes to the excitement of travelling to off-the-beaten-track urban locations, consumption facilities such as shops, cafes and cultural venues represent a reassuring factor. As in other forms of tourism, visitors look for difference and excitement, but they are also relieved to find some reassuring reminders of home (Smith, 2007). Therefore, it is probably because of its lack of consumption spaces that Deptford is perceived as the most dangerous of the four case studies. Also, as a Canadian tourist to Deptford noted, in ‘any place, if you know it, you become more comfortable’. As discussed in the next section, Deptford is by far the least known of the four case studies: the fact that the majority of its visitors were first time visitors could hence represent another explanation as to why it was seen as more dangerous than the other three. Surprisingly, however, overseas visitors, although less experienced

visitors of these areas (and of London in general), did not seem to be more concerned than Londoners with regards to their safety (in any of the researched areas).

Another factor which seems important to the appeal of these areas (with the exclusion of Hoxton/Shoreditch) is their ethnic diversity, which becomes most evident in spatial elements such as street signs written in Bangladeshi (Spitalfields), ethnic restaurants and shops (Spitalfields, London Fields and Deptford), religious buildings (Spitalfields) and traditional religious clothes such as burkas (even represented by a visitors on a sketched map, see Figure 8.4 chapter 8). Although this aspect is not directly related to the existence of a creative cluster, it is nonetheless an interesting finding in that it confirms what was said earlier about many visitors to these areas having a cosmopolitan lifestyle, as some of the main characteristics of cosmopolitanism are precisely the appeal of the exotic and the search for a better understanding of other cultures as a form of cultural capital. The ethnic mix is seen by both visitors and creative entrepreneurs as a very positive factor, although some (in Spitalfields and London Fields) pointed out at the segregation of the non-white local communities. On Brick Lane (Spitalfields), for instance, the separation seems particularly evident as most of the Bangladeshi-owned businesses are clustered in the south end of the street (see Figure 8.4 chapter 8 for a visual representation of this dual segmentation, as drawn by a first time overseas visitor to London). The Bangladeshi cluster south of Brick Lane initially started as an unplanned development, driven by market forces such as cheap rents and by the failure of commercial businesses to thrive in the north end of the street. Only several years later it was reinforced by public policy (Carey, 2004). In 2002, when the dual segmentation of the street had reached an advanced stage and the numerous Bangladeshi restaurants were fiercely competing against each other, Tower Hamlets Council stopped encouraging their proliferation (Carey, 2004). In Deptford, instead, according to visitors' views, the white community and the other local ethnic communities still seem to mix, which appears to be particularly evident on Deptford High Street, where shops owned by people from different ethnic backgrounds coexist next to each other. The cultural diversity of the shops (and market) on Deptford High Street is seen by visitors and local creative entrepreneurs as one of Deptford's

most important qualities, contributing to the area's perceived authenticity. As discussed above, in fact, authenticity is linked to everyday shops aimed at local people and by the lack of chain stores, and therefore associated by some visitors with the small ethnic groceries and restaurants.

In Deptford, the small local shops also contribute to the creation of another place quality which is of intangible nature but strongly entangled with spatial characteristics: the villagey feel. In Deptford and London Fields, several Londoners commented on the fact that these areas seem more like small villages than parts of a large city. From a theoretical point of view, the idea of the existence of villages in the city, seen by Taylor (Taylor, 1973) mostly as communities with a common identity, originates from the urban village concept, firstly described by Gans (1962) as a recognisable and well-organised urban space where ethnic groups of migrants successfully adapted their non-urban cultures to the city. As Franklin and Tait (2002) explain, the village in the city idea relates to the existence in cities of spatially bounded locations (such as ethnic quarters) characterized by a certain social order and consistent cultural identity, which may replicate the qualities of a non-urban village. According to the evidence collected in Deptford and London Fields, similar qualities can be recognized also in some creative areas, which may be perceived as villages although they are not characterized by one common cultural identity (as various communities live side by side in Deptford as well as London Fields). Reasons for the villagey feel in London Fields and Deptford partly relate to the fact that there are small shops owned and managed by the same people, who in some cases personally hand-make the products they sell. In this sense, the villagey feel is linked to tradition, to the lack of symbols of modernity such as large chain-shops. Interestingly, three London Fields interviewees spontaneously compared London Fields and Deptford as places with similar characteristics. While one visitor noted that in both areas you can see 'the current normal London (...), what it was', another one noted that Deptford is still authentic, whereas London Fields has now changed, becoming very upper-class. As in the perception of authenticity, the idea of 'real London' is very idiosyncratic and depends on a number of factors, including the person's cultural background, their experience of London and their idea of who Londoners really are (for instance, ethnic immigrants seem exotic to some, but typical

London to others). Similarly, facilities targeted at upper classes could be seen by different people as appealing, intimidating, typical or inauthentic. In Deptford, for example, a visitor from York noted that Deptford is ‘classic inner London’, showing a different perception from those Londoners who perceive it as an outer village. As some interviewees noted, however, a characteristic of London is precisely being polycentric, ‘a city made of small villages’ therefore the villagey feel is not necessarily in contrast with being typically London:

‘Every street, every corner [of London] seems to witness events and stories, so it’s really a source of inspiration for me, I like to go around because looking at a corner, at a street more attentively these stories come to mind (...) there are areas that are completely different, it seems that there are one hundred different Londons’ (architect from Italy)

In the case of London Fields nature, notably the canal and the park, also plays an important role in the perception of villageiness. As one visitor from South London noted, in London Fields ‘you don’t feel you are in London [you feel] somewhere far away’. This comment is interestingly connected with the idea of everyday tourism, suggesting that a visit to London Fields can feel, for a Londoner, like a trip out of the city. The same is also true for Spitalfields: by being seen by Londoners as ‘completely unique’, Spitalfields can in fact represent an ideal day trip for a Londoner who feels the need to visit something different without actually leaving the city. London Fields and Spitalfields appear, also through visitors’ sketched maps, as self-contained spaces, with fairly delimited boundaries. In this sense, the creative cluster plays an important role by setting the boundaries and making the area within the cluster distinctive from the rest of the city. As a visitor in London Fields put it: ‘It feels a like bubble of some young, creative [community]’. London Fields, Spitalfields and (to a lesser extent) Hoxton/Shoreditch are perceived as distinctive spaces, almost islands separated from the rest of the city, suggesting a comparison with traditional tourism precincts (Hayllar et al., 2008) or even recalling the emergence of an embryonic tourism bubble (Judd, 1999). This last point is further discussed in the next section.

Tourism Development

As previously discussed, one of the reasons that led to the choice of the four case studies was their different levels of tourism development. Although quantitative data on visitor numbers or tourism revenues for these areas are not available, it was acknowledged from the beginning of the study that Spitalfields had higher levels of visitation and awareness than the other three, while Deptford appeared to be at a very early stage, with available data showing negative image and very low awareness even among Londoners (Tour East London 2005a and 2005b; Tabje 2006). The qualitative data collected within the present research further consolidated this initial statement, allowing a deeper understanding of the demand patterns for these areas.

The analysis of interviewees' characteristics allows a classification of visitors according to traditional marketing consumer typologies (e.g. Baker, 1992) and the application of the tourism area life cycle model (Butler, 1980) to the four researched areas. Using Butler's lifecycle phases (exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation and decline or rejuvenation), Spitalfields could be located in the development stage: characterised by a fast growing number of visitors (and, as a consequence, tourism facilities), increasing popularity, and the attraction of less adventurous tourists. Hoxton/Shoreditch and London Fields could be included in the involvement stage, being largely unknown by mainstream tourists, but attracting pioneer travellers (early adopters or, using Plog's terminology (1973), allocentrics). Deptford, is perhaps at an early, exploration stage, with only few adventurous visitors having started to discover it. Indeed the lifecycle analysis, thanks to its flexibility and wide applicability to most tourism destinations, easily fits the four researched areas. Precisely because of the very general characteristics of each stage, however, it does not seem very helpful in providing a useful tool for analysis in the specific case of the present study. Firstly, one of the research questions for the present research concerns the role of the creative industries in these areas' development, while Butler's model, having been devised for traditional tourism resorts, mostly focuses on the role of tourism products and services. Secondly, the four areas are parts of a much larger city, which has a number of implications on tourism development. On one hand,

the development of accommodation and other typical tourism products is less vital for the destination growth, as visitors are more likely to be locals (i.e. Londoners), VFR or accommodated elsewhere in the city. On the other hand, providers of such facilities (e.g. shop and restaurant owners) are less reliant on tourism, as their income draws also on a number of other customers, such as residents and workers. The risk of decline, and the consequent importance of a TALC analysis, appears therefore as less relevant in such cases. More important than tourism facilities is, instead, the role of other place elements in the attraction of visitors, such as artists' studios or the area's image as a creative hub. Also, an interesting question for the present research, rather than the stage of development where each area can be placed, is how these areas may move from one stage to the next, and whether the same pattern of development should be expected in all the case studies over a certain period of time (an occurrence that would instead be taken for granted in the TALC model).

The case of Deptford seems in this sense especially important: is its exploration stage only the first step of its route through all the six phases of the TALC? Or are there place qualities which are present in the other areas, attracting visitors, and not in Deptford?

Other theories, such as those on gentrification, could help explain this phenomenon. A reflection on the process of gentrification occurring in the four areas (as in most inner London areas) could provide a first indication as to why certain areas seem more popular than others. Spitalfields, Hoxton/Shoreditch and London Fields all possess to a greater extent than Deptford those qualities that are normally seen as key to the attraction of the middle-classes: centrality, a strong artistic community (Zukin, 1982), an interesting housing stock (historic or convertible industrial buildings) (Beauregard, 1986) and pleasant surroundings (especially in London Fields, thanks to the canal). The fact that these areas can be appealing for middle-class home buyers, however, does not alone explain their wider appeal for visitors, as the needs of residents are not necessarily the same as tourists (although they have shared interests). There are many areas in London, for example, which have a long history of gentrification (e.g. Barnsbury, as discussed by Butler, 2003) yet have not become popular tourist destinations. An analysis of the functions researched areas perform for the visitor (based on Griffin et al.,

2008), seems instead a useful approach in order to understand a) why an area such as Deptford, despite having similar characteristics to the other three, seems to be less appealing to visitors (and, conversely, why Spitalfields is much more appealing than all the others); and b) the role of the creative industries in this process.

Tourism precincts, according to Griffin et al. (2008) perform three categories of functions for the tourist. Firstly, a *facilitating function*: the precinct is a well-known, familiar and recognisable area. Secondly, tourism precincts perform some *external or place-connecting functions* (Griffin et al., 2008) by helping the visitor to relate to and to comprehend the place they are visiting. Finally, there is an *internal or state-of-mind function*, which involves the stimulation of a feeling of escape, relax and leisure.

Of the four case studies, only Spitalfields seems to fully satisfy the *facilitating function* for overseas tourists, domestic tourists and Londoners. Spitalfields is in fact well-connected by public transport, is often mentioned by London guide books as an interesting area to visit, and has some recognisable landmarks such as the Old Truman Brewery. On Sundays, Spitalfields is particularly distinctive as a precinct thanks to its ‘creative markets’, which function as magnets for visitors. Visitors’ sketch maps are particularly revealing of all the case study areas’ facilitating functions: for Spitalfields, all the maps (except one) represent Brick Lane and a varying number of points of interest on and around it. Similarly, in Hoxton/Shoreditch in most cases they represent the area around Hoxton Square (where White Cube is located) and in London Fields the area between the canal and the park (which include Broadway market). Deptford, on the other hand, seems to lack a recognisable perimeter and some memorable landmarks. The Laban Dance Centre, for example, was not often represented on the maps despite its apparent memorable shape and bright colours. Perhaps precisely the lack of this facilitating function may partially explain Deptford’s failure to succeed as a tourism destination.

Spitalfields, Hoxton/Shoreditch and London Fields constitute good examples of how the *place-connecting function* is performed in a creative cluster context. The

East London area where these three creative quarters are all located is very rich with creative industries, and could therefore be seen as a large creative cluster. Visitors, however, tend to concentrate only within these three areas where they can find opportunities for consumption, some landmarks and other familiar elements such as other visitors. In this sense, the precinct functions as an intermediary, allowing the visitor to understand better the essence of the creative cluster thanks to creative shops, markets, art galleries and other facilities which facilitate the connection between visitor and creative production. Again, Deptford is an example where this function is not performed: the creative industries are present, however the area lacks spaces that visitors would find easy to relate to and that could act as intermediaries (this problem is further discussed below).

Spaces of consumption are important elements of the creative tourism precinct also as they contribute to the fulfilment of a third function individuated by Griffin et al. (2008): the internal or state-of-mind function. This function involves the stimulation of a feeling of escape, relax and leisure, which, as seen earlier, was perceived very strongly by visitors of Spitalfields, London Fields and Hoxton/Shoreditch.

Conclusions can therefore be drawn on the reasons behind the different levels of tourism development in these four case study areas, in relation to the precinct functions theory developed by Griffin et al (2008). Spitalfields, where all the main functions of a tourism precinct are performed for overseas, domestic and inner visitors, is the most developed. The area is clearly delimited in people's minds (as proven by their sketched maps) and it has some elements which make it distinctive, such as the Old Truman Brewery, several Sunday markets and the cluster of fashion shops, bars and ethnic restaurants on Brick Lane. Also, the good transport connections, the fact that the area is not too far from the city centre, and its presence on several London Guide books, all contribute to its facilitating function. It must be specified, however, that whereas Londoners tend to see it as a central areas, overseas and domestic tourists perceive it rather as a non-central location. In this sense, its facilitating function is even stronger for overseas and domestic tourists, as the precinct allows them to visit an off-the-beaten-track (non-central) location, yet facilitating its access and exploration thanks to its

recognisable form, legibility and landmarks. Even more important, however, seems the place-connecting function Spitalfields fulfils thanks to its creative shops and markets where artists can sell their work, and public places which allow conviviality between visitors and artists. These elements function as intermediaries between visitors and creative production, allowing visitors to comprehend better the cluster and its meanings, thus providing sense of place. Finally, numerous leisure and consumption venues concentrated in a small area contribute to provide a strong feel of escape and relaxation, allowing also for the state-of-mind function.

Similarly, in Hoxton/Shoreditch - where tourism is developing but is to date not as advanced as in Spitalfields - most of these functions are performed. However, the existing differences between how the two areas perform tourism precinct functions may explain their different levels of tourism development. Hoxton/Shoreditch is well-connected to the centre by public transport, although visitors seem to perceive it as slightly further afield than Spitalfields. As in Spitalfields, Londoners tend to describe it as a central location, whereas other visitors see it as more peripheral. More often than in the case of Spitalfields, however, visitors associate it with the East End. It only has one recognisable landmark (White Cube), which is located in the most legible section of the area, Hoxton square and its surroundings (drawn by most interviewees on their maps). However, many art galleries and other cultural or leisure facilities are located outside this small section, thus rendering the precinct's boundaries less clear and weakening its facilitating function. White Cube and the other local art galleries are the most important attractions, although they draw only a very specific brand of visitors, interested in contemporary art. Art galleries, cafes (frequented by creative professionals) and creative shops perform the place-connecting function between visitors and creative cluster. However, the absence of creative markets and the smaller concentration of shops (in comparison with Spitalfields) reduce the reach of this type of function. In addition, the fact that many bars and public venues are only open at night-time, weakens the importance of the precinct's state-of-mind function during the day (when the research was conducted). It should also be noted that whereas some visitors consider bars and clubs as leisure and relaxing places, other (often older) visitors see them as intimidating or dangerous thus less

relaxing and welcoming. Similarly, the presence of ultra-trendy patrons may reduce the comfortable feeling of familiarity and relaxation thus reducing the first and third functions.

London Fields, on the other hand, performs very well in terms of place-connecting and state-of-mind functions (especially thanks to the market on Saturday and the shops and galleries on Broadway market), whereas the facilitating function is only partially achieved. The area is not as easily accessible from central London, and it certainly does not appear on international London guide books. However, it could be nonetheless seen as performing a facilitating function for visitors from London (East London in particular) since its very distinctive features, including the canal, the market and the park, make it a very recognisable area (as shown by visitors' sketched maps). The fact that London Fields is not well connected to other parts of London could explain why its visitors were mostly from east London, ex East London residents, or accompanied by a local. It seems therefore possible that, once transport connections between Hackney and central London will be improved (within the next ten years, as planned by Greater London Authority), London Fields could possibly better perform its facilitating function thus developing tourism also on a pan-London or even overseas level.

Finally, Deptford probably represents the most interesting case, since public bodies (such as Lewisham Council and LDA) have long – though with very little success - tried to encourage the development of tourism in the area. Here, in fact, none of the three discussed functions are fully performed. Firstly, the area is not perceived as a distinctive, clearly delimited perimeter, and it lacks recognisable landmarks (although the Laban Dance Centre would have all the characteristics of one). In addition, the fact of being located South of the river Thames keeps it at distance from the well-known creative clusters of the East End (such as the other case studies) thus weakening associations between this area and the creative industries, and making its discovery through random exploration more difficult. Most importantly, however, the lack of creative consumption spaces negates the area's place-connecting and state-of-mind functions. This becomes even more evident during events such as Deptford X, when artists' studios open to the public, thus allowing visitors to comprehend better the essence of the creative cluster (and

the place-connecting function is therefore fulfilled). The paucity of leisure and consumption spaces also negatively affects the state-of-mind function (i.e. the feeling of relaxation and escape), which is further damaged by the perception of lack of safety linked to the rundown urban environment. It is interesting to note, however, that creative industries have a positive effect on all the three precinct functions: they increase the feeling of being in a familiar environment (especially for creative visitors), they enhance the connection between visitor and place and the meanings attributed to it (thus creating sense of place), and they add to the perception of safety, relaxation and leisure by providing on some occasions cultural events, parties or other leisure activities. As a visitor from Canada noted 'I think without the art and without the people here that make it (...) it would have just been dirty, wouldn't be as lifelike'.

In conclusion, it appears clear that the four researched areas are not simply at different stages of a same tourism life cycle, as some visitors suggested (some remarked on the fact that London Fields will soon become as popular as Spitalfields, or that Deptford will be like London Fields). The four areas differently fulfil tourism precinct functions, and as a result have differently developed in terms of tourism (this topic, with relevant recommendations, is further discussed in the next chapter).

The Creative Cluster

Within the broader topic of the role of the creative industries in the development of tourism in creative non-central urban areas, an important aspect of the present research has been to examine how the specific features of a creative business cluster may affect tourism. In order to assess the agglomeration advantages as perceived by local businesses, compare them to visitors' perceptions, and relate them to the development of tourism, 22 local creative entrepreneurs were interviewed.

Creative entrepreneurs (which included artists, gallery owners and creative shop/gallery managers) were asked about the reasons why it was originally decided to locate their business in the area. Answers varied. In Spitalfields, the

area being ‘up and coming’ or even fashionable appears to be an important reason, while only one entrepreneur mentioned the presence of other creative businesses. Hoxton/Shoreditch and London Fields’s interviewees are the ones for whom the presence of other creative entrepreneurs emerges to be most important. As discussed below, the presence of other creative people, the flow of human capital and creative customers, and the arty atmosphere are all fundamental determinants of the location choice. In Deptford, cheaper rents and convenient location (near home or near other place of work) emerged as the most important aspects, while other creative businesses did not play a role in the location choice. Regardless of the initial reasons that led entrepreneurs to locate in a certain area, however, a number of advantages derived from being part of a creative cluster were perceived by all the interviewees.

Firstly, as for some creative visitors, the presence of a creative atmosphere and the area’s buzz are seen by artists and other creative entrepreneurs as important for their work as they induce creative inspiration. As an artist interviewed in London Fields put it ‘walking down the road, and seeing interesting things, like street art or some weird poster (...) is quite inspiring and (...) puts you more in the mood for working and being creative yourself’. This finding not only confirms what creative visitors said, but it also supports the results of other studies which have claimed the importance of place and atmosphere in the production of knowledge and symbolic products (e.g. Scott, 2000; Drake, 2003; Helbrecht, 2004). With regards to this point, creative entrepreneurs in Deptford have contrasting views: whereas some highlighted the area’s artistic buzz, others lamented the lack of places where artists can meet each other and exchange ideas, as well as the absence of an appealing night-life which would encourage them to go out locally. One artist interviewed in Deptford, in particular, compared the desolation of Deptford High Street on a Saturday night with the exciting night scene of Hoxton/Shoreditch, suggesting that such a buzz is what Deptford needs in order to be a successful creative cluster from the point of view of the artists.

Another important advantage of the cluster, connected to the arty atmosphere and buzz, is the opportunity for creative entrepreneurs to exchange ideas and develop joined projects. Across all the four case studies, interviewees pointed at this aspect

as an important factor which exists in these areas to some extent, but could certainly be improved. Events such as First Thursdays (see chapter 8 and 9) and Deptford X (see chapter 10) are mentioned as important networking opportunities. Beside these occasions, networking between creative entrepreneurs appears to be rare, a lack that interviewees of all the four case studies noted with regret. It is also interesting to note that for many creative entrepreneurs this type of social capital (a network of contacts, etc.) is seen as potentially transformable into economic capital (Bourdieu, 1984) in the form of joint funding applications, information about funding opportunities and joint marketing.

Another important advantage of agglomeration, according to the creative entrepreneurs interviewed, is represented by the wider pool of customers available when a cluster of businesses are located in a small geographical area (Porter, 1998). This point emerged as especially important in Spitalfields, where, due to its popularity, rents are not as cheap as they used to be. Interviewees (creative shop owners) nonetheless saw the increasing availability of a high number of customers as an advantage. Similar remarks were made by art gallery owners in Shoreditch and in Vyner Street (London Fields) where, in contrast to Spitalfields, the quality - rather than the number - of customers appeared as important. The agglomeration of contemporary art galleries in these two small areas allows them to share a pool of very selected customers such as art buyers, collectors and curators with the other members of the cluster.

In Hoxton/Shoreditch, London Fields and Deptford better access to products and services for creative work was seen as an advantage of being located in a cluster. Similarly in Hoxton/Shoreditch, a gallery owner and a creative shop manager remarked on the local availability of a wealth of creative talent. These two aspects (creative products and creative talent), together with the availability of cheaper studio space, link to the remark made by some visitors regarding the impression of these areas as places where young artists (such as visitors themselves) have opportunities to develop their own creative activities and ideas. For instance, in Spitalfields young artists can exhibit their products in the markets; in Deptford and London Fields there are many affordable studio spaces (which visitors have the opportunity to visit on occasions such as open studio events such as Deptford

X). Visitors, who are themselves often creative professionals or art students, project these opportunities to their own experience and dreams, increasing their interest in the area(s).

The only element related to the agglomeration of creative industries that interviewees (both visitors and entrepreneurs) see negatively is the threat of gentrification, perceived as a consequence of the area becoming more attractive. Many interviewees, including some overseas visitors, spoke about the risks related to the presence of a strong artistic community in a deprived neighbourhood, which include loss of authenticity, attraction of middle-class visitors, raise of renting costs and, ultimately, disappearance of the original residents (including artists) and commercial activities to the benefit of large companies and chain-shops. Only one visitor (from London), interviewed in London Fields, described the area's change as a form of regeneration; the majority of other visitors saw the changes as a slow process of commercialisation that would lead to the loss of what attracted them to visit (e.g. authenticity, bohemian feel, creative activities). In London Fields and Deptford, Hoxton/Shoreditch was mentioned by visitors and creative entrepreneurs as an example of an area where this phenomenon happened, with some interviewees expressing their fears that the same were occurring also where the interview was taking place. In Hoxton/Shoreditch itself, an overseas visitor said he decided to come precisely to see the effects of this phenomenon, after having read about it in a newspaper. Only in Deptford was this point not raised, and some of the artists interviewed commented on the fact that local authorities and private developers are collaborating on various projects aimed to rise the area's success (see chapter 10), but to date the results in terms of image and tourism development have failed to emerge.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to draw together, compare and discuss the results of the four case studies, in order to provide answers to the research questions identified at the beginning of the investigation (a specific answer for each question will be provided in the Conclusions chapter).

Overall, similar results emerged, but each case study appeared to have its own specific characteristics. Spitalfields, for example, is unique because of its more advanced level of tourism development. This facilitated the study of a wider range of visitors, including overseas off-the-beaten track tourists, 'London Fashion Week' business visitors on a fashion trends hunt, and artists in search for creative inspiration. Hoxton/Shoreditch is instead particularly interesting for the key role art galleries play in the attraction of visitors. Its reputation as a super-trendy London area also represents an interesting aspect of this case. London Fields is characterised by a number of factors which, being particularly evident in this area, allowed a better understanding of certain themes: the market, for example, seen by some visitors as an attraction and by others as a negative point (because of its upmarket look) is a key for the analysis of what is perceived by visitors as authentic. Also, in London Fields the villaginess theme appeared as particularly important, as well as the role played by everydayness in the tourist experience. Finally Deptford, having (apparently) many qualities in common with the other three, yet being much less popular as a tourism destination, certainly represents a key for the analysis of what makes a creative cluster a tourist attraction. In the next chapter some general conclusions will be drawn from this discussion, and the three sets of research questions will be individually addressed. Final reflections will also include recommendations for policy and future research.

13. CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This study investigated why people are drawn to creative areas by focusing on four areas of London. It adopted a qualitative approach to allow in-depth study and, whilst inevitably confined to specific times and places, the research aims to relate individual findings to larger meanings. Although generalisability is not an aim of this investigation, the comparison of four different creative areas, combined with existing research in related fields, allows the researcher to recognise patterns which can be used as bases for future research or for urban policy in other places or different times. The present chapter aims to illustrate such patterns, discussing the answers to each of the research questions identified at the beginning of the study:

- 1) What are the characteristics of tourists visiting these areas? Can they be described as creative themselves?
- 2) What is the relationship between cultural production and consumption in developing tourism in creative areas? What is the role played by the cultural and creative industries in this development?
- 3) How does the configuration of urban space affect the development of tourism in creative areas?

Each of these three research questions will be addressed individually in this final chapter, followed by some reflections on policy implications of the study, on the research methods chosen and recommendations for future research.

1. What are the characteristics of tourists visiting these areas? Can they be described as creative themselves?

At the beginning of this study a review of the use of the words *creative* and *creativity* in academic literature concluded that the characteristics of something *creative* are *novelty*, *authenticity*, *originality*, being related to *imagination* and adding something *positive* to the existing world. Consequently, a creative visitor would be one undertaking original tourist activities that involve imagination and the development of something new. For example, Richards and Raymond (2000) use the term *creative tourism* to describe a form of tourism which involves the tourist's active participation and the opportunity to develop one's own creativity, such as dancing holidays or local craft workshops.

In the researched London areas, the opportunity for visitors to learn and exercise their creativity represents an important attraction. However, this does not happen through a formal learning experience, such as a cooking course or music class. Rather, it occurs through a process of creative inspiration that visitors link to tangible and intangible place qualities such as a visually stimulating urban environment, a vibrant atmosphere, and the presence of models of (perceived) creativity, such as artists and creative products. In this sense, as in the original creative tourism idea (Richards and Raymond, 2000), these areas offer the consumer –whether Londoner or tourist – the unique opportunity of consuming, experiencing production, and producing (ideas, in this case) at the same time. Such a creative experience allows some visitors to enjoy a form of 'existential authenticity' (Wang, 1999), meaning the opportunity to be in contact with their true self (which they perceive as creative), and to create their own narratives (Richards and Wilson, 2007) and tourist experiences.

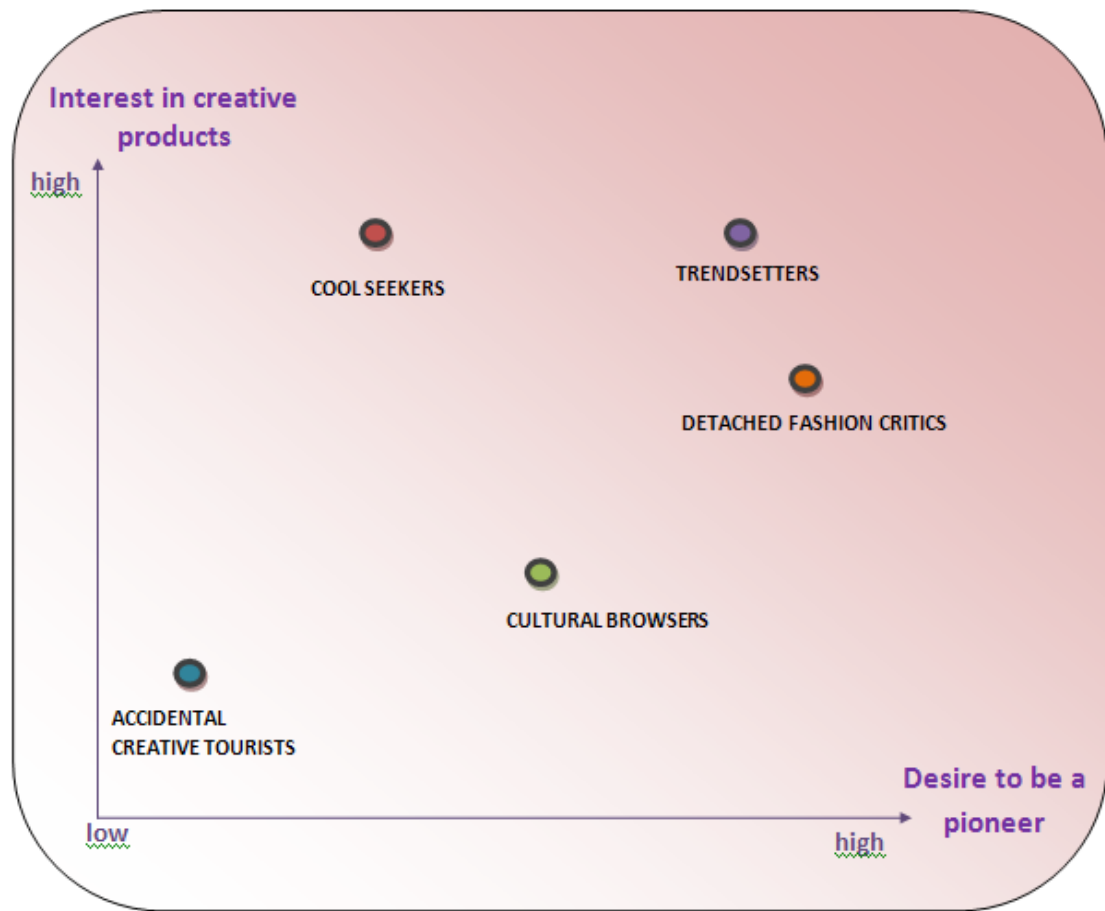
However, the notion of creative tourism by itself is only marginally helpful in explaining the relation between creative industries, visitor characteristics, and place attractiveness. A diagram representing key types of visitor to creative areas was developed, in order to illustrate some visitors characteristics which emerged as central to the understanding of tourism development, and relate them to the

strong presence of creative industries (Figure 13.1, page 282). In this visual representation, interviewed visitors can be positioned according to two characteristics: their interest in creative products, such as fashion, design and art (Y axis); and their desire to be a pioneer (X Axis). The reasons behind the choice of these specific characteristics are twofold.

Firstly these two emerged as important qualities of interviewed visitors. Often visitors had a number of common characteristics, which include a cosmopolitan life-style (Hannerz, 1990), the search for cultural capital (often in terms of new trends), a tendency to travel off-the-beaten-track, and a keen interest in art and other creative products. Secondly, these two dimensions are closely related to the aim of the present research. *‘Desire to be a pioneer’* (intended in a broad sense, including the discovery of new places, new styles and new products) can be related to interviewees’ creativity as visitors and consumers. This often entails a willingness to undertake original and new tourist activities or the discovery of new places yet unavailable to the mainstream. As in Butler’s TALC (1990) and other tourism development models, this dimension is particularly important for the explanation of tourism dynamics, including the understanding of different markets which are attracted to a specific destination and changing stages of tourism development. *‘Interviewees’ interest in creative products’* (intended as anything produced by a creative industry) is, on the other hand, important to understand the role of creative industries in attracting visitors. This is especially true when these products are related to the feelings associated with them by visitors (e.g. fashion), or to the type of tourist experience the availability of these products may enable (for example, the opportunity to observe other fashionable visitors, which leads to the co-creation of the destination value by visitors).

Individual visitors can be positioned at any point of the graph, so that an infinite number of nuances are possible. However, visitor qualities and behaviours (as identified through qualitative analysis) were clustered around five sets, and their characteristics are described below. These typologies are then used in the following section to analyse tourism development dynamics in these areas.

Figure 13.1 - Visual representation of five types of visitor to creative urban areas.



a. Trendsetters

Trendsetters belong to the type of professionals often referred to as cultural intermediaries (Bourdieu, 1984). Employed in the creative sector (especially media, fashion and arts), they appear as pioneers in starting or testing new fashion trends. Trendsetters search for distinction through the accumulation of (sub)cultural capital (Thornton, 1995), such as insider knowledge about niche artists and musicians, latest alternative fashion trends and counter-cultural venues. They are frequent visitors to creative areas, although they often complain that such areas are becoming too popular and therefore look for undiscovered edgy spaces where they can feel a real pioneer. For instance, some interviewed visitors compared Spitalfields and London Fields, explaining that the former is now

‘obliterated’ whereas the latter is still cool and undiscovered by the mainstream. Similarly, a trendsetter-type visitor from London, interviewed in London Fields, explained how Spitalfields lost its appeal after it became more accessible for the mainstream:

‘I used to go there [Spitalfields] a lot more, but now I don’t go that much, it’s sort of become more commercial, it’s like -what’s the fun- (...) it’s become a bit popular’ (woman from London, works in advertising).

Trendsetters can be seen as gentrifiers in the sense that their presence (together with the presence of other cultural intermediaries such as people who work in the local creative businesses) attracts other visitors raising the areas’ profile, with consequent raises in property prices.

b. Detached Fashion Critics

Detached Fashion Critics are characterised, with the above described Trendsetters, by both a strong desire to be a pioneer and a high interest in creative products. Like Trendsetters, they are often (although not necessarily) employed in the creative sector, and they derive part of their cultural capital from their knowledge of niche forms of art (including music, photography and street art) and non-mainstream leisure and cultural spaces. For this reason, they love to describe themselves as contemporary *flâneurs*, to travel, and to explore new places, including new areas in their own city. Their specific characteristic, which differentiates them from Trendsetters, is their disdain for anything which they perceive to be contrived and non-authentic, including any kind of fashion (e.g. alternative and underground). In particular, what they dislike above all, is the presence of Trendsetters, which they see as the personification of contrivance and commercialised creativity. Although fashion critics like creative areas because in many ways such places and their patrons are consistent with their own habitus (Bourdieu, 1994), they are particularly concerned with pointing out their detachment from ‘the fashionable crowd’. For example, a journalist from Brixton (London) described her interest in music trends and creative people (‘right-minded people’), while detaching herself from the shallow trendy patrons:

‘[in Spitalfields] you meet right minded people, which is good, there are unique events, good gigs happen here sometimes, music is good also in the local

bars, they seem quite informed and up to date, people are very fashionable, they try very hard around here, because they are shallow’.

On the other hand, Detached Fashion Critics like to highlight their liking of what they consider authentic: for instance, expressions of ethnic diversity, products made by emerging artists, hidden natural landscapes and run-down spaces (such as an unpopular music venue, an old local pub or a deserted side-street). Such a visitor, for example, compared the market in London Fields (which she found contrived) with the one in Deptford (for her, more authentic). Detached Fashion Critics are very reflexive visitors, as they see (and worry about) their role as gentrifiers. On the other hand, their discourses often appear as hypocritical, as they critique other people for having a lifestyle which is in fact very similar to theirs, showing intolerance for basically any other visitor except themselves (i.e. contrived Trendsetters, awful mainstream tourists). Overall, their view of what is acceptable in a creative area is very narrow, as it only includes what *they* perceive as authentic and truly creative.

c. Cool Seekers

In contrast with Detached Fashion Critics, some of the interviewed visitors - termed *Cool Seekers* – said they were in a creative area precisely to soak up the trendy atmosphere and pick up new trends. They are interested in creative products, especially fashion, but they do not aim to be pioneers in terms of fashion or as visitors, and thus not necessarily look for new, undiscovered areas. In most cases Cool Seekers are overseas visitors: arguably, this is due to the fact that mostly overseas visitors *consciously* visit London’s creative areas to observe fashion styles or music/art trends, or would admit to do so to an interviewer. In many ways they are similar to many London tourists, but they are drawn to ‘coolness’ rather than more traditional attractions. Often, they have an idealised image of London as the creative and alternative fashion capital, thus they see creative areas as the stereotypical ‘Real London’. Unlike Detached Fashion Critics, they admit their admiration for Trendsetters, which they consider as the main tourist attraction. Equally, trendy shops and bars are very important to them. A fashion designer from Hong Kong, for example, was in Spitalfields especially to check fashion trends; similarly, a visitor from Germany admitted to enjoy

observing Hoxton/Shoreditch's patrons because 'they are cool and trendy and I try to be like them'.

d. Cultural Browsers

A fourth type of visitor found in creative areas is the one who can be named (elaborating on Hayllar et al., 2008) *cultural browser*. In comparison with the two previous types, they are less interested in creative products: their visit to the area is motivated by the desire to discover a new area in London rather than by the presence of creative industries. In this sense, their 'desire to be a pioneer' is quite high, although lower than the previous two types. Cultural Browsers are generally new to the area, and they have come following the advice of a friend, magazine or guide book. They can be Londoners or overseas visitors, and even first time visitors to London. Often they are not particularly familiar with creative work, contemporary art or alternative fashion trends, but they are generally interested in culture and are seeking to discover new places and travel off-the-beaten track. They look for cultural capital in the form of knowledge, for example, about different cultural expressions, architecture or ethnic products. However, their prime concern is not to achieve status but rather to enrich their own persona through the travel experience, as described by Fenner (2008). For instance, they may be overseas tourists looking for an off-the-beaten-track destination in London, or Londoners interested in architecture or looking for a specific attraction such as the markets in Spitalfields and London Fields, White Cube in Hoxton/Shoreditch or the Laban in Deptford. Often, these visitors are particularly interested in observing the area's social and development dynamics, including regeneration. For example, a visitor from Italy, who was visiting London with her husband and children, said:

'[I was looking for] somewhere special, a bit different from the city centre. Because I like to see not only the sights, the city from an artistic point of view, but also special things such as neighbourhoods, what kind of people live in these neighbourhoods, and also immigration, how life develops'

This type of visitor is found more frequently in Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch, since these two are the most well-known areas of the four researched, and the ones that more frequently appear on guide books and magazines. Interestingly, while these visitors would be considered explorers (Hayllar et al. , 2008) or adventurers (Eade, 2002) as tourists to London, in the context of the creative area they often behave as browsers, observing their surroundings but limiting their exploration to the most frequented path. What differentiates these visitors from the three previous types is their lower interest in creative products and spaces. In contrast with the other groups, Cultural Browsers' attention seems to focus more on geographical space and on everyday life, through the exploration of what they see as 'real London' (of which the creative milieu is for them just one of the many fascinating aspects).

e. Accidental Creative Tourists

This type of visitor is characterised by low levels of interest in creative products as well as low desire to be a pioneer. Their visit to the area is accidental in the sense that the motivation is not related to the area's qualities; often they are visiting friends or relations who happen to live in the area. For example, the three visitors (two from Canada and one from Spain) interviewed at the hostel in Deptford were not there with the objective of visiting Deptford, and one of them showed no interest at all in creative products or in being a pioneer and discovering new areas in London. This typology clearly echoes Silberberg's accidental cultural tourist (1995) or McKercher's incidental cultural tourist (2002). However, it should be noted that in this case the visitor experience may not be a shallow one. On the contrary, often accidental creative visitors, although not especially interested in creative products, seek to discover the real character of an area and experience it as a local would. In addition, Accidental Creative Tourists are generally in the area for reasons related to their accommodation (a friend's house or youth hostel located in the area): therefore they often have more time to get to know the area than day visitors, thus achieving a higher depth of experience.

These visitors represented an important group for the study, allowing a better understanding of how the areas may be perceived by visitors who are not

necessarily drawn there by the creative industries. For example, one of the two Canadian visitors, in contrast with people who enjoyed experiencing the area's 'authentic' character and everyday life, saw Deptford as a dangerous place, where

‘...I feel I may or may not get stabbed at any moment (...), there is just a lot of crazy guys, but - if you walk around with headphones on - you don't really notice them, so it's ok'. However, on the other hand, her accidental visit allowed her to discover some of the area's amenities, such as the creative industries and local pubs, slowly changing the negative image she initially held. Accidental creative visitors are in fact necessary for any unexplored area to be noticed and start attracting other visitors. In tourism development models based on traditional holiday resorts (such as Butler, 1980) adventurous explorers are the initiators of tourism development. In contrast, in large cities such as London, where tourists may happen to stay in a certain area for a variety of reasons, less intrepid visitors may actually play a key role as initiators.

In addition, it must be noted that all tourists - not only creative ones - contribute to the area's creativity. While certain visitors see other tourists as a threat to these areas' creativity, for some creative entrepreneurs, such as artists who sell in the markets, visitors are important customers regardless of how creative they are. Creative markets frequented by visitors, such the ones on Brick Lane (Spitalfields), allow many emerging creative micro-enterprises to fund and develop their work. In addition, the relaxed atmosphere and the 'buzz', described by many creatives as conducive to individual creativity, are certainly facilitated by the playful presence of visitors in the streets, cafes and cultural spaces. On the other hand, certain types of visitor such as Trendsetters and Detached Fashion Critics may find the presence of mainstream tourists as disturbing. As discussed in the next section, as an area becomes more popular, the increased number of visitors may (as in Butler's life cycle model) lead to the displacement of some groups of consumers, thus taking some of its *coolness* away.

2. What is the relationship between cultural production and consumption in developing tourism in creative areas? What is the role played by the cultural and creative industries in this development?

Creative production (i.e. the presence of creative industries) impacts the tourist experience in a number of ways –as discussed in the previous chapter- thus contributing to the attraction of visitors to the area. Impacts include the provision of opportunities for consumption and for the accumulation of cultural capital, the presence of creative producers or other creative visitors, the development of an environment which is seen as conducive for individual creativity, the perception of authenticity and the contribution to certain place qualities such as an interesting built environment and good atmosphere (see Figure 12.1 Chapter 12). In particular, the bohemian, arty people who frequent these areas represent one of the main tourist attractions. In this sense, consumers (visitors, workers, residents) co-create the value that can be derived from the experience of these areas (Etgar, 2008; White et al., 2009) and *others* represent an important aspect of the visitor experience. In the previous chapter it was also described how creative urban areas can perform similar functions as more established tourist precincts, and the central role creative production plays in how these functions are performed. Deptford was taken as example of this process: the presence of art studios and other creative industries in the area partly compensate for its lack of leisure and consumption facilities, allowing (on specific occasions such as open studio events) connection between visitors and the area's creative character, thus creating sense of place.

An important role played by creative production in the attraction of visitors (and thus in the development of tourism) is its contribution to the areas' atmosphere and *cool* image. This contribution, which is derived from a number of factors including creative workers' bohemian styles and fashions, urban environment and the proliferation of trendy spaces of consumption, can help explain some important dynamics related to place image and tourism development.

Coolness (or other similar concepts such as *hipness*) can be described, following Nancarrow et al. (2001) and Thornton (1995), as a positive quality (of people,

objects and places) or as a form of cultural capital, which is very subjective and complex in nature, and which can be seen as the combination of a number of youth values including differentiation from the mainstream, authenticity, exclusivity and belonging to a certain cultural group. Although perceptions of what is cool vary from person to person, certain patterns can be recognised, as similar cultural groups often share similar views of coolness. In the case of the present study, for example, five types of visitor with slightly different perceptions of places that could be labelled as ‘cool’ were identified. For instance, Trendsetters and Cool Seekers, who both have a keen interest in alternative fashion, value the presence of alternative/fashionable/stylish people or the availability of such clothes and accessories in the local shops. This factor is closely related to the area’s artiness and the strong presence of creative industries and creative professionals. On the other hand, visitors who are highly concerned with feeling a pioneer, such as Detached Fashion Critics (as well as Trendsetters), will place value on the fact that an area is undiscovered and not touristy.

Figure 13.2- Visual representation of place characteristics as perceived by interviewed visitors

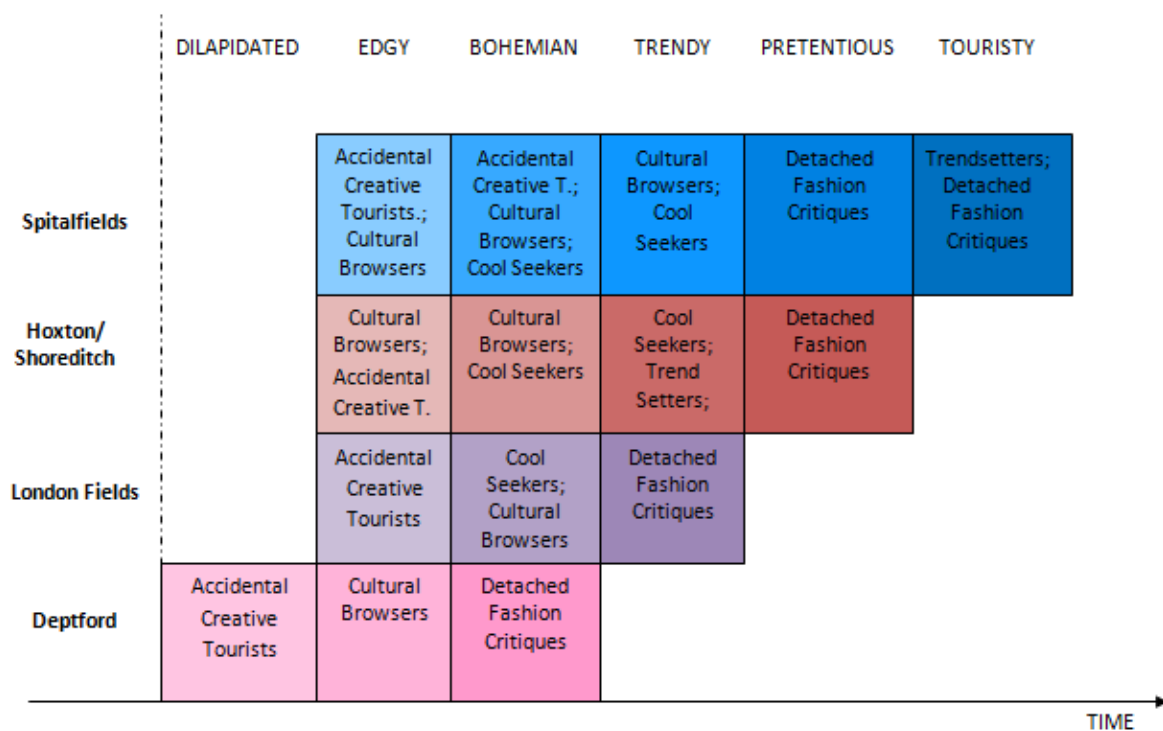


Figure 13.2 (page 289) represents how the four case studies are perceived by different types of visitors, according to the qualitative data collected during

interviews. The graph shows, for example, how the same area can be seen by some visitors as edgy while others may see it as touristy. Also, it shows how these perceptions can change over time, following both the area's changes in terms of tourism development and image, and the way in which people themselves change, for instance as they become older or they start knowing these areas better. For example, a visitor who sees Spitalfields for the first time may think the area is edgy and bohemian, whereas after a few visits he or she may start seeing it as too contrived or becoming too touristy.

Equally, different purposes for the visit and different level of experience of the city may correspond to very different – at times contradictory - perceptions and interpretations. This is especially relevant since the range of mobilities in a city such as London is extremely wide including residents, short time residents, VFR visitors and several different types of tourists (domestic day trippers, overseas business tourists, etc.). In Spitalfields, for example, many Londoners say they find the area 'unique' and they appear to be consuming it in a consciously 'touristy' manner, whilst paradoxically overseas visitors seem to go there because they want to see something typical, 'the real London'. Also, as an interviewee in Hoxton/Shoreditch noted, the perception may change as the person gets older changing interests and values. In some cases the same visitors can also see one area as corresponding to more than one of these qualities, for instance being bohemian *and* touristy (this often happened, for example, in the case of Spitalfields). What people find attractive also changes with their perceptions of 'cool' and the importance attributed to factors such as interest in creative products (e.g. fashion or design) or desire to be a pioneer. For instance, Detached Fashion Critics find trendy, pretentious and touristy areas intimidating and totally unappealing, whereas they are interested in edgy and bohemian places (i.e. 'undiscovered'). This approach could be seen as a form of neo-colonialism (Cohen, 1984; Huning and Novy, 2006) in that the host (fashionable patrons in this case, who can also be co-tourists) are observed as a tourism object and judged from a superior perspective by certain visitors.

What is most interesting, however, is to relate these different perceptions to the process of tourism development. The image of a same area can change as a consequence of these perceptions, and this dynamic can lead to the attraction of different types of consumers over time. This is similar to the process Simmel (1904) described as the trickle-down effect, or to the development of seaside resorts between the 18th and 19th century (Steinecke, 1993; Butler, 1980). An area which is deprived but features some appealing characteristics such as a concentration of creative industries and certain physical features (as discussed above) may start attracting visitors who are interested in discovering new places and desire to feel a pioneer (as a form of cultural capital). Some of them may be Trendsetters, which, together with creative professionals already working in the area, contribute to make the area feel trendy and fashionable, thus attracting new types of visitors (like Cool Seekers).

As discussed in the previous chapter, however, the fact of being creative and cool is not in itself enough in order to start a process of touristification: other elements, including the area's legibility (Lynch, 1961), its ability to connect visitors to the essence of the creative cluster, the feeling of relaxation and leisure, and its physical characteristics, also play an important role (as shown by the case of Deptford, which failed in this sense). As the area becomes more popular, certain visitors such as Detached Fashion Critics are however inclined to leave, looking for other areas perceived as less pretentious thus more authentic. At the same time, relevant magazines and websites start to publicize the area, thus attracting new groups of visitors, such as Cultural Browsers. As a consequence, visitors interested in 'feeling a pioneer' or exclusive (Detached Fashion Critics and Trendsetters) will start looking for new, undiscovered places, thus possibly starting the same process again. The evidence collected shows that *coolness* is a fundamental quality of creative areas, which is linked to its bohemian character and to its distinction from mainstream cultural activities and tourist attractions. For this reason, promoting and branding an area as creative in order to trigger tourism development (as Lewisham council and private developers are doing for Deptford) could be problematic, since what makes the area cool is precisely its unavailability to the mainstream.

3. How does the configuration of urban space affect the development of tourism in creative areas?

In the field of creative cluster research, a small number of authors have investigated the role of urban space in the production of knowledge, finding some correlations between the look and feel of a place and creative activity (e.g. Drake, 2003; Helbrecht, 2004). In this sense, also tourists can play a role in the local creative production: the proximity to a pool of shared consumers represents one of the advantages of creative co-location (Baerenholdt and Haldrup, 2006), and contributes to a creative area's buzz and atmosphere, which are considered important factors for the development of a creative field (Scott, 2000). As Zukin (1995) pointed out, the relationship between symbolic production and consumption is a reflexive one, because urban lifestyles represent the raw material as well as the result of cultural economies. Physical environment, atmosphere and a critical mass of consumers all contribute to creative production, and the present research has looked at how these three elements interact in a creative area. In particular, one of the research questions focused on the configuration of urban space and its influence on the development of tourism.

Many interviewed visitors were creative professional themselves and evidence suggested that an interesting urban environment can be conducive to individual creativity and provide artistic inspiration. Physical aspects are therefore entangled with intangible ones, as the place qualities which encourage creative ideas can be visual (e.g. a peaceful natural landscape or a stimulating piece of street art) as well as linked to atmosphere, buzz or exchange of ideas with other creative professionals. The physical configuration of space, however, is not only important to people employed in the creative sector. Other visitors are equally interested in the urban environment, which seems to play an important role also in the creation of atmosphere. The arty feel, for example, which emerged as a fundamental quality of all the case study areas, is strongly related to space. On one hand, for some visitors (such as Detached Fashion Critics) a rundown urban environment contributes to the bohemian feel; on the other, creative shops and markets, cultural spaces and galleries, people's clothes and street art all function as intermediaries

between visitors and creative production. Also these areas' heterogeneous physical environment, mirroring the type of urban space advocated by Jacobs' (1961), is very appealing to people, encouraging walking and exploration. In Spitalfields for example, in contrast with the council's and local ethnic businesses' attempt to promote the area as Banglatown, the mix of styles and different cultures and consumption opportunities appears as the key to the area's success, showing the failure of the theming approach. In fact, the appeal of this area seems to lie precisely in its ability to offer leisure consumption opportunities and the exotic in an everyday life context, as well as a mix of alternative lifestyles (a package which is similar to Kreuzberg in Berlin, as described by Huning and Novy, 2006).

The small size of local businesses, which are individual and unique, also represents a fundamental aspect of the physical constitution of space, contributing to the perception of coolness (as opposed to mainstream chain shops), distinctiveness and authenticity. Authenticity, which according to the evidence collected is associated by people to anything which does not appear as conceived or produced specifically for the visitor, is very closely related to physical space: rundown buildings and roads, small local shops and street art, for example, all contribute to the perception of authenticity. Linked to small individual shops is also the perception of these areas as villages within the city (London Fields and Deptford in particular), suggesting that some visitors see such areas as a recognisable bounded spaces. This point emerged most visibly on visitors' sketched maps. There, interviewees represented their own image of these areas as small self-contained environments, characterised by individual details (such as a graffiti or their favourite shop) and, in some cases, what is perceived as a landmark (e.g. the White Cube Gallery in Hoxton/Shoreditch or the Old Truman Brewery in Spitalfields). In this sense, creative industries could be seen as that consistent cultural element which provides a narrative unity to an otherwise very heterogeneous place. Ultimately, creative areas fill urban space with meaning, providing sense of place (Tuan, 1977). They contribute to the atmosphere as well as to the physical environment, and in their turn are affected by both. They create

a sense of authenticity, but also contribute to its destruction, through the attraction of visitors and consequent commercialisation of creative activities.

Policy Implications

Creative areas are delicate environments to promote, as their attractiveness lies precisely in their lack of commercialisation and big attractions, as well as in their diversity, authenticity and places where everyday life goes on. Forms of tourism development policy such as marketing, theming, creation of facilities aimed at tourists and signposting, all carry the risk of turning these areas into tourist bubbles, which are perceived by creatives and visitors as the very antithesis of creativity and coolness. As the present thesis goes to print, for example, a plan by Tower Hamlets Council to mark the two ends of Brick Lane with giant arches in the shape of headscarves is causing the outcry of some Spitalfields residents and local artists (Guardian, 2010). The plan aims to create a themed ‘cultural trail’ in what the Council has tried to market as Banglatown, ignoring some of the qualities which have made the area so successful: its heterogeneity, creativity, perceived authenticity and bohemian look. The planned arches, rather than promoting the area’s cultural richness (as intended by the Council), bear the risk of becoming markers of a tourist bubble, echoing established (and central) London tourist precincts such as Carnaby Street and China Town. Such a change would most likely cause the departure of many residents, artists and creative visitors, ultimately leading to the loss of Spitalfields’ role as a hub of small creative enterprises and of cultural innovation.

Similarly, branding areas as creative hubs may lead to the loss of the qualities which made them attractive in the first place (Plog, 1973): culture-led developments are seen by certain visitors as contrived (thus the antithesis of cool), and appear to be in many cases led by a static form of culture rather than by genuine creativity (Richards and Wilson, 2007). Targeting consumption facilities specifically at tourists can, in creative areas, be doubly harmful: on one hand such strategy may compromise the diversity, originality and innovation of local production by leaving out emerging small and micro creative businesses. In

addition, it can even be counterproductive in terms of attraction of visitors, as the area may be perceived as non-authentic as a consequence of promotion, and thus less appealing.

In conclusion, tourism development policy in creative areas should be to a great extent avoided, permitting innovation and rapid reaction to changing demands of creatives and visitors alike. Soft approaches to policy, however, can be in certain cases appropriate: for instance, the provision of opportunities (including space) for creative entrepreneurs to network, showcase their work and sell their products, as well as mix with visitors. This would not only benefit the areas' creativity, but also the tourists, by allowing them to consume, feel creative and draw inspiration at the same time. Creative markets and events such as open studios are, for example, important places where production, consumption and the exercise of people's own creativity (via the inspiration process) come together. They not only allow the exhibition and promotion of an area's creativity, but also provide an opportunity for local artists to sell their products as well as a platform for networking and for the development of joint work. It is important that these markets and events are let free to develop without excessive intervention in terms of choice of products and artists. This is, for example, the case of the markets around Brick Lane, where anyone is free to rent a stall. In the case of Broadway market (in London Fields), instead, the range of producers who are allowed to sell their products on the market is strictly defined by a market manager. This approach leads to a number of drawbacks: firstly, the market offer reflects a specific taste – imposed from above - rather than the area's creative variety; secondly, emerging local businesses are not given the opportunity to grow by selling their products; and, finally, the market is perceived by visitors as more contrived (or less authentic) because aimed at one specific target.

Finally, whereas in more central, typically touristed areas, large shops, department stores and branded consumption spaces are becoming the norm (and often their presence is appreciated by locals and visitors), creative areas call for some caution in this sense. Small and micro businesses (shops in particular) are not only seen by visitors to creative areas as more authentic and appealing, but they are also

places where innovation and new creative work can be best developed (Jacobs, 1970). It seems thus important, for the management of creative areas, that such activities are protected, as well as their development encouraged and supported by public policy.

Reflections on Methodology

The findings, discussion of findings, and conclusions of the present research are based on the qualitative analysis of face-to-face interviews with visitors, maps sketched by visitors, and in-depth interviews with creative entrepreneurs (all conducted in four case study areas). The interviewing method proved to be effective, providing a very direct understanding of the tourism development dynamics in these areas. In particular, the choice of interviewing both Londoners and tourists to London allowed the achievement of some important results on the different perceptions these two types of visitors have. However, while interviews with visitors appeared from the beginning as necessary in order to achieve the research objectives, interviews with creative entrepreneurs were considered an additional method (and for this reason a smaller number of such interviews were conducted). Indeed, although some interesting findings on these areas as creative clusters and on the advantages of agglomeration emerged, most of the results which are more closely related to the objectives of the present study were obtained through interviews with visitors and mental maps analysis.

Sketched maps were chosen as a method in order to tackle the third research question concerning configuration of physical space. The use of a method which is not common in tourism research was also seen as an opportunity in terms of academic innovation. While initially the choice of this method was seen as potentially risky because interviewees could be disturbed by the request of producing a hand-sketched drawing, finally this did not constitute a problem. On the contrary, visitors to creative areas seem quite happy to express their own creativity through such an exercise. The main problem was instead represented by the difficulties in interpreting the results. Some of the evidence collected from mental maps, such as places where visitors had been or most memorable

attractions, emerged in a much greater deal of detail through the analysis of interviews. Mental maps, however, proved to be revealing in showing to what extent visitors perceive an area as consistent or bounded; whether they see more than one area as one (e.g. Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch), or what the core of an area is for them (for example, Brick Lane in Spitalfields and Hoxton square in Hoxton/Shoreditch). Also, the combination of maps and interviews, allowed in some cases the confirmation or the enhancement of certain findings.

Overall, the triangulation of qualitative methods provided rich and detailed data, and a depth of analysis a quantitative approach would have not allowed. The chosen methodology proved to be successful in achieving the study's aims, and the same methods would be adopted were this study to be repeated. In the future, it would be interesting to supplement this technique with other visual methods, such as for instance the use of a photographic camera.

Recommendations for further research

The present study constitutes the first exploration of a new and potentially much wider topic, and more research is still needed for a deeper understanding of the issues involved. Future research could develop in several directions. Firstly, themes emerged as important could be investigated more in depth to add richness to these (or other, similar) case studies. For example, night-time venues emerged as important attractions in both Spitalfields and Hoxton/Shoreditch, but this aspect could not be investigated in the context of the present study as all the interviews were conducted only during the day. Similarly, other themes such as the importance of the built environment in visitor perceptions, the production of atmosphere, or the factors contributing to creative inspiration for visitors could be explored further.

Secondly, the scope of this research could also be extended by involving different subjects: for instance, gentrification issues (such as its role in the development of tourism) could be explored through interviews with locals. Such interviews would also allow the investigation of other interesting topics, such as co-tourism (Harvey

and Lorenzen, 2006) and guest and host relationships. In addition, the study of tourism development from a visitors' perspective (as in the present study) should be related to public policy questions, such as the extent to which the development of tourism may help regenerate deprived areas and contribute to the local economy. The active role of local authorities in the promotion and marketing of such areas, and the actual results in terms of tourism development should be further explored (the two cases of London Fields and Depford, for example, would make interesting cases).

Thirdly, comparisons with other areas could allow a sounder understanding of the dynamics investigated and provide interesting results. This could involve, for instance, the comparison between a creative London area and a similar (creative, non-central) area in a different city. Berlin, for example, was mentioned by several interviewees as a city where there are very similar creative spaces which are attractive for visitors (e.g. Kreuzberg in Berlin has been researched by Huning and Novy, 2006). Other interesting areas could be Ticinese in Milan (see Bovone, 2006) and Long Island City in New York (see Gross, 2009). Further research could also be conducted in other parts of London: more attention could be paid, for instance, to South and West London, or to Outer London boroughs, contributing to the body of knowledge on creativity and the development of new tourism areas in London.

Ultimately, the researcher's personal goal throughout the past three years of doctoral research has been to start building an understanding of tourism development dynamics in non-central creative areas, in order to contribute to similar areas' regeneration through the identification and implementation of appropriate development policy. Certainly, this study represents a step towards a better knowledge of these phenomena, and recommendations for public policy have been devised. Yet more research should be conducted into the dynamics of such places, in order to understand visitors', residents' and businesses' needs, and to promote a sensible approach to development which could be sustainable, conducive of innovation and creativity, as well as respectful of all the city users.

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APPENDIX I

Interview Topic Guide for London Residents

Introduction

Information about the research/use of data/privacy – show recording device

Ask to sign informed consent form

1. Do you travel often?
2. For example, how many trips you have made in the last three months?
3. Do you ever visit areas of London other than the one where you live?
4. And what do you look for when you visit other areas?
5. What made you decide to visit this particular area of London today?
6. Is it the first time you visit this area?
7. How often do you come here (visits per month or per year)?
8. How long did you stay in this area, I mean, how many hours or days?
9. And how long are you planning to stay?
10. Now could you please tell me, what have you done/seen during your visit to this area?
11. Are there any other things you are planning to do while in this area?
12. Do you like this area?
13. What do you like about it?
14. What do you not like?
15. If you could change something of this area to make it more appealing to you, what would you change?
16. How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?
17. Do you know that there are many creative industries around here?
18. Are the important to you?
19. Does this area remind you of any other areas of London or of other cities that you know?
20. Why?

21. Now I will tell you the names of three other areas of London, I would just like to know if their names ring a bell to you [excluding area where the interview is taking place].

- Spitalfields/Brick Lane
 - If yes: what do you know it for
- Deptford
 - If yes: what do you know it for
- London Fields?
 - If yes: what do you know it for
- Hoxton/Shoreditch?
 - If yes: what do you know it for

Finally, I would like you to draw on this sheet of paper a picture of this area. A kind of map, but it doesn't have to be precise or professional at all, just whatever you remember of it. In particular, I would like you to mark the route you have taken and the places you have visited and whatever else caught your attention, also writing any comments you may have about these places. Like for example, you can write what you liked the most, what you didn't like and so on. Please, take your time...

Ok, this is all, this will be really useful to our research. Thank you so much for your time, it was a pleasure talking with you

APPENDIX II**Interview Topic Guide for Tourists to London**

Introduction

Information about the research/use of data/privacy – show recording device

Ask to sign informed consent form

1. Do you travel often?
2. How many trips you have made in the last three months?
3. And why did you decide to come to London?
4. What made you decide to visit this particular area of London?
5. How long did you stay in this area, I mean, how many hours or days?
6. And how long are you planning to stay?
7. Now could you please tell me, what you have done/seen during your visit to this area?
8. Do you like the area?
9. And what did you especially like about it?
10. What did you not like?
11. Are there any other things you are planning to do while in this area?
12. How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?
13. Do you know that there are many creative industries around here?
14. Are the important to you?
15. Does it remind you of any area of London or of other cities, like the city where you come from for example?
16. How is this area different from the other places you have visited in London, if it is any different?
17. If you could change something of this area to make it more appealing to you, what would you change?

18. Now I will tell you the names of three other areas of London, I would just like to know if their names ring a bell to you [excluding area where the interview is taking place].

- Brick Lane/Spitalfields?
 - If yes: what do you know it for
- Deptford
 - If yes: what do you know it for
- London Fields?
 - If yes: what do you know it for
- Hoxton?
 - If yes: what do you know it for

Now, we are almost finished, just few general question about your visit to London.

19. Is this the first time you visit London?

20. How many times have you visited London in the last year?

21. Can you name three things you like about London?

22. How long did you spend In London during this visit?

Finally, I would like you to draw on this sheet of paper a picture of this area. A kind of map, but it doesn't have to be precise or professional at all, just whatever you remember of it. In particular, I would like you to mark the route you have taken and the places you have visited and whatever else caught your attention, also writing any comments you may have about these places. Like for example, you can write what you liked the most, what you didn't like and so on. Please, take your time...

Ok, this is all, this will be really useful to our research. Thank you so much for your time, it was a pleasure to talk with you

APPENDIX III

Interview Topic Guide for Creative Entrepreneurs

THE BUSINESS

1. What do you do exactly? (sell, produce, showcase, etc.)
2. Is this business yours?
 - a. If not:
 - i. does the owner ever work here?
 - ii. How many people work here?
 - iii. Why do you think they chose to locate it here? (including characteristics of space)
 - b. If it is:
 - i. When did you open?
 - ii. Why are you located here? ... (including characteristics of space)
 - iii. How many employees do you have?
3. Do you consider this business to be a creative business?
4. Why?

THE AREA

5. How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?
6. What are the assets of this area (for your business)?
7. In your opinion how is tourism developing in this area?
8. How would you describe the visitors who come here?
9. What is, in your opinion, the role of the creative industries, like design and advertising agencies, fashion and art studios, in attracting visitors to this area?

10. What elements of this area are, in your opinion, especially important in attracting visitors?
11. Which areas (of London or of other cities) are in your opinion similar to this one? (how?)
12. Would you call this area a creative industries' cluster? (why?)
13. Would you call it a cultural district? (why?)

POLICY

14. What do you think of how creative businesses are managed by local authorities in these area?
 15. And of the restoration of the old buildings what do you think?
 16. And what about the creation of new contemporary buildings?
 17. And what about cultural policy, like the organisation of cultural festivals or events, do you think this is done in the best way?
 18. Finally, what do you think of marketing policy, like anything that is being done to attract visitors (both Londoners and tourists)?
 19. Is there anything you would change in regards to all these projects and policies?
 20. Are you, as a business, in contact at all with the agencies responsible for regeneration and tourism policy in the area?
 21. Do you feel the need to be more involved with them and their decisions?
-
22. Is there anything you would have expected me to ask you which I didn't?
 23. Is there anything else you would like to say on this topic?

APPENDIX IV

Consent Form

Tourism Development in Non-Central Areas of London

This academic research aims to learn more about what draws people to some of the less visited parts of London.

Researcher: Ilaria Pappalepore, the Centre for Tourism, University of Westminster.

I agree to take part in the research and understand that:

- I am free to refuse to answer any question at any time.
- I am not obliged in any way to continue with the interview. I can stop the interview at any time, and the tape recordings will be erased in my presence.
- Recordings and transcripts will be anonymised and securely stored.
- Nothing I say will be published in a form that makes it personally identifiable.

Name:

Signature:

Please indicate:

Country where you live		
Town / City where you live		
Gender	Female / Male	
Profession		
Age Group	Under 30	
	30-39	
	40-49	
	50-59	
	Over 60	

APPENDIX V

Themes used for analysis.

1) Tourists

A-priori

Characteristics of visitors (experienced, cosmopolitan, creative...?)

Search for cultural capital

Interest in contemporary/urban culture

Importance of creativity

Alternative tourists/adventurers

Tourist experience

Emerged from Data

Books, films

Londoners experiencing the city as tourists/every day tourism

Tourists want to experience the city as Londoners

Observations related to their job

2) Activities

A-priori

Consumption of cultural/creative products

Emerged from data

Roaming, exploring, back streets

Getting inspiration

Bars & clubs, night-life

Festivals and events

Food/Shopping/markets

Taking pictures/photography
 Other places they have visited/tour
 Activities related to their job (e.g. architects looking at architecture)

3) Place

A priori

Heterogeneity
 Diversity/cosmopolitan
 Atmosphere, authenticity, sense of place
 Configuration of space (small streets, variety of urban forms...)
 Comparisons with home or other places

Emerged from data

Small/independent/unique shops
 Trendiness
 Interesting people
 Criticisms against the place's excessive trendiness/pretentiousness
 Arty Feel
 Location of the area (central, on the city's edge, access)
 Small village feel
 Nature/natural beauty
 Crime, poverty, danger
 Segregation/social divide, contrast
 Dirty, scruffy
 History
 Source of inspiration
 Young
 Unique
 Typical London
 Calm/tranquility
 Local community
 Major attractions (e.g. White Cube)

4) Creative cluster and development

A priori

Creative industries/cultural production/creative production

Touristy/off the beaten track, tourism development

Reasons for locating in the area (for entrepreneurs)

Benefits of clustering

Networks

Marketing activities

Local authorities

Urban development/regeneration

Emerg ed from data

Gentrification

APPENDIX VI

Key words count

Table VI.1 Table showing occurrences of key words within interviews with visitors for each case study area (keywords were not counted when referred to other areas).

Key words	Spitalfields (42 interviews)	Hoxton (34 interviews)	London Fields (39 interviews)	Deptford (17 interviews)
Group 1 (‘trendy’ and similar)				
Cool-	9	9	7	7
Trend-	16	10	8	0
Hip	2	4	1	2
groovy	0	2	0	0
Cutting edge	0	2	0	0
Up and coming	0	7	2	3
style	7	8	3	0
Fashion-	19	15	4	0
Moda/tenden za (Italian for trendy)	4	4	3	0
Tot. Group 1	57	61	28	12
Group 2 (‘vibe’ and similar)				
Vib- (vibrant, vibe)	7	6	5	8
buzz	3	1	1	0
fizzy	1	0	0	0
young	14	12	21	0
Giovane (Italian for young)	8	2	1	0
Tot Group 2	33	21	28	8
Group 3 (‘arty’ and similar)				

Art-	47	52	36	32
Creative-	24	24	29	8
Tot Group 3	71	76	65	40
Group 4 (‘alternative’ and similar)				
hippy	0	1	0	0
funky	1	6	0	0
alternative	11	0	1	0
indie	2	0	1	0
vintage	4	0	1	0
Bohemian	3	2	1	1
Tot Group 4	21	9	4	1
Group 5 (‘underground’ and similar)				
Edgy	0	2	0	0
Edge of the city	0	0	0	1
Underground	7	0	0	0
trashy	0	0	1	0
Tot Group 5	7	2	1	1
Group 6 (‘rough’ and similar)				
Dangerous	1	0	0	3
Dirty	2	1	1	6
scruffy	0	0	0	3
rough	2	1	1	7
Tot Group 6	5	2	2	19
Group 7 (‘try hard’ and similar)				
Try hard	2	1	1	0
contrived	0	0	2	0
Beautiful people	2	0	2	0
wanky	0	0	2	0
intimidating	2	0	0	0
pretentious	4 ⁱ	3	3 ⁱⁱ	0
Yuppie	0	1	0	0
Tot Group 7	10	5	10	0

Group 8 ('mixed' and similar)				
mix-	6	15	15	7
diverse	4	2	1	2
cosmopolitan	2	1	4	1
Tot Group 8	12	18	20	10
Group 9 ('relaxed' and similar)				
authentic	0	0	0	0
local	5	1	7	6
Laid back	2	0	5	1
Chilled	1	1	6	2
Relax-	7	8	17	5
Famil-	1	0	6	4
Village	0	0	2	4
Old fashioned	0	0	0	2
Tot Group 9	16	10	43	24
Other key words				
Gentrif-	5	4	8	0
Touristy	1	0	1	0
Non-touristy	0	0	2	0

SUMMARY

	Spitalfields	Hoxton	London Fields	Deptford
Group 1 'trendy' and similar keywords	57	61	28	12
Group 2 'vibe' and similar keywords	33	21	28	8
Group 3 'arty' and similar keywords	71	76	65	40
Group 4 'alternative' and similar keywords	21	9	4	1
Group 5 'underground' and similar keywords	7	2	1	1

Group 6 'rough' and similar keywords	5	2	2	19
Group 7 'try hard' and similar keywords	6	2	7	0
Group 8 'mixed' and similar keywords	12	18	20	10
Group 9 'relaxed' and similar keywords	16	10	43	24

ⁱ Including 1 unpretentious and 1 not pretentious

ⁱⁱ Including 1 unpretentious and 1 not pretentious

APPENDIX VII

Selection of Quotes

SPITALFIELDS

- 1) 'From what it has to offer, it's completely unique, I mean, so many people come here to get inspiration, you get all the graphic designers come here, so many people come here to get inspiration, share inspiration, it's everything for everyone, people come here from their country and they feel inspired, and they go back to their country they have something to offer' (art director, from London).
- 2) 'It's so interesting culture it's like a mish-mash of like a lot of different communities...a big like a migrant population living here, quite international, quite a lot of like trendy people, quite a lot of all kinds of people really, a bit of a meeting point I find, kind there's like a lot of different elements of culture like old east London, very international (...) I'm so more interested in weird funny little corners of London than [commercial high streets], I like the fact that some of the streets are named here in another language and, yeah, it's always interesting to walk from one end to other and find very different looking people, often have some weird adventure' (producer from Clapton, London).
- 3) 'There is one thing which I didn't like, there is still a lot of separation between different ethnic groups, there is the Muslim Muslim, the Indian Indian, the European European, maybe it's inevitable, I'm not sure, but it still strikes me because in a metropolis such as London, which has been a multiethnic city for so long, well, you understand how difficult it is to integrate people' (librarian from Italy, aged between 40 and 50)
- 4) 'This [the art space where the interview took place] is a fantastic place and I just walked in I didn't know about the exhibition, I just spend maybe 10 minutes here and I will be on my way, and this is great, that you can have these little diversions that you haven't quite planned for, (...) [it] enriches the whole experience, because you haven't planned it, it just draws you in (...) so if you have a space that allows or encourages diversions then you explore and it's like you roam the city, and if you don't, and you find a bar or a seat, you don't realise this fact, I wouldn't have done this interview for example' (visitor from Birmingham).
- 5) 'I like very much to visit new places, to get lost, dangerous places (...) I walk, because I like walking and thinking, so I walk and think, I get lost

and then look for the way back' (student from Italy, lives in East London).

- 6) 'I like new people, new places, it's very inspiring, it's like a documentary of the everyday, I like photography and I'm interested in what people look like, how they behave, what they are doing... I like this place, there is a lot of street art, I make good pictures I think, and it's a very crowded place, vibrant, every time I'm here people are different, I like especially artists, it's inspiring, maybe I'll go home and something will happen' (artist from Poland)
- 7) 'It was on my guide book, the writer wrote this is the famous brick Lane, it said that local people come here it's very friendly, so I'd like to see how true English London is' (tourist from South Korea, in London for 6 months on a university exchange programme)
- 8) 'Maybe sometimes I go recommended by someone who tells me you need to go there to visit that thing... I really appreciate that kind because you can see the real London not just the Big Ben, and I'm looking for this real London for Londoners not just the tourist... (...) maybe [Spitalfields] is more touristic than before but I don't know because it's not like Camden where you can see that most people are foreigners, and I see people that live near this area, they know each other when they see other people in the street, and I think that that's the reason why it's real London' (Spanish tourist)
- 9) 'I don't know, it seems that there is less... not less tourists because there are tourists, but people who try not to look like tourists, if you know what I mean' (photography student from Birmingham)
- 10) 'We are following the guidebook, we are following one of the walks, that's why we were lost... we are trying to find out more about London, we have been living here for a year but we don't know anything about it'. (woman from London)
- 11) 'I like the atmosphere it's very trendy, up to date, as well as very comfy, with the cafés and everything, like cosy, quite friendly, people are very fashionable, and unique' (visitor from Hong Kong).
- 12) 'I like that it's a mix of lots of different things, I like this food, and I like that it's a kind of clash of new and old, and lots of trendy shops and also all these shops that have been here 100 years or so, places I don't go to, but like the old hat shop, small little shops which obviously have been here (...)' (visitor from Essex)
- 13) 'The artworks were quite nice, all the different styles, I saw one of the Banksy's prints, that was very very nice, and the fashions, some are quite unusual and interesting, nice to see (accountant from Kilburn, London)
- 14) 'Relaxed, chilled out, its quite interesting to see people dressed up, it's a bit trendy, quite amusing how people dress around here, not the hassle and bustle of the fashionscapes around here, there is no business as such it's

more relaxed (...). It's slightly pretentious, cool and trendy but not as trendy as other areas of London, it's a bit rough around the edges, it's quite old' (research officer from London)

- 15) 'I used to go there [Spitalfields] a lot more, but now I don't go that much, it's sort of become more commercial, it's like -what's the fun- it's kind of dirty, it's become a bit popular (woman from London, works in advertising- interviewed in London Fields).

- 16) '[Do you know Spitalfields?] Unfortunately I do, it's a compulsory passage, especially with friends who come and visit me from Italy, they come with the request to go there, but it's too crowded, well it is a bit folkloristic but you go once and enough, it does make me feel like going again unless I need to buy something in particular or if I'm meeting friends who live there (free lance photographer from North London).'

- 17) 'it's the fashionable part of town and I find it a bit intimidating, really (...) I don't care about that, it annoys me just that everyone is in their gear, and they like to go to fashionable bars and all that (...) I used to live in Shoreditch High Street for a short while, I mean, my girlfriend did, and it was just driving me crazy... but I'm just a miserable geek, I mean, most people enjoy it' (musician from Birmingham).

- 18) 'It's a little bit pretentious around here, but also, people are quite creative and quite arty, there is a lot of creative industries have offices around here so you get a kind of creative hip which is good and bad obviously [why i sit good and bad?] good because the guys seem to be quite hot [laughs], I don't know, just good and bad, you meet right minded people, which is good, there are unique events, good gigs happen here sometimes, music is good also in the local bars, they seem quite informed and up to date, people are very fashionable, they try very hard around here, because they are shallow' (journalist from Brixton).

- 19) 'Yeah it's a cool area, it's unpretentious, alternative in a certain way, I usually like the music that most places play around here, plus it's not as crowded as central London, people here know what to do, know pretty much what they are looking for (...), people here agree on a common liking, I like that. [How do you mean it's alternative in a certain way?] well, usually people that you find here, and this is represented in the shops, bars and clubs, it's sort of underground but not hard underground, they are not gonna play Britney Spears in a bar here, it's quite indie and that's what I like, also in the shop its quite vintage and you can find records from small labels, cloths like H&B' (student from Montreal, Canada)

- 20) 'We knew [from the guide book] that this was a special area, a bit different from the centre of London, because I like to see not only the sights, the city from an artistic point of view, but also special things such as neighbourhoods, what kind of people live in these neighbourhoods, and also immigration, how life develops, in fact here it's crazy because it's like a continent within one city, it's very interesting' (librarian from Italy)

- 21) 'London Fields, Hoxton and here are all linked, because London Fields and Dalston it's where everyone [art and design students] lives, Hoxton where everyone goes clubbing and here where everyone goes for shopping. This side of the East is like a small city, I know people who don't take the underground to go to the centre for months, whereas in other areas this doesn't happen because young people go out here anyway' (graphic design student, from London, originally from Italy).
- 22) 'I like the market, I like the fact that it's new and old at the same time, where I live it's more historical, here it's been redone and I like these new buildings... Brick Lane is nice to go for a walk, but I wouldn't live there, it's not very safe, I wouldn't feel secure' (accountant, lives in Islington)
- 23) 'I'd say it's an interesting place because, despite being in the city centre, is very different from what you can see in other areas of London, it's kind of alternative and also the architecture is very particular, the brick houses, and the contrast with the City of London, and the atmosphere is nice, the people...' (economist from West London, originally from Spain)
- 24) 'The changes taking place in this area for us are very interesting because it's like the new London tries to accept the ancient London, in a way we assimilate our past but doing new things, for example this place [the Old Truman Brewery] like very ancient but they didn't demolish it and this is very nice, its smaller but with old walls' (tourist from Spain)
- 25) 'I'm interested in the architecture, how the area developed, for example how they have used old factories and warehouses, how they have reused them and what they left inside, or how they have transformed old buildings into buildings belonging to other cultures, like we saw a building that used to be a church, then it was synagogue, and now it's a mosque, so how it transformed three times still remaining the same building' (librarian from Italy).
- 26) 'Interviewee: (...) Spitalfields market is gone, it's completely different
Interviewer: yeah? What changes have you noticed?
Interviewee: well, it's just posh, there are all chain food out there, the whole point of it was that it was all independent and individual and all kind of small and homely
Interviewer: how was it before?
Interviewee: well, it was a complete rip off then, it was people selling tack at unreasonable prices, but it was more vibey, now there is a Starbucks, there is a Nando's, you know, there is not McDonald's but there could as well be...' (tourist from Birmingham)
- 27) '[How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?]
Eclectic, bohemian, alternative area, which is different and daring, if you look at most of the shops they are different and it takes some bravery to do that, I would say it's a unique area, that's the main thing about it, it has a character that everybody knows, very different from other areas. And it's also a Bengali area, not only a artistic area, and the market is brilliant, and

the history' (engineer from North West London).

- 28) '[How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?]' never been here... it's well known for being one of the trendy places, like where you have loads of artists, people coming and going up to exhibitions, the atmosphere is very friendly in a way, they call it arty farty, so its like, you like it or you don't like it, then it's just too much (...) fashion is something which would be hard to agree with, really so obvious and, kind of, you like something but you don't buy it, and looking for something else or try to be so different, and at the end there is not much difference, because if everyone would try to be a new artist, everything would be same, I'm not so much into fashion, I don't like it so much' (young woman from acton, London, unemployed).
- 29) 'You always discover something different here, there is plenty of exhibitions...the problem is that most of the galleries in this area are a little bit hidden (...) or some others you can only see them by appointment, but it's quite eclectic' (middle-aged artist, lives in London).
- 30) 'By now everyone knows that here you can find young people, young fashion designers and new things, many of my friends live in this area and work here, those who work in fashion, so you are sure here you will find youngest shops, youngest brands, night-clubs, also the people who work here are younger, they go to have a coffee in the caf  s around here... I'm studying graphic design so I hang around with that kind of people, and I don't know why, but when I arrived in London they were all here, because 4 or 5 years ago it was an area on the edge of the city, not expensive, so like it happens everywhere people used to come here to buy or rent property, to open the first shops...' (graphic design student from London)
- 31) 'People kind of lived around here so it seemed sensible [to locate in the area], it was the place where it all seemed happening, quite cheap rent, it was the natural place to start, it wasn't like we need to choose somewhere in London' (jewellery designer)
- 32) 'It just takes a couple of brave people, really, and also, when you are so close to the City, to the centre, things are going to happen on the outskirts... We liked the fact that there were many artists, we are so close to Columbia market, to Spitalfields market, people were already interested in doing things here' (jewellery designer)
- 33) 'What I like the most is that there are no chain places, and there is a personal feeling to it, like this place for example [a bar inside the Old Truman Brewery], so comfortable, so relaxing, of course I like the fact that there is full of young people, it's a party place, and I also like the artistic feel, a place where artists live, it gives that bohemian quality (...) they were the first to change the area, before this used to be mostly a Bengali area, it's the creative people who moved in, to have a studio, because there were good transport links, now I think most of the people who live here work in the City, which is a shame I think, so, yeah, I think the creative people have shaped the area' (engineer from west London).

- 34) 'I think the area is becoming more gentrified and as a result it has lost appeal to me, like, what often happens is, a place gets trendy, the property prices move up, the people who live here can't afford to live here anymore and probably it becomes more like the same street that you find anywhere in the world, and less like an interesting different weird place (...) ten years ago [this area] was a completely different place but maybe there was nothing here ten years ago, I don't know... it's a natural... it's still of a natural process that seems to happen everywhere and all the counter cultures go somewhere else' (producer from London)
- 35) 'Five years ago you wouldn't have seen so many white people, it was more a residential Indian, Afghanistan, Bangladeshi community, but now it's more a bit of an underground, indie, vintage clothing thing, and even tourists now!' (a student from London)
- 36) '[participating with other local creative businesses in an international exhibition] was good to meet some of the other businesses in the area, because people have shops next to us and we don't really know their names (...) I would like to be more involved in a lot more events that are happening in Brick Lane as a whole, so all of the shops getting together and doing something for the week-end, I know Cheshire Street doing a late night opening for Christmas and I wish we could do a lot more stuff like that as a kind of creative community, but I think everyone is in their own little world with their shops and sometimes it's hard to break out of that, I don't know what kind of community feels there are among the shops, you know, it takes some person to organise and if you have your own business as well it's hard' (Accessories designer)
- 37) 'It's difficult for us because we are not just a shop, here we are a studio, and we sell around the world on-line, so we are not just a shop here, it's just nice for us to be in the area soaking the atmosphere, it's so young and exciting there is always something happening, street art going on or independent coffee shops, cinemas and lots of bars, it's quite nice for the young companies to be based in this area' (accessories' designer)

HOXTON/SHOREDITCH

- 38) '[How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?]
Someone who has never been here... it is a very stimulating and interesting place to be, it depends who I'm talking to, to someone who is interested in arts I would definitely advise to see it' (screenwriter from Paris)
- 39) '...either I've read something interesting on my guide book or it's an area with some fascinating story, and, because of my profession, I also like a lot to look at buildings, the architecture, the urban side of cities, so basically I like to go around and see the exterior design, the city in its various forms' (architect from South London)

- 40) 'I come here for culture (...) shops that you can get up here are a bit more fun (...) a bit arty and I come here for visual inspiration, to get inspired

[Interviewer: yes I saw you were taking pictures, what do you take pictures of?] Anything that inspires me really, just the environment, just the environment more than anything, that's what inspires me, I travel in different areas in London and get the different vibes, different environments and surroundings' (graphic designer from south London).

- 41) '[What is your impression of this area?] mixed impressions, I mean I went to Hoxton Street, there are many council houses, it's the same impression I have in many of the not so well-to-do areas in London, you have a mixture of things some like (...) and some kind of hip areas that are very interesting and very lively, for me, and generally the areas where I am walking, I just walk generally at random' (screenwriter from Paris)

- 42) 'I'm taking pictures, because I also like the graffiti part, street art, and here there's plenty of it, today for example my aim was to take pictures of some of Banksy's graffiti, but I didn't really find them, I found on Internet all the locations of his artworks and many are in Old street, I found some of them but many have been covered or deleted (...) I like to see in person things that I have seen on the books' (architect from Italy).

- 43) 'I see them trying to clean up the street, which a lot of people in the area don't want, like the aspect of this area is the art on the walls, is the graffiti, it won't have the same feel so I think people are not happy about that aspect of the council' (art gallery owner)

- 44) '[And what do you look for when you visit other areas?] something different, every area that I go is like going to a different town to go and try to go far, and different houses, I like the architecture here, and i like different bars, shops' (hairstylist from North London)

- 45) 'Every street, every corner [of London] seems to witness events and stories, so it's really a source of inspiration for me, I like to go around because looking at a corner, at a street more attentively these stories come to mind, London seems to have an infinity of this, it's a city that offers endless possibilities, I came ten years ago, the typical tour you make with your parents, instead now I'm really experiencing it, I'm discovering, in the week-ends I try to see different places (...) because there are areas that are completely different, it seems that there are one hundred different London' (architect from South London)

- 46) 'It's a classic itinerary for me, when I come only two or three days I don't go to the number one London area, Oxford street and Covent Garden, for me this is the central area because I want to see the art galleries, I'm very interested in contemporary art, and these fashion shops, by independent designers (...) we went to art galleries here, we ate bagels because that's a must do, now we will go to the bar opposite to here, we went to White Cube and various other galleries and later we will leave this area and we will go to Tate Modern' (fashion designer from Siena, Italy)
- 47) '[What made you decide to visit this particular area of London?] Here, this area, i don't know i quite like it here, I like wandering around here, and I work near here as well so I know a little bit. There is no reason to be here today rather than I like it here, I like the pubs around here, there is a nice little vibe around here, kind of like arty touch vibe, you don't get any of this in London,.. It's a bit, I don't know, its fun (...) it's just a nice atmosphere, I just like the pubs and bars, restaurants and its a bit cheaper and a bit more down to earth than the west end and the west end, you know the west end is a bit a rip off, I don't enjoy that much (graphic designer from Surrey, works in East London).
- 48) 'Well, where I spend most of my time is clearly more developed and gentrified, neighbourhoods like Chelsea and South Kensington which I know really well, there is nothing like that, I think the downside I feel comfortable here because I'm older and I have a family, but I know I can walk in any restaurant in Chelsea, whereas I don't know it about this place, I could walk in totally the wrong place and it might be a bar and it might be, you know, not suitable for me' (urban designer from Washington DC)
- 49) '[And what do you like of this area?] In comparison to West London is a bit more young, a bit less family orientated, has got lots of bars, there is a bit more of a scene than in west London which is a bit quieter' (visitor from West London, operation manager in a charity)
- 50) 'What do you like about it? Yeah, I don't know...I guess it has like a vibe and the people walking around and I don't know I just like the positive attitude ... the people that live around here, that come here and like they stick around here I guess...I don't know...I feel like...I like it' (student from France)
- 51) '[How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?] A very trendy area of London [what makes it trendy?] The people around here are all very self-conscious, very aware that they have to keep up the cool image to be around here (film student from London)

52) '[What is your first impression about the area?] I like it

[And what did you especially like about it?] The people, the bars and the atmosphere

[What about the people?] They are cool and trendy and I try to be like them

[And the bars?] They are all right as well, it's just a nice place (...) unique, quite cutting edge, rather than... say, when you are in Frankfurt for example, it's really classic and no cool instead here (...) it's cutting edge and people have pretty haircuts, this is what I like, really' (physiotherapist from Frankfurt, Germany)

53) 'I did used to really like it [this area], years ago, well I lived on Chester street off Brick Lane (..) and that was kind of before everything happened. It was a new place regenerating, it was a place for artists really, new designers little bit more off the wall things and it also had a really good night life some new bars, some of the fashion people used to come here, not that I'm bothered by that, but it was kind of really interesting, different place to come, and then now it has become really commercialised, (...) I think this has currently become a new Soho which is fine, I mean, there's lots of students in this area...It's a great environment for them to be in, very creative...it's just maybe I've become a little bit older and I just kind of moved on and.. may be just I'm looking for some quieter (...) [How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?] I think I'm a bit tainted, just because I've lived here and I know it (...) I think it's also a very intimate place as well. .. it is quite 'in', an 'in' place, I think although it's getting a bit... it used to be a very fashionable place years ago but, about may be 7 or 8 years ago, it was really, really, and then... but even just like 2 or 3 years ago it was just like quite sort of fashionable and big...but I mean, it's a noisy place, it's entertaining, there's loads of people, different cultures , different people' (designer from London)

54) '[What do you not like?] About the area... too many pretentious people...they think they are more stylish than the rest of them, better than the rest of them.

[If you could change something of this area to make it more appealing to you, what would you change?] Less of that people

[How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?]

It's a easy going area you can do anything you like , there are many tourism things to do, good place to meet people with same way of thinking,...yeah the galleries you go and meet people with same way of thinking' (Photographer from East London)

55) '[What do you know it [Hoxton] for?]' The trendy Hoxton. It's one of those areas that you would like to go out to. The fashionable crowd. Known for all the wrong reasons but...

[What do you mean by 'the wrong reasons'?] Yeah, trendy dresses. Wacky headed. Tight jeans. You know what is a Hoxton person [Interviewee's friend: A Shoreditch twaik!] Yeah, that is said quite a lot. And also they really try hard, too hard... like fashion type of students. They are the people who go to the university... So they can dress up and enjoy the cheap area of Hoxton' (music PR from London, interviewed in London Fields)

56) '[What do you not like?]' The Shoreditch mob.. just kidding! I think the area is a bit pretentious, there seems to be a certain type of people based here, and that's probably quite exclusive for other types of people' (architect from London)

57) 'I know it a bit, I know it's become more fashionable in recent years, it grew quite a lot it used to be quite poor run down area now it's fashionable, people buy flats there (teacher from York, interviewed in London Fields).

58) 'Yeah [Hoxton/Shoreditch] it's kind of near Brick Lane, we [do] a lot of gigs in Hoxton, Hoxton bar, we have gigs there, nice to hang around in the summer in Hoxton square, it's a bit wanky though, the wanky level of Hoxton square is far above the one of Broadway market, it's getting a bit much, too many guys in suits, not enough real' (product manager for a record label, interviewed in London Fields).

59) 'I think it's sort of London thing that they are all kind of looking similar in a way, I always say very Shoreditch, if you see all the designers' studios and the shops in Shoreditch, it becomes their underground standard for the creative industries around here, because I think there is a market for it, so they start to produce more similar things, because they think there is a market for it' (gallery attendant, White Cube)

60) 'I think our customers are not brand type of people, they look more at the quality, we have that kind of customers here, so we don't really go for the New Bond Street type, Gucci bag, they don't like that, East London there is a lot of creative people who also like to spend money on luxury products (...) also there is a lot of art feel here, very different from the West, I heard from her [the fashion designer who owns the shop] that when she first started her business she had a shop in Carnaby street, back then Carnaby street was a bit hippy, that's what she likes, and our customer is also like that so, the East is in a way very hippy and underground' (shop assistant, fashion designer shop)

- 61) '[Do you like the area?] Yes, it's nice, it's gentrifying as you can see, different, away from the crowd

[Why is it different?] Because you can see the buildings have a different taste, different architecture, different style, time periods compared to most parts of London which has all a similar style' (visitor from Bangkok, originally from England)

- 64) 'I like the square, I think it's very nice, and the smaller streets are obviously a lot more attractive than the bigger streets that don't have store fronts on them and nothing really to look at like Great eastern Street, Old street or.. all these coming out from the square are much more entertaining as a tourist to walk in and experience, that's not a great experience to walk on, Great eastern St' (urban designer from Washington DC)

- 65) 'Historically this area is controversial because it has always been overcrowded, the typical London with twenty people in one apartment, but now it has this colourful bits, like a design shop, a little restaurant, a trendy bar, there are spots of colour, and this square is very nice also in terms of structure, very typical of London, with a central court and buildings all around, and all the restaurants, it's very, very nice' (architect from South London)

- 66) 'I read an article in the newspaper in Germany about this area here, and I had never been before so that's why I came to have a look.

[and what did the article say?] That it's a new developing area and that there was a transformation from a former working class area where many people came from abroad from other cultures, and now they are combined, the traditional London style and the people who live here and they create a lot of art' (bookseller from Cologne)

- 67) 'Interviewer: How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?

Interviewee: I would say it's a very new part of London, it's creative and in development, all these buildings have been reconstructed or refurbished, a lot of things happen in this area, it's London and it's change.

Interviewer: If you could change something of this area to make it more appealing to you, what would you change?

Interviewee: I don't know if it is necessary to put up these restaurants which are I think very upper class, I would prefer more basic restaurants not so upper class, I don't know the English expression for this, something like... in Germany things have to go to this kind of structure like here and it also becomes a centre for people with money, and this people want to come and live here and they change this character' (bookseller from Cologne)

- 68) 'It's not about Big Ben or... London is not all about architectural sites that tourists guides say, but I think that here it has the real life and it's more interesting, you know you can't stay here [in London] just two, three or five days and come here, I mean, I wouldn't, so, but it has the real life, but it depends what people are looking for, I mean, some people like white beautiful galleries in West side and some people like a bit of roughness, young energy' (manager of a fashion designer's shop, originally from Japan).

- 69) 'When I go to Spain it often happens to me to get surprised by what I see, this is something that doesn't normally happen in London, even though I really like it, it's not a city that surprises me, I like it, I feel very comfortable, but it doesn't surprise me. Instead this is an area that surprises me, that I like to explore, that provokes curiosity in me (...) it has a human dimension, it's very authentic, cosy, I feel at home' (tourist from Italy).

- 70) 'Interviewer: Why are you located here?

Interviewee: Because I wanted to be in the centre and I asked a few artists where I should set up and they said Hackney, because it's where the culture is, it's definitely the centre of contemporary art and then there are historical reasons for that but it's really because people like' White Cube are here (art gallery owner, Shoreditch)

- 71) 'I always consider Hoxton as an example, consider that White Cube was the first gallery to open in Hoxton square and now it has generated a mushrooming of other businesses' (art gallery employee, Vyner street)

- 72) 'Interviewer: how would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?

Interviewee: now I would describe it not really up and coming anymore because it's already up, arty farty sort of place to go, lots of design studios, I don't know about the club style, there is Three, Fabric, Cargo, it's a place to go at night for sure' (graphic designer from Zurich).

- 73) 'I have a lot of memories here because I used to come here say 9 years ago and then there was (Metal Heads?) every Monday night there was a 'drum & bass' night and it was really run down, it was the place to go out, and it was cheap, a lot cheaper than anywhere else, and it's still a bit arty but it has changed, it was a shock coming here, now it's all made up it looks richer it used to be derelict here now it's totally different (...) the council should make sure they keep cheap houses or cheap spaces and give the artists a possibility because they add a lot to the area, I think it should be a mix of everything because it can't be too run down, like it used to be quite a scary place, and now not anymore, but you have to mix you have to integrate everything' (graphic designer from Zurich)

- 74) 'I did use to really like it, years ago, well I lived on Chester street off Brick Lane, I've also lived just off Carnaby Road and that was kind of before everything happened. It was a new place regenerating, it was a place for artists really, new designers little bit more off the wall things and it also had a really good night life some new bars, some of the fashion people used to come here, not that I'm bothered by that, but it was kind of really interesting different place to come and then now it has become really commercialised, I think, you know, for a place to regenerate to redevelop you need business, you need new restaurants and bars and whatever, but I kind of think some type of places are too overwhelmed. I think this has currently become a new Soho which is fine I mean there's lots of students in this area...It's a great environment for them to be in, very creative...it's just maybe I've become a little bit older and I just kind of moved on and.. may be just I'm looking for some quieter' (designer from London).

- 75) 'I think they [creative industries] did great here , I think there is a lot fashion companies here, which let in the bars, because the way the bar is designed creates the sort of buzz that certain people would come to, and I think little independent shops as well I mean its kind of very new designers lot of creativity here and that obviously brings in certain person and it produces a certain person, you know, that shops lives works drinks around here, so its very important' (designer from London, p.54)

76) 'Interviewer: Do you know that there are many creative industries around here? Interviewee: Yes, you can feel it immediately, you can see it on the signs on the advertisements, tags, trash bins and walls, I mean, you can really feel there is some creative movement but we are very sensitive for stuff like this because we are creative persons as well' (shoe designer from Hong Kong)

77) '[Do you know that there are many creative industries around here?]
mmmh

[Are the important to you/to the area?] No, not for me, I'm not really a very creative person, she is very creative, for me it doesn't make a difference.. but for the area, yes you get all these young creative types coming in, whether this is a good thing or a bad thing I don't know' (visitor from West London, works in a charity)

78) 'Are you in contact with the other galleries and other businesses? Yes, definitely, even with some other galleries we collaborate sometime, everyone is always helping each other out whether be sometimes other businesses use our space for events, or we go to them and ask if we can use, anything from the ladder to the fax machine...it's a very family feeling especially on the street' (Art Gallery1)

79) 'Interviewer: What are the assets of this area for your business?

Interviewee: I think it's the type of people that work and live here, and I wouldn't say it's really the rents, I think the advantage is the attitude, I mean there is an entrepreneurial attitude here, and so you can set up something, you can be unconventional it doesn't really matter, you couldn't have a gallery like this in... well, you couldn't have it in any place in West London because the rent would be too high and because the attitude.. it's more conventional, whereas here there are thousands of artists so you have the constant in-flock of new people and new ideas, people that are in east London' (art gallery2)

80) 'I think we could do more joined marketing, that's the really good thing that I've tried to do because if we can create the draw, that was the point of the map, individually you won't be successful, people will not come for an hour to see this, sometimes they would, but not very often, but they'll come for a day to see a whole neighbourhood and by the way have something really great to eat, (...) there is no mentality of collaboration, and I think, I see it, I don't see it building, I see it declining, the collaboration, I don't see the collaboration building, I think with the economic downturn people are going to be more focused on their own business, and so they don't see the advantage' (art gallery2)

- 81) 'For us definitely people coming here looking for art artists, it helps us in clients purposes, in creative purposes I think because there is still many resources that you can use in this area, whether be the artists that work and sell in this area, the creatives in this area, or if we need someone to come and photograph, just the resources here for what we are doing are completely perfect' (Art Gallery1)
- 82) 'Every summer we have that even in the whole district including us as a shop it's a very strong bond so whenever this kind of project happens than we tend to get involved as well, it's not just work as a shop space it's more like people feeling the community, it's just all things happening together, it's just the people in the area trying to do something about the street or about the area, which is pretty special, I don't know how to explain more the relation between the shop and the street, but we are making a new website and trying to make links to all the shops on the street so it makes sense for us why we should be here, but it's still just in project' (fashion designer shop)
- 83) 'I say why don't we collaborate? I think there is tremendous potential but no integrated policy, there is no vision and nobody wants to collaborate and it's not Hackney borough's priority at all, it was but for only about ten minutes (so what's their priority?) joblessness, worklessness, poverty, illiteracy, and they don't believe tourism is a way out of that' (art gallery2)
- 84) 'I've heard there is one shop that is available, an empty space, and what I've heard is that the council preferred to have an estate agent there, they don't want any other shop, that's how the council thinks, the land and space that makes money, actually this is.. not every single shop but a lot of the space here is run by the council, so we pay rent to the council, so in that sense they examine what type of business people are doing, so in a way I think the council helped the regeneration of this street and make things happen, but now what I heard was the wanted a real estate to be there, which is really scary' (fashion shop)
- 85) 'It's the conflict of Tower Hamlets and Hackney, because the territory is segmented between two territories that have different policies, and you've got funding constraints (...) [shows the map with borough borders] so Monica used to be here and now she is there, so now she can't participate in our Hackney meetings, and White Chapel is in Tower Hamlets, Barbican is in city of London, so that's a different issue, they have got different funding, and then you got Islington, but the big issue is between Tower Hamlets and Hackney (...) and Hackney has its own set of policies, Tower Hamlets has its own set of policies, but if you look at art it's across borders and those two won't cooperate (art gallery)'

LONDON FIELDS

- 86) '[How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?]' I would say classic inner London, cosmopolitan, mixed, different ethnic groups, all sorts of people. [In what way is it classic?]' The fact that it's such a mixed community, it's typical of inner London not the suburbs (teacher from York)'
- 87) 'I live (...) west of London Fields and I walk here from there past the Lido, in London Fields it's a different area, different type of people depending on where they are, like young local kids that hang out in one bit, then mid 20 to mid 30 up and coming young trendy people clustering in one area near Broadway market... it's nice that it's not so so segregated, I mean, everyone gets along, but white middle class people kind of cluster together and the others on the other end, it's like they don't have so much to share with each other, which is kind of a shame really (ceramic artist1)'
- 88) 'let's talk about Hoxton and Hackney, because around here there is also the City and Liverpool street that seem to be completely the opposite... I like how it is changing actually and they mix together, but I don't think they mix together at all, the other day we went to Broad Street market in Hackney, no, Broadway market, and definitely its kind of gentrified, you have city council buildings all around and you see that the poor people don't come to the bars, same way this is a nice place and all around is pretty poor, and these poor people they don't come here, and the same way I had lunch at some kind of Turkish restaurant in one of the streets over there and no one from this part, the galleries part, would go there' (screenwriter from Paris, interviewed in Hoxton).
- 89) 'If I visit the UK I tend to always stay in London, because why move to London and then not enjoy London (...) I just walk around. Look for the vibe, restaurants, pubs and how much it has gentrified it is in the last 12 years that I have lived here (...)
- [And do you like this area?]' Yeah! I love it. Not just it. I love London because it's full of loads of different areas. There are certain areas which I don't like. Really don't like. Bits of the west. I don't like Chelsea, where everyone is full of themselves. But, I just like London it's got so many different areas. But, there are very few bits that I don't like' (events exam coordinator, from London)'
- 90) '[Does it [London Fields] remind you of any other area of London?]' I think the only parallel that you could draw is the Hampstead area which is like countryside area. But then it's not arty like this area' (music PR from London)

- 91) '[Does this area remind you of any other part of London?] Which other market do I go to.. Hmm.. Columbia Road on the corner. A similar road with a big market on Sunday. Big market on Sunday. You can walk it up...' (musician from London)
- 92) '(...) there is a kind of shushi wanky market on Saturday, it's like Borough market but it's smaller, but I don't really like that actually, I prefer when the market is not there [why?] I just think it sells a lot of crap, overpriced crap (...) Borough market is more comfortable [so you come more often other days than Saturday?] Yes, Sunday is a good day, because the Lido is very nice on Sunday, when it's sunny, and there is no market going on which is good [Anything else you do not like?] I don't like the Broadway market (...) it feels a bit too wanky, too much central London, the park is nice I love everything else except Broadway market (product manager for a record label, from London)'
- 93) '[Do you like this area?] Yes I love it, I love the diversity of it as well (...) I'm creative industry and she is creative industry, it's nice being around people who are creative and that's what I mean by the diversity, it's also lots of people who have interesting stories, interesting jobs you learn about (woman from London, works in advertising)''
- 94) 'What do I look around? What do I actually enjoy? That is probably some art and music. And for finding inspiration. I think. [Because you are an artist?] Yeah! I am a graphic designer. That's the kind of thing... And also like natural areas like natural parks and stuff like that... Yeah! That's the kind' (graphic designer from London).
- 95) 'If they are loners they shouldn't come here, but if they are relaxed, if they enjoy different senses, you know, different things for the senses, it's colourful, you have got different smells, but when it mixes it doesn't really overpower, and just looking at the organic foods and stuff, and just window shopping at the clothes I can't wear, they are too small which makes me feel good because it's too pricy anyway' (visitor from east London, works in a school).
- 96) 'I think it's really good. Because I came here before and I went through Hackney. It's so, so different all around. And then you go around this area and it's like a small, it's like a small highland really. It's so different. It's got a really nice atmosphere. Yeah! It's really good (...) It's a completely different atmosphere. You walk down there and it's quirky beside down there. Its just.. Hmmm.. Its completely different. Its got life... It's little... ha... its got life (graphic designer from London,)'

- 97) '[Now I will tell you the name of some other London areas, I would just like to know if you know them and why. (...) London Fields?] Yes, I live there, it's a lot better than here [Spitalfields], because part of the crowd who used to live here moved to London Fields to have more neighbourhood life, here it's much closer to the city, more people get here' (graphic design student from London, originally from Italy, interviewed in Spitalfields)'
- 98) '[Does this area remind you of any other areas in London or other cities?] Deptford, yeah, because you can still see the current of the normal London, you know, what it was. That's what I like about it. It's got a lot of new stuff, but it's not obliterated, it's not completed, so yeah, Deptford (events exam coordinator from London)'
- 99) 'I love this area. It's really pretty. It's quiet. I think it's quite old. Oldy woldy, quite original out here even though you have got those great flats here. But for the most part... You don't feel you are in London as well. Somewhere far away (music PR from London)'
- 100) 'And how would you describe it to someone who has never been here? It's interesting. It's got lot of stuff to look at, even if you don't do anything. And the other thing is that people in London always worry not to take their cameras out because it might get pinched. But here one feels really, really safe. It feels safe, friendly and approachable. And that's interesting, it feels like you are in a local village. It feels like a town. It definitely feels like that (events exam coordinator from London)'
- 101) 'London Fields, Hoxton/Shoreditch and here are [Spitalfields] all linked, because London Fields and Dalston it's where everyone [art and design students] lives, Hoxton where everyone goes clubbing and here where everyone goes for shopping. This side of the East is like a small city, I know people who don't take the underground to go to the centre for months, whereas in other areas this doesn't happen because young people go out here anyway' (graphic design student, from London, interviewed in Spitalfields).
- 102) '[What do you like about it?] It's just very very relaxed, the pace is so much slower than it is in the city or where I work, I love the market, the food is great and if you need to have lunch and breakfast, and the people are just so relaxed, I really like it' (journalist from London)
- 103) '[How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?] Hackney, don't go! No, it's lovely, you have got Broadway market which is really lovely and chilled out atmosphere

and there is nice bars, they are quite welcoming as well, and then you have little family places and organic food places, which is really appealing' (musician/film-maker from South London).

- 104) 'Hmm... The main thing is the amount of young people that live here. And they all seem to be creative people. So, it has a nice buzz around it. It also feels safe even though it is in the middle of Hackney. It feels a like bubble of some young, creative... And, sometimes, in some ways it's a bit too much. An ultra-trendy... Wanna be creative places. But, as compared to the place where I live [New Cross] it's quiet, nice there is a university there, creative people there. Yeah! As, I was saying earlier there is nothing like this area really. The amount of young people concentrated in one area' (photography technician from London).
- 105) [And how would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?] I would describe it like a gentrified area. Somewhere that's got like independent cafés. And a nice place to come and hang around. It will be a good tip to give someone who is in London for a week. Come here which is off the tourist trail. Yeah! That's it' (photography technician from London).
- 106) 'I don't know. I find it's like an extension of Hoxton or Shoreditch where out of your door it's like a catwalk you have to be dressed. And I can't be bothered I am older now I'm not 21...now I like to go somewhere that is just more grown up like Stoke Newington for example I think that that is quite an extension of here but... (visitor from London, under 30, film distribution).
- 107) 'Yes I love it, I love the diversity of it as well, it's funny, it's really diverse in the way people are individual but in another way it's very contrived, people are all the same it's quite...I like dressing up and looking nice and stuff and people here are the same, quite fashion, so I guess it's the same, there are a lot of good looking guys, but people have fun' (visitor from East London, works in advertising).
- 108) '[What did you not like?] Maybe there is this thing where people are a bit superficial a bit posy, that kind of thing but it's interesting to come down and observe that
- 109) [why is it interesting?] Just to see how people live here what is their fashion or their lifestyle (...) [How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?] I'd say it's like, set up, gentrified, probably a cool place to hang out if you are into that sort of thing [what sort of thing?] You know, I don't know how to describe it, indie kind of scene, a particular scene' (personal assistant from Seven Oaks, UK)
- 110) '[What do you like about it?] The atmosphere is artistic, many

people into design and crazy things, it's my cup of tea, whereas if I go to the City you see the City boys, the people here are good people, and the way of dressing and everything, I do like everything (architect from London)'

111) '[What do you like?] Hmm... the fact that fresh and creative, because there are new ideas, young elements, enthusiastic, who want to do something new and creative (manager from London,).'

112) '[What do you look for when you visit other areas?] water, music, beautiful people, fun things to do [what do you mean by water?] canals, rivers, swimming pools, lakes and anything else that is wet and moving (...) I was seeing a friend and I like the lock and the Lido is here, I might go and swim in the Lido, or I might not, I'm not here for the shopping I'm here for the beauty of Broadway market, I just felt like being a bit cockey and wander around the market, it's nice [why is it nice?] Because it's near the canal and it's near-by the gasworks which looks wicked, I like the gasworks (...) it [the gasworks] featured in the cover of the latest Editors album, and a local artist took the picture that was used in the album cover, so they are local history, here you go, that's why I came' (product manager for a record label, from London'

113) 'It's kind of... nerdiness in a way, it's so specific, the shops are so small and specialised, in either vintage from the 60s or chocolate shops, or Indian and Korean restaurants, in this area you find everything but not in a very commercial way' (sales assistant from East London)

114) 'It's very East London. The market and stuff. It's got nice shops and there are nice small restaurants and not chains, independent' (visitor from North London)

115) '[and what about London Fields, do you know it?] I'm going there later, lots of friends of mine live there, it's so different from what it was fifteen years ago, when it was hot Hackney, there are lots of Georgian houses not block flats like in Deptford, there are two societies there, the Afro-Caribbean people and the people who moved there recently, who are mostly young professionals' (engineer from West London, interview conducted in Spitalfields).

116) 'What do you like about it? Hackney has got a lot of green spaces which is really nice, lots of trees and nice big buildings and houses, and it's really cosmopolitan there is a lot of different coloured people, you can dress how you want, no one really judges you, that's about it (...) [How would you describe this area to someone who has never

been here?]) [laughs] Hackney, don't go! No, it's lovely, you have got Broadway market which is really lovely and chilled out atmosphere and there is nice bars they are quite welcoming as well, and then you have little family places and organic food places, which is really appealing (film maker from South London)'

117) '[if you could change something of this area to make it more appealing to you, what would you change?] I don't know really, I don't think I would change anything because even the dangers of Hackney are quite a bit charming (web editor from London)'

118) '[how would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?] Probably sort of non-touristy, well, less touristy than the centre, it depends if you are talking to someone who comes from London or someone who comes from abroad, I would probably tell them about touristy artiness around the galleries, the great shoes in Broadway market, probably the areas not here but not too far from here where you can go out at night and generally they are, like, atmosphere (journalist from London)'

119) 'Its just slightly outside normal touristy London. Quite local. You can get to see a lot of young families here which is quite cool. Maybe you can meet quite a few artists, creative people as well... The area got a quite a mixture of families and creative people (musician from East London).

120) 'I actually I used to live not very far away from here, just five years ago. And I have seen how it's kind of developed and is now become so popular. Even five years ago it was quite popular. But now it's amazing... All these people here (photography technician from south London).

121) 'people complain that the old traditional pubs get done up and become very expensive with expensive food and people who have drunk there for 20 years and they can't afford to go there, but I probably like them and I wouldn't want to go there the way they were before so it's kind of hypocritical' (ceramic artist1).

122) '[How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?] Hmm... I bit shishi (...) the closest would be Deptford market but not as (...). I like it there. You know I think the market there is ready to become like this. Because I know people who live there and they say they are going there to get food as well, whereas before it was more just like a normal market. No it's great. It's more a market for the normal people, this is more touristy. I went there because I wanted to buy food to cook at home. I wouldn't go there to

have coffee, it's different. They say it every five years, it's going to happen, Deptford is going to be regenerated, but then it doesn't. Is that a bad thing, I don't know. But it's very nice they have got lots of food, I find very cheap like second hand clothes, it's not as civilised as here, you know, it's all kind of messy. And you can get a lot of junk food around the corner and now there is this Southern-East train and they are trying to turn it into a café, that should be interesting. You find there a lot of local people. And here I think you find a lot of people that somehow are locals but they haven't lived here for that long. Maybe they have lived here for a few years but Deptford is more people that have lived there, like, forever' (graphic designer from Kilburn, London)

- 123) 'I think it [London Fields] has changed with the Broadway market, few years ago it was not so busy and now with the fact they have the market on is absolutely (...) really changing. I thought there were more middle class people moving in, a bit older, and now there is more young people coming in just hanging around in the market and not necessarily buying all the expensive food and stuff, just kind of hanging out really' (ceramic artist1)

- 124) 'Interviewer: and are you happy about that [the area becoming more popular]?

Interviewee: I think it's just inevitable really, I don't know if it's a good thing, there is a lot to be said, people complain that the old traditional pubs get done up and become very expensive with expensive food and people who have drunk there for 20 years and they can't afford to go there, but I probably like them and I wouldn't want to go there the way they were before so it's kind of hypocritical (ceramic artist1)'

- 125) 'I know it's really bad, but I think gentrification in a way can bring up the standard for a lot people, in fact, I know that you get the old school that gentrification (?) but everybody wants nice stuff if they have the option to have it, like a posh organic shop is something that will pay their staff and treat them a bit better then a dodgy pub or something. Do you know what I mean? No I do like it, I think it's a good thing (events exam coordinator from London)'

- 126) 'I just like the fact how much it has changed in the last few years. When I moved to London like 12 years ago, there was bits of it that were gentrified. But nothing like now! Now it's just full of beautiful people! And there are probably three quarters of the art studios of the entire country around here (events exam coordinator from London)'

- 127) 'I was going to say it doesn't make a lot of difference to me what area I'm in, but then again, walking here, walking down the road, and seeing interesting things, like street art of some weird poster people

have put up, which happens a lot around here, seeing things that is quite inspiring and makes you start thinking about what you can do and you want to be more creative or just seeing people around that look interesting, you know, cool, puts you more in the mood for working and being creative yourself, you know, it's just a very nice area and definitely it makes you sort of inclined to be creative I don't really know many creative people working in this area but...' (ceramic artist 1)

128) '[What are the assets of this area for you as an artist?] The people, if you go in a café you meet different people, quite creative, advertising agency people, designers, performers, so if you go with your friends and then they introduce you, I think that kind of knowing somebody interesting (...) I like to have connections with people but in terms of business I've never worked with somebody, no, I did few times but I don't really have connections with people, but if I go to fashion I could so there is a chance, many possibilities that I could make more connections, but maybe not in an organic way... more informally' (ceramic artist 2)

129) 'Interviewer: are you much in contact with the other galleries, beside the First Thursdays event?

Interviewee: not really, we meet at art fairs and you can't meet people because you are on the art exhibit, but when you go around you just bump into people, but we don't have tea together put it that way, I mean some of them, but not all

Interviewer: so the fact of having many galleries clustered together is more an advantage for the customers than for the galleries?

Interviewee: yeah, yeah, it's sort of strange because a hairdresser next to another hairdresser is bad, but for us is good, the more galleries there are it becomes more vibrant and, you know, even if the collectors are not particularly familiar with the galleries they are passing, if they have got 3 minutes they can come in (art gallery 2)'

130) 'The reason why we located here is that Vyner street was already an established contemporary art destination, (...) we liked the idea that here there was already some traffic of people such as collectors and curators who come here especially to see the exhibitions, this is a very important thing because obviously in Shoreditch there was a constant traffic of both residents and people who worked in the area (...) but it was more spread, there are galleries in Hoxton and Shoreditch but they are less concentrated, instead here they are concentrated in one street, Vyner street has become a destination and we wanted to take advantage of this' (art gallery1)'

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131) 'I'm quite interested in culture interested in experiencing architecture and nice place to be its quite it about finding nice things, experience new things that I haven't experienced before I'm not especially interested in shopping or anything like that but it is about being somewhere that I haven't been the novelty of being in a new environment that I haven't enjoyed before' (Art Director from South London).

132) 'I would only come here to see my friends I wouldn't go here to go to a gig or something like that, I don't really know if there is anything like that going on here, I'm sure there is but I just come here to see friends' (lawyer from Richmond, UK).

133) '[What do you think of the area?]

I like it, I'm enjoying it, and I'm very surprised and really didn't expect this

[What did you expect?]

I really couldn't tell you what I expected, but I dint expect something that was so, I like it here, quite relaxed laidback, a lot of different stuff going on, quite creative, good atmosphere and I'm very pleasantly surprised' (assistant manager in a theatre, from London)

134) '[How would you describe this area [London Fields] to someone who has never been here?]

Hmm... I bit shishi, the closest (...) would be Deptford (...) I like it there. You know, I think the market there is ready to become like this. Because I know people who live there and they say they are going there to get food as well whereas before it was more just like a normal market. No it's great. It's more a market for the normal people, this is more touristy. I went there because I wanted to buy food to cook at home. I wouldn't go there to have coffee, it's different (...) But it's very nice they have got lots of food, I find very cheap like second hand clothes, it's not as civilised as here, you know, it's all kind of messy. (...) You find there a lot of local people. And here [London Fields] I think you find a lot of people that somehow are locals but they haven't lived here for that long. Maybe they have lived here for a few years but Deptford is more people that have lived there, like, forever' (graphic designer interviewed in London Fields)

- 135) '[How would you describe this area to someone who never been here?]

Residential, quiet, I don't really know, it's ok (...) it doesn't really have any real point of interest (...) I think it is just suburban residential area, very typical of any outside of a big city, I would say it's like that' (dentist from West London).

- 136) 'Apart from being here [at the Laban Centre] we've been out to dinner a few times, into a couple of restaurants in Greenwich, we went to Deptford once, which is slightly the two areas are very different, in comparison Greenwich is quite nicer and Deptford is quite rough, you can tell that from when you are walking along the street (...) The buildings are pretty run down and the people, sounds really bad, but it seems like, I don't know, it just seems quite eerie and dull, you know what I mean, it's dark and not a bright area at all' (Laban student 2)

- 137) 'It's quite a welcoming area, I mean like, we haven't had any trouble and there is so many of us, I thought we might have a bit more trouble than what we've had, but everyone seems quite friendly, I think compared to some places we could have been based, this is nice in comparison, I don't think it's horrible, I wouldn't say it's amazing, it's not like town, a nice area in town, it's standard' (Laban student 2)

- 138) '[If you had to describe this area to someone who never been here, how would you describe it?]

I would say not typical, not the thing you think about London when they say London, but it's quite good if you don't have enough money to live in the centre of London, and it's not so stress, it's quiet, it's hip and relaxed, and for me the river it's quite close, it's so beautiful, you can go for a walk without people' (visitor from Spain)

'[mmh, one month and a half, and what have you been doing and visiting in this area during this month and a half?]

In this area, really not much because, here you can see, when you come to London you want to see the centre of London but here I think it's a good area to live, it's cheap compared to the centre of London and I didn't have too much money to go to the centre' (visitor from Spain).

- 139) ‘You can go into the main part of London and see what everyone else sees there, cool, but coming here you see things you would never see, that a lot of people wouldn’t see, the graffiti around here this pretty cool you can catch it on buildings just the old buildings, this area in general

[How would you describe the area to someone who hasn’t been here?]
Poverty, dilapidated (...) lots of different things that you might be in, art scene creative hidden’ (waitress from Canada)

- 140) ‘I think Greenwich is a really nice actually (...) but Deptford’s not as nice, it’s a bit more, I don’t know, not rough, its not as welcoming as Greenwich is, Greenwich is a bit more chilled with nicer places

[Is there something you like about Deptford or nothing at all?]
Oh no, I did like it, during the day I love it, it’s got the attitude different cultures and its constantly mixing but at night time it’s a big dodgy’ (Laban Student 1, from North Davon)

- 141) ‘[How did you find this area different from other areas you’ve seen in London?]

A lot older, like the oldest part of town not as posh as central London that we have gone to (...) a lot friendlier people in the smaller areas of town, everyone seems to know each other which is cool and everyone wants you to meet everyone, so that really cool’ (waitress from Canada)

- 142) ‘In the beginning of the year I was not sure what all these little streets, how it spreads over, all the multinational people, a big change, and then I realised this kind of people they really lived here, they were not tourists (...) I really like this kind of.. how do you say... real people’ (student from Berlin)

- 143) ‘[Does it remind you of any other areas of London or other cities?]
Um it reminds me a bit of, sort of, Hoxton and Shoreditch ten years ago before they sort of got really gentrified, other cities, well it does feel like slightly More of a village feel, it does sort of feel edge of the city’ (marketing officer from East London)

- 144) ‘[Does the area remind you of any other areas of London, or other cities that you know?]

No, I’m picking up a community thing here, so it’s the other areas of London that has got a pretty community thing going on (...) we might hit some little villages of towns little pockets in London where they have got almost like little villages’ (assistant manager in a theatre,

from London)

- 145) 'I think Deptford as a community is kind of... it seems negative but, I mean, it exists in its own right, kind of people don't open, I mean, don't go outside so much, it has got its strong character, which is good and bad, especially for the young people because it can make people feel that stepping outside is a big deal, but it's actually so close to central London, 7 minutes to London Bridge they say, but it is really close but you do feel you are in another world, it's lively, very lively, very vibrant (...)it has got people who have been here all their lives, from whatever background they are, people from different parts of the world, it definitely has its own character, very creative place as well, and so colourful' (woman recently employed at the Albany)
- 146) 'It's very historical and very characterful, and very kind of non-conformist, that's kind of the idea of it, if you go to Deptford High street there is no chains there, no Starbucks (...) also the premises are owned by the people that own the shops, so you can find things that you can't find anywhere' (local photographer)
- 147) '[Can you tell me a bit more about what you especially like about the area?] Like a big change, there isn't the big store that everybody knows, it's more independent little kind of stores local people go to, I really like that they try to get more art scene here, art galleries and little art studios and there is this market I like to go to, and the park (...) Like multinational, multicultural, not that over-owned by big chains, big brand names, small streets, local people' (student from Berlin)

- 148) ‘Well particularly the area that we passed there’s a lot in it, there’s a real sense of artist community and sort of like feel a lot of artist living in the area and working in this area and that is quite interesting but also it feels quite run down in some ways but also feels like it might be improving like its regenerating, and that’s quite interesting but I kind of feels like its a vibrant place (...) [So you think that there are many artists and creative industries important to the area?] I think it makes it, it certainly makes it appealing to me it makes me want to come and explore it more, but I think I wouldn’t be interested in coming here if that wasn’t there and I think its interesting because does mean that the people that are here increases the mix that your getting a real mix of people that are living and working here in the high streets and markets and your also getting people out of the area coming into it and be involved the arts and creative side of it, it does feels its all adding the colour and vibrancy’ (visitor from South London)
- 149) ‘[...Deptford?] Yeah, people who come from London call it ‘low life city’, it’s mostly known for people who smoke drugs, crack, cocaine, it’s one of the poorest areas of London, I think it has a maritime history, they used to build ships there, it’s changing now some friends of mine that have a lot of money just bought a house there, by the river. [and what about London Fields, do you know it?] I’m going there later, lots of friends of mine live there, it’s so different from what it was fifteen years ago, when it was hot Hackney, there are lots of Georgian houses not block flats like in Deptford, there are two societies there, the Afro-Caribbean people and the people who moved there recently, who are mostly young professionals’ (engineer from West London, interview conducted in Spitalfields).
- 150) ‘(...) rough and dangerous if you don’t know it, but when you get to know the place it’s like any other place, if you know it, you become quite comfortable, the environment is nice, the shops are very nice, they’ve got the right kind of food that I would tend to buy and eat, and there are people from my own country just generally nice and cheap place to live and very central to travel into London (...) In the night so when you walk past the market you find a lot of teenagers hanging around some drunk kicking bottles but I guess you find that anywhere in London (...) [And how would you describe the area to someone who’s never been here?] Very cosmopolitan and very different and I guess if you are not used to, I think people prefer to live in rough areas, they associate it with to Peckham and Brixton, have you been there, cause I don’t think it is anything like Peckham or Brixton, I think its much more calmer to live (project manager from South East London)
- 151) ‘Yes, actually Brittany one of the girls who works here took us down this one back road and its a whole bunch of arts studios and metal workings, we didn’t go into any of them cause it was closed but

we saw the outside of them, under the fridge thing, I don't really know which way we went any more, but most of them were closed cause we did it quite early into the morning we just saw them as we were, we were exploring' (Canadian tourist 1)

152) 'My friend [previous quote] was saying about going to the factories by the Creekside and peeping into the art studio, and what else did we see, several of them down the way, with a place called seven man, were doing an art show we didn't get to see [Is it important to you the fact that there were these art studios?] Yes, I think without the art and without the people here that make it art I don't think this side of town would be the same that it is, that I've experienced, so it was very important to me have that I accessed to that so easy, cause without that it I'm sure it would have just been dirty, wouldn't be as lifelike, but cause there's that creative element to it' (Canadian tourist 2)

153) 'I'm trying to think about a photographic project about that transition that is happening now, to get, hopefully, to get this kind of half neglected and half up market kind of situation so you have the (...) which has been neglected, because it was pretty bad several years ago, I worked at Goldsmiths for twelve years so I know the area since then, it was pretty rough, it was, not desirable at all, in New Cross as well, and in these twelve years has just changed, so I would like to take the project from that and involve the music scene as well, and other things' (local photographer)

154) '[How would you describe this area to someone who has never been here?] It can be quite... depending on people's sensibility is quite rough and ready and un-camped and quite interesting because of the character of the people, the people that are here, it has a lot of qualities that make people don't like it, it doesn't have the manicured order to it, so for instance I think it's obviously not like West London, not like King's Road it's not Chelsea, it's not full of nice bars and restaurants, so a lot of people that would like to find a nice place to eat and drink they wouldn't necessarily find it here the trendy wine bars and trendy restaurants we don't have that yet, I think we will do, I think there is still some years but it's a very unpretentious place and I think that is what I really really like, if you want to see a bit of London that is not spoiled it's here, but it does have some problems every part of the regeneration (...) (local artist and art gallery owner)

155) 'real London, I'd say, it's real London without all the corporates who haven't been in yet to make it soulless, its got soul, I think and it does feel that its probably is an area where there needs to be some money spent on it, it's nice, its got character' (visitor from east London, works in marketing).

156) 'I suppose what I like is the proximity to the river very peaceful, mixture between old and new what I like is the whole spectrum of new buildings or business to what we are connected to here the studio art and then around the corner you will have a very old building, its very surprising to see very old, extremely old buildings, there's one back there that is built in the 1500 so that made me quite excited and then next to that is the new council houses with new offices (civil engineer from South London)

157) '[And anything you didn't like?] Ok, maybe the river, we didn't like that a little bit dirty and mainly the river because we passed it 3 or 4 times while we were walking, not that nice [If you could change something in this area to appealing to you?]

Definitely, do something about the river, I don't know if its just because its been hot, but there is no water and as it was my first time here I'm not really sure how it would be during winter , mainly at least there was water (dentist from London)

158) 'Like some of the High street looks a bit scruffy in parts it looks like there's not much money in the area, but that sort of adds to the charm as well, but my friends that live here said it can be a bit scruffy a bit of a mess around a bit smelly so yeah... but other than that I hear it's a very nice area (marketing officer from East London, p.6)'

159) 'people will not want to visit somewhere, there is a lot of litter on the street, first get that cleaned up, that's not nice at all quite dirty probably do that, I don't know, I've heard this and don't know for a fact that there is a lot of crime around the area possibly that, try and sort it out (student from London)'

160) 'Its much more popular than I thought, I thought between Canada water and Greenwich was nothing but industrial estates and there are a lot of very vibrant council houses and activates football and playgrounds and safe feel to it, a lot of pubs, bingo hall a lot of amenities by the looks of things and here where we are now [Creekside] is a lot of development going on in terms of riverside development' (civil engineer from South London)

- 161) ‘Certainly when I first moved into this area [ten years ago] they were already talking of this part of London as the new East End, we still haven’t got there yet, by a long way, but there are a lot people that think that there is enough creative talent here to do that, we just don’t have the galleries yet.

[So ten years ago it was already a creative area?] Yes I would say so
[And has it been growing?] Yeah, unfortunately some of the old buildings have gone, inevitably, so that always makes it difficult for artists to stay in any area but there is still very much a strong population of artists (...) I think that the area hasn’t changed a great deal in the ten years I’ve been here, I think there were a lot of people saying this area would be the new Hoxton, and they were saying that when I first moved here ten years ago, and there are people that are still saying that, I don’t know the way it will be, but it’s still a long way to go, it’s just a slow process I think’ (local artist/art gallery owner)

- 162) ‘[Does this area remind you of any other areas in London or in other cities?] Maybe sort of Shoreditch area about 6 or 7 years ago. I suppose, also a little bit....

[Why?] Just ‘cause there’s more art things happening and there’s more interesting bars and cafes for me, but I think other than that, it also reminds me of kind of the beginnings of Finsbury park because the sort of shops, lots of fruit and vegetable shops, gift shops, that kind of thing, it makes the place very safe’ (visitor from London, works in a museum)

- 163) ‘If you walk around where there is the train line (...) you can see in the arches there used to be a cab garage and that sort of thing, now there are two galleries there, very nice looking galleries, it’s been happening for some time, very slowly, and in other places as well, restaurants and tapas bar, and the pubs and the music, it’s sort of maturing now, it’s been happening for some time now, very slowly, but now it’s going to get more mature I’d say, which means for us in a few years everyone elsewhere because we cannot afford it anymore

[So you are not so happy about it?] No, I’m quite happy, actually I think this is the ideal time to be in a place like this, because it’s not compromised and it’s already living on its own as well, and in so many years ahead it won’t be like that anymore it will be un-payable and hectic as well, but for the time being the opposite, I like it, it’s a shame you can’t roll it back’ (local photographer II)

- 164) ‘It would be cool [more networking within the artists’ community] if it happened very very naturally, because a lot of the time I think you know the fact that there is this model of Shoreditch, like people having, you know, made a lot of money, lots of property going up because that’s like a model now, I mean, again, it’s walking on a fine line, there is Creative Lewisham agency, they call it creative process

now, and they are great, you know they really help parties (...) but at the same time, their underlying inspiration behind making Deptford really great is a kind of social regeneration, and that's great if it just happens naturally and I've been to quite a few meetings where they go like 'we'll make Deptford great...' (local artist/musician)

165) '[And can you see it [tourism development] growing?] Yes, especially this year there has been a big change from last year, it speeded up [Why in your opinion?] Well, if you are kind of romantic you may say that things are going well and everyone likes it, if you are a bit cynical you can say that the developers are putting money into the region to sell and make some more money [So is it working?] Yes, it's working, they are putting a lot of money in the area to try to make it even more trendy as possible and that has an impact [How are they doing it?] Well, financing projects, like there is a bar in Deptford high street there is a bar, like an old bar, like the Godfather, they put money to put half of the finance to put a train wagon there, and a very nice café in there, so that's their money, they created a website which promotes artists, just a kind of window if you like, a website where we can put our work and a competition and behind there is their money and so on, and so...[So it's just the developers doing all this?] I don't actually know the numbers, but I think so because I don't really see the Council putting so much money (...) they want to create this creative market now (...) but again, this creative market is an initiative from the same company (...) they do this kind of initiatives, so they are behind these things, behind the train, behind the arts market, behind other things around (...) It's a creative company that somehow got hooked up with the developers and they managed to make good use of the money that the developers somehow made available, they didn't convince them to do it, but they made good use of it' (local photographer II)

166) '[When you decided to move here did you know that there were other artists?] Well, I chose here for practical reasons, for example from where I live it's easy to commute, it is a lot cheaper here to rent in north London, but I think since I've been here I've learnt a lot more about the area, and I think it's also grown since I've been here

[How?] I think there is a lot more focus on Deptford X and networking, we also have the 'Don't say nothing' website, which is based on the Deptford network of artists, and it encourages all the different artists around Deptford, Lewisham area, to network with each other, and there has been a lot of emphasis on that in the past, in the last couple of years or so (local visual artist)

167) '...yeah, there is definitely a creative cluster of people working, but you can have that without people actually knowing about each other, you know, you can work in a big studio, coming to work, go past all the other closed doors and go into your bit and then come out

again' (local artist/musician)

168) 'I was cycling back from Borough Market last night, and I just came back down Deptford High street, you know, it was a Saturday night on Deptford High street, and it's very very dead, there is nothing happening on Deptford High street on Saturday, I mean, there is, but in terms of the arts, you know, what happened in Shoreditch and stuff, that's why it became such a popular place, it really built up and there is a real economy to it, because all of a sudden, yeah, there is a lot of artists living in the area, starting up clubs, starting up little new venues and now it's like people being alive, kind of socialising, kind of out of just working in a place, there is a real kind of social life to it' (local artist/musician)

169) '[Would you call it a cultural district?] Yeah I think it's also a cultural area because not only have we got the art studios but we also have the music studios next door, and at the bottom of the road near Greenwich we have got the Laban, which is fairly new, so yeah I think it's a cultural area as well as production, definitely because it's the new Greenwich' (local artist, p.44)

170) '[Is it important to you the fact that there were these art studios?]

Yes, I think without the art and without the people here that make it art I don't think this side of town would be the same that it is, that I've experienced, so it was very important to me have that I access to that so easy, cause without that it I'm sure it would have just been dirty, wouldn't be as lifelike, but cause there's that creative element to it' (waitress from Canada)

171) '[Does it remind you of any area of London or of other cities, like the city where you come from for example?] Yeah definitely, it reminds me of Berlin, because in there there's a particular area where you can feel that they want to create something new but it's in the very beginning, it's not finished, and you can do something new and you could arrange something without much money to grow your own ideas, so a place that in the next 5 years will change (student from Germany, p.24)'

APPENDIX VIII

Available secondary data

The most complete sources of data on visitors of these areas available when the research started (October 2006) were three marketing studies: *Market Segmentation for Tourism Promotion to East London* (Briggs, 2005), *East London Brand mapping* (Tour East London, 2005a) and *East London Visitor Survey* (Tour East London, 2005b). All were commissioned by the London Development Agency in conjunction with Tour East London (the tourism marketing agency for East London). The outcomes of these three studies constituted the groundwork for the practical guide *Positioning and Marketing East London*, published by Tour East London in 2006.

The *Market Segmentation for Tourism Promotion for East London* (Briggs, 2005) was developed in 2004 by the place marketing consultancy agency The Tourism Network. The aim of the study was to identify target visitor segments for East London, in order to develop a more focused marketing strategy. One of the main objectives was to identify segments not only through geographic and demographic characteristics, but also (and most importantly) by additional factors such as motivations, interests and social characteristics. The primary research underpinning this report consisted of a number of questionnaires to be completed by tourism providers and destination managers in order to identify the current target markets for tourism businesses in East London. However, the segmentation that was finally identified was mostly based on pre-existing information on visitors and on other tourism marketing organisations' segments (such as Visit Britain and Visit London).

East London Brand Mapping and Cluster Mapping are the outcomes of marketing research that was conducted by Tour East London in 2005 in order to identify special places and themes within the eastern sub-region and to validate existing

brands (e.g. the City, the Tower of London, etc.). It consisted of a preliminary study plus two main parts, a quantitative and a qualitative one. The preliminary desk research helped to identify the key East London locations that were then selected for the main study. Usefully for the present research, these ‘key locations’ included Spitalfields, Brick Lane (considered as part of Spitalfields for the present research), Hackney (The London Borough where most of London Fields and Hoxton/Shoreditch are located), Hoxton/Shoreditch and Deptford. The quantitative study was conducted with Londoners, domestic visitors and overseas visitors across London and it consisted of a questionnaire aimed to determine the levels of awareness for the selected destinations. Interestingly, three of the four case studies of the present research ranked among the first 17 best known locations and were therefore selected for the next, qualitative stage. More specifically, in this ‘propensity of visit’ report, Spitalfields appeared as the 11th, Brick Lane the 15th, Hoxton/Shoreditch the 16th and Deptford the 17th. The qualitative phase then consisted of a number of focus groups carried out with the purpose of assessing how well known and understood the product offering was. The final report of this study identified three ‘primary clusters’ (Canary Wharf & Docklands, the City and Maritime Greenwich) and two ‘secondary clusters’ (Spitalfields & Bricklane and Hoxton & Shoreditch). Interestingly for the present study, it highlighted that both Londoners and tourists to London had no awareness or held a negative image of Deptford. Also Hackney, taken as a whole, was seen as ‘a run-down, rough area with no appeal’ (Tour east London, 2005a: 16). Both London Fields and Hoxton/Shoreditch are located in Hackney, however, it could be argued that London Fields is more often associated with ‘Hackney’ than Hoxton/Shoreditch (reasons for this include the fact that the closest train station to London Fields is Hackney Central). Hoxton/Shoreditch was seen as ‘new, young, up and coming, night time place; similar to Spitalfields and Brick Lane, but not as established [and] not family friendly’ (p. 14). Spitalfields, on the other end of the spectrum, appeared as an appealing destination for pioneer visitors: ‘traditional yet trendy markets, shops, places to eat and drink, multi-cultural (...) those that know the cluster, are good advocates, but there is a sense these are pioneers and trend setters, prepared to invest time to explore and “be the first” ‘ (p. 13).

The East London Visitor Survey was conducted between June and October 2005 by MSB Consultancy. Objectives of the survey were to refine the East London Positioning Guide (Tabje, 2006) and better understand existing visitors. More specifically, motivations, sources of information, experiences and movements were investigated (Tour East London, 2005a). The survey consisted of 1,403 face to face interviews conducted at nine key tourism locations in East London (of which only two belonged to our case study areas: Spitalfields Market and the Geffrye Museum in Shoreditch). The data provided is in quantitative form and it includes information on age, gender, origin, reason of visit, repeat or first visit, sources of encouragement to visit, method of transport and accommodation. For instance, the most important motivations that drive visitors to Spialfields according to this study are, in order of importance, ‘shopping/markets’, ‘restaurants/pubs/nightlife, and history/heritage. For the Geffrye Museum in Shoreditch these are ‘buildings/architecture’, ‘parks/gardens’ and ‘museum/gallery’ (Tour East London, 2005a).

This survey represented a very important source of information for the initial exploratory part of this study. However, due to its extensive and quantitative form, it only provided a superficial description of visitors and their motivations, leaving scope for the more in-depth approach undertaken in the present research. In addition, existing figures on visitors’ in the area only covered a small aspect of this research (the visitors’ profile, and without any details or any depth on their features or their possible creative characteristics).