

## PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY AND LANDSCAPE

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This chapter considers how the public, broadly defined, can engage with the historic environment, understanding and appreciating its character and grain, its depth, its subtle folds and weaves; and how the same public can influence change through the increasingly democratic and participatory nature of local government. This chapter is not about inviting people outside of archaeology to help with field-walking projects or earthwork surveys. Rather, it is about planning, management and change, and the key role the public can and should play in managing the historic environment and shaping the places and landscapes of the future. A particular focus of this chapter concerns what we mean by 'public', recognising that a diversity of interest groups now exist, defined by ethnicity, sexual preference, cultural and religious affiliation, gender, age and class. Public archaeology simply describes public participation, and their involvement in matters concerning the historic environment and the material remains (objects, places) within it. The historic environment matters to all sorts of people, and that's where we begin, with the principle that everyone's view counts.

### **Powers of place**

The idea of a culturally diverse public that takes an interest in the places they live is not new. In her *Power of Place* (1995), Dolores Hayden remarked on cultural engagement with the built environment. She noted, for Los Angeles, how it embodies the 'racially and culturally diverse American metropolis' (ibid., 83). In 1990, of its 3.5 million people just under 40 percent were Hispanic (any race); about 37 percent white (not Hispanic); 13 percent black (not Hispanic); just under 10 percent Asian American or Pacific Islander; and 0.5 percent Native American. The Los Angeles Unified School District at that time enrolled children speaking 96 different native languages. Hollywood High School alone housed students who spoke 35 native languages including Armenian, Rumanian, Farsi, Tagalog, Khmer, Lao, Samoan, Vietnamese, Thai, Afghan, Dari, Urdu, Cantonese, Portuguese, Russian, Hebrew, French, Bengali, Korean, Hungarian, Arabaic, Hindi, Visayan, Formosan, Gujarati, Mandarin, Greek, Mandingo, Swedish, Polish and Tahitan, as well as English and Spanish. Yet, despite all of this, Hayden describes how city biographies and the official landmark process have favoured the history of a small minority of white, male landholders, bankers, business and political leaders, and their architects. In 1986 Gail Dubrow (cited in Hayden) counted the city of Los Angeles's designated cultural historic landmarks and found that 97.7 percent were Anglo-American. Only 2.3 percent celebrated Native American, African American, Latino or Asian American history, despite the fact that these 'minority' groups comprise 60 percent of the population. Only 4 percent of the official landmarks were associated with any aspects of women's history. Hayden concludes:

So three-quarters of the current population must find its public, collective past in a small fraction of the city's monuments, or live with someone else's choices about the city's history. The major ethnic groups that have always

been part of the city have been dispossessed. And the new immigrants have every reason to be confused (1995, 86).

In another *Power of Place* (English Heritage 2000), some resonances can be seen with Hayden's study. There is support for the heritage certainly. An opinion poll conducted for this survey identified 98 percent of the population thinking that heritage is important in teaching us about the past, and that 76 percent of people think their own lives are richer because of it. Yet many people feel excluded: they think their heritage – the things they themselves value – are ignored, and that their experiences are neglected. It goes further. Many believe heritage provision does not adequately represent certain groups. Some 75 percent of people believe the contribution of Black and Asian people is not adequately represented, a figure that is even higher among people from those backgrounds. Only a quarter of Black people said they had been to the countryside in the past year, and both Black and Asian people were less likely than White people to visit stately homes. Perceptions of a lack of welcome (and arguably also of relevance) are the most likely cause (*ibid.*, 25).

Gard'ner's (2004) study of heritage values amongst the majority Bengalee community of Tower Hamlets (London, UK) bears comparison with these findings. Here little support was evident for those buildings deemed worthy of statutory protection by virtue of their cultural and architectural significance. Yet those buildings most valued by the local community – religious and public buildings, markets and community centres – failed to meet national criteria for listing. Again, the values of the state and those held locally, by those that live in this area, for whom it is home, appear contradictory.

National criteria for the statutory protection of buildings and monuments are one thing, but gathering opinion on what matters most to local communities is quite another and it should not now be difficult to accommodate multiple views and perspectives in our increasingly diverse, multi-vocal and technologically-aware society. Significant progress has been made in Australia, where heritage legislation specific to indigenous sites and ownership is administered largely by indigenous people. The value of sacred cultural sites, some of which have no physical human remains (such as food gathering places, English 2000), are widely recognised and respected. Further, migrant heritage is also recognised, and members of recent migrant communities are encouraged to recommend their own sites for inclusion on registers. I shall return to this example later.

Against this backdrop, the chapter concentrates on two issues at the heart of archaeological resource management practices: 'The Public' and 'Landscape'. Taking the second of these first, I will comment on ways in which landscape can be used in archaeological resource management; how it is a helpful scale at which to conceptualise and comprehend the historic environment, giving context to its component parts and making an understanding of larger, longer-term processes of change easier to grasp. I will then describe and discuss how I think the public should be integral to the process of managing change, and planning a future based on an awareness of landscape character. But it is a complicated and challenging

business, as even conceptions of 'public' are contested. We can no longer think only in terms of a white middle class, but a public that embraces the cultural diversity seen by Hayden in Los Angeles in the mid 1990s, and a public that will incorporate views of landscape and value as determined by groups defined by gender, sexual preference, race and religion as well as amongst those marginal to society's mainstream: the homeless, and the young for example. After a discussion of each of these key issues ('Landscape' and 'Public'), three case studies will then examine some of these ideas and principles in more depth.

## **Landscapes**

We can I think be clear about what we mean by landscape. The European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe 2008 [2000]) defines it simply as, 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'. Further, each Party undertakes to, 'establish procedures for the participation of the general public, local and regional authorities, and other parties with an interest in the definition and implementation of (the Convention's) landscape policies'. Prominent therefore are public perception on the one hand, and public participation on the other. The convention also recognises that landscape is continuous, and by implication not something that agencies or authorities can (or should) demarcate, except for specific management or administrative purposes. The Convention avoids the constraints of only concerning designated or 'special' landscapes (national parks, World Heritage Sites etc), and instead clearly gives focus to broader, more holistic views of landscape, and of the ordinary and everyday – places that people 'perceive' as landscape, and which, as such, matter to them. At one extreme are indeed landscapes recognised as important to society, through their inclusion on the World Heritage List – Cornish mining landscapes for example, or Stonehenge. At the other extreme we might include interstitial landscapes, or city waste – the awkward and leftover spaces on the margins. Are these really empty and unloved? One suggestion is that these 'in-between' places provide refuge for the homeless, for addicts and those marginal to society (eg. Zimmerman and Welch 2006). Are their values and perceptions any less worthy than those of city planners, of architects and politicians? Greg Keffe has described how every city has its 'compost heap' – an area where one puts one's 'rubbish': sink estates and social housing for example (<http://www.urbis.org.uk/page.asp?id=2934> – accessed 29 September 2008). The first reaction of planners is often to clear these areas, and improve them, although this may go against the wishes of residents. Musicians talk of growing up in these areas, and being inspired by them. Often it is the 'compost heaps' that are the most fertile, in terms of cultural achievement, with music, art and literature emanating from what, to some, appear 'hopeless' social and economic situations. The examples included here are all considered 'compost heaps' by some in authority.

Another dislocation of heritage management practices is often between 'old' and 'new'. One might, for example, question the judgement of anyone who places the landscape of an out-of-town retail park above or equal to that of a relict field system in the uplands of south-west England (see Schofield in press a). If put to the public vote, one presumes the latter would significantly out-vote the former.

But not everyone will take that view. Some will place 'retail parkland' higher, in terms of convenience, familiarity and social networking, amongst other considerations. Theirs might be a minority view, but it is often a significant minority and should not just be dismissed as ridiculous, bizarre, or – worse – ill-informed.

It is worth considering briefly what is meant by the phrase landscape archaeology in this context. In fact there are various categories of landscape archaeology (after Fairclough 2006, 185), 'each valid and necessary, but each serving different purposes' (ibid.). First, archaeology at landscape scale – involving the study of material remains of the past at extensive scale using methods such as regional survey, aerial photography and environmental archaeology. As Fairclough says, this is essentially a reconstructive and positivist approach to find out what happened in the past. Second is the archaeology of past landscape – attempting to gain insight into the way people in the past perceived areas of land as landscape. Phenomenology is an obvious example. And third is the archaeology of landscape; that is, using archaeological perspectives, methods and models to study landscape as it exists today. This is descriptive but also explanatory, aiming to contribute archaeological perspectives to wider holistic understanding, but doing so with subjectivity, privileging the most dominant survivals from the past that contribute most to the present day character of landscape (ibid.). Key to this landscape characterisation is that it avoids value judgements; it embraces the idea of multiple views and perspectives.

All of these methods are valid for their own purposes, of course, and all three can and should include a public dimension. But it is the third of these approaches that concerns us here, being more effective for achieving one of the European Landscape Conventions key ambitions: to enable an archaeologically-informed perspective to contribute to the holistic, democratic and trans-disciplinary understanding of landscape. Fairclough goes on:

It takes today's landscape as its starting point, the landscape in which most other landscape disciplines engage and in which people live ... It assumes that the present landscape contains the past, and is indeed in large measure created by the past; its starting point is that the material traces of the past can be read, questioned and often explained in order to inform public perception (2006, 185).

I started off writing that the third of these approaches was '*unquestionably* the most effective ...' but changed my mind, for this archaeology of landscape has been questioned, by Austin (2007) and Williamson (2007) for example, favouring instead, it seems, the more traditional archaeology at landscape scale. Williamson (ibid., 70) for examples criticises English Heritage's Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) programme for operating in isolation, and not being subject to external review. The fact is HLC is external, and locally produced, by local authority archaeologists and their staff. Projects are funded by English Heritage, yes, but are local products and are important for being so. HLC is also GIS based, and thus technology-driven. The fact is planners and the public rely

heavily now on online and GIS resources, and whatever problems the technology might generate are far outweighed by the benefits. HLC and the GIS component in particular means historic character and archaeology are factors and considerations accessible, comprehensible and computable by planners and – crucially – the public. The GIS component of HLC also enables it to be integrated with other datasets, either now or in the future. Potential is already great; future potential could be infinite (see Schofield 2007, 115-7 for an example).

### **Public archaeology**

This too is simply defined, at least for the purposes of this chapter. Public archaeology concerns the involvement of the public in archaeology, through practical assistance in projects, the management and co-ordination of work in some cases, and also in offering opinion, advice and perspective usually via the Web and upload facilities. It has never been easier for ‘the public’ to tell us what they think, and – potentially at least – to tell us where we are going wrong, or what we are doing right. In 2006 I was involved in excavating a Ford Transit van previously used for archaeological projects (Newland et al. 2007). The public told us what they thought – comments were received via the project’s online blog, which was established prior to the excavation, and ran throughout. Comments included:

‘An excellent form of madness if ever I saw one.’

‘Sounds like a load of crock to me and makes archaeology look stupid! I really think that archaeologists could do without this form of publicity at the moment. Especially if you want more funding.’

‘This is an important example of archaeological practices deployed as a series of interventions into the contemporary and specifically as a means (and end) of marking what once was, before it passes: a life history (memory) if you will.’

A year or two earlier I surveyed and part excavated one of the former peace camps at Greenham Common (Schofield 2008). It became obvious early on, from public reaction, that the excavation of these sites was unwelcome, as was the removal of finds from the sites, for analysis. Previous occupants of the camps considered these sites to be sacred in a way I had not envisaged. As a result of this reaction (perhaps unique to only a small group of women), we changed our strategy overnight – survey replaced excavation, and finds were recorded and photographed in situ rather than being collected and removed.

Merriman (2004, 1, and Carman 2002) helpfully defines what is meant by ‘public’, recognising two specific meanings, both of which are relevant here. First is the association of the word ‘public’ with the state and its institutions (they cite public bodies and public office as examples). The second is the concept of ‘the public’ as a group of individuals who debate issues and consume cultural products, and whose reactions inform public opinion. We therefore have a contradiction, which this chapter in part seeks to unravel: between the state on the one hand, assuming

to speak on behalf of the public and acting in the public interest; and on the other, the notion of a public encompassing debate and opinion. The first of these makes the inclusion of minority interests difficult (perhaps impossible) to achieve; the second recognises the public as an active and multivalent force with the power to influence or criticise the wishes of the state, and bring about change (Merriman 2004, 1-2). As all the examples here demonstrate, it is this dimension of 'public' that interests me, and which I think has the major role in effective heritage management practices, now and in the future.

Ian Hodder presents something similar in his *Archaeology beyond Dialogue* (2003), arguing for change in the way we work (and think) as archaeologists. Many discussions of dialogue, he says, assume we carry on as normal but add a bit of community collaboration – add collaboration and stir. Fundamental here is the definition of archaeology, and the foregrounding of people in the work we do. Hodder notes how previous definitions of archaeology involved 'the study of the past through its material remains'; now it is more a 'mode of enquiry into the relationships between people and their material pasts'. The role of indigenous voices is an obvious example of people not simply discussing what archaeologists present to them as fact, but engaging in the dialogue that reaches that position. As Hodder says, 'the gazing back by native anthropologists can lead to new forms of ethnographic text', as was demonstrated by involving native Madagascan voices in the interpretation of Stonehenge, and local community members involvement in post-excavation processes of analysis and interpretation at Catalhöyük (2003, 4).

#### And ...

The central point of this chapter is how these two things connect: the public, and landscapes. My principal concern is the involvement of 'the public' in managing their local and closely familiar landscapes, the places to which they typically have close attachment, based on a personal involvement with the place over time. The local place is their own heritage, conceptualised in fabric, stories and memories, just as genealogy is their own history. It is no coincidence that these two pastimes (local studies and genealogy) have each become increasingly popular in recent times. There are many good examples of how the public have become involved in understanding and managing local landscapes, taking or contributing to decisions about change.

One cannot review local views on change and development without reference to nimbyism. Wikipedia defines the term simply, as follows:

**NIMBY** is an acronym for **Not In My Back Yard**. The term is used to describe opposition to a new project by residents, even if they themselves and those around will benefit from the construction. Often, the new project being opposed is generally considered a benefit for many, but residents nearby the immediate location consider it undesirable and would generally prefer the building to be 'elsewhere'. (Accessed 1 August 2008.)

But the pejorative sense in which the term is typically applied often masks a deeper and more significant truth: that those (generally) opposing change are also those who know the area best of all, and who hold the strongest feelings about it, feelings that are typically rooted in deep and intricate personal histories and

heritage. Nimbyism can be a negative response to development (and may extend on occasion to 'niabyism' - Not in Anyone's Back Yard), but that should not mask the fact that it is often also a considered, informed and impassioned view that is represented. The examples that follow often touch upon elements of nimbyism – not necessarily in the sense of restricting change, but rather ensuring that a democratic view of historic interest, character and significance is taken account of in the evaluation of planning proposals and recommendations.

A bigger issue perhaps is the recognition of multiple perspectives, and engaging communities whose values do not coincide and will often in fact contradict (Schofield 2004). In his foreword to the *Guide to Migrant Heritage Places in Australia* (Australian Heritage Commission, nd), Peter King describes how,

Australia has a culturally diverse heritage, greatly enriched by the many thousands of people who have come to live here since World War II. However, the places that are significant in telling the story of the immigration experiences of these Australians are not necessarily well-protected because the wider community is not aware of the significance of these places. (nd, 5).

The Guide goes on to describe how migrant heritage places are those places that tell the history of migration in Australia, and telling readers that,

you can decide what places are part of Australia's heritage ... Migrant heritage places will most likely have historic importance, because they tell the story of the history of immigration and adjusting to life in a new country. Other migrant heritage places will have social importance for the present generation. This is often hard to identify as heritage. One way of deciding if a place has social importance is if a migrant group has held special feelings for a place over a long period of time and these feelings continue today' (nd, 9) [For example:] 'Does the place have features that inspire strong feelings or have special meanings, connected to your community's religious, cultural, educational or social life?' (ibid., 34).

A further guide provides advice on finding and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places (Australian Heritage Commission 2002). Alongside guidance on how to identify places of historic, aesthetic and scientific significance, social significance is included, here alongside examples that include the long established Chinatown areas of Sydney and Melbourne, temples and churches, cemeteries and restaurants. Of course these are all *places* that have been identified. But together they constitute a landscape of Chinese influence and involvement in Australia – a layer on the increasingly diverse social and cultural map of the country. The point here is that these particular layers are often ignored or not recognised by those in authority, perhaps because the knowledge rests with those for whom language or cultural barriers exist, or who mistrust authority.

Amongst Australia's Macedonian community there are intricate and challenging issues around the relationship between ethnicity and landscape. In talking to a Macedonian migrant to Australia (Thomas 2001, 7-8), one gets the sense of how

the different landscapes he experienced (in Macedonia and now in Australia) are interrelated. 'The memory of inspiration of one place will have a discernible impact on others. This is especially noticeable when he describes traditions of socialising that have developed in outdoor recreational settings' (ibid.). And here is the point of tension: between Australia's national parks, as places of historic importance, aesthetic beauty and tranquility, and typically sacred to indigenous groups, and the 'rowdy, congested and environmentally unfriendly' picnics that occur annually in Royal National Park. The words in parentheses are those of the National Parks and Wildlife Service; to the Macedonian community these picnics represent important social traditions:

People could expand their national feelings, gathering in their language. Because everybody worked in a fish shop or a factory or something like that. So picnics were a tremendous outlet. People looked forward to this. They played a major part in our getting to know each other, and for people who would come from overseas it was an introduction to the people. They weren't alone. They could see there's other Macedonians here. (ibid., 9).

One can see therefore how 'insights foreground the connection between historical experiences and attitudes to national parks. Here is evidence that any mode of inhabiting and interpreting a landscape is ethnically specific' (Thomas 2001, 9).

In addition to the methodologies promoted by the Australian Heritage Commission and NPWS (NSW), new mobile technologies provide another intriguing dimension, about which I have written previously (Schofield 2007; in press b). At a simple level of engagement sites like [www.mapmylondon.com](http://www.mapmylondon.com) allow people to upload information from their mobile phone, cheaply and easily – telling anyone that will listen what specific places mean to them, through memories and events. Text messages can be uploaded and geo-referenced along with photographs, videos and audio. The information is raw, unedited and unfiltered, but also immediate, personalised and of the moment. It has always proved difficult in the past to incorporate people's personal views, with organised meetings and workshops typically involving the same types of people. Now infinite personalised views and opinions can be accumulated through feedback loops and collaborative processes, enabled by mobile technologies into a plural and more inclusive view of landscape. To give an example, Christian Nold's biomapping workshops and events ([www.biomapping.net](http://www.biomapping.net)) encourage participants from a range of cultural backgrounds to discuss and assess place, in addition to experiencing it through their galvanic skin response, generating emotion maps. What participants say about a place can be compared to what they experience, physically and emotionally: the high arousal of danger and anxiety, or of pleasure and tranquility. And GIS provides the possibility of merging maps: emotion mapping on the one hand, and maps of historic landscape character on the other. One might ask: does 'historic' landscape always correspond with a positive emotional response? I somehow doubt it.

**The public and their landscapes #1 – Strait Street, Valletta (Malta)**



Valletta is Malta's capital city. It is the main town on the island, and a World Heritage Site, for its impressive fortifications and colonial architecture. It is central also to the tourist experience of Malta. Few stay in the city, but most visitors from the island's resorts, and on visiting cruise ships, will tour the town at least once during their stay. Malta is Catholic for the most part, and city authorities and planners seem to manage the place in a very particular way, a way that effectively hides any aspect of its past that is deemed shameful, even alternative. One such place is Strait Street, a long, straight and narrow road (also known as 'The Gut') which runs the length of the town and was once an area of bars, lodging houses, dance halls and fast-food outlets (Figures 1 and 2). Fountain Street, which extended beyond Strait Street at its far end, was a centre for prostitution, with trade evidently extending into Strait Street, at least at its lower end. Strait Street was where sailors came on shore leave, in vast numbers. The authorities were not happy, and with the island's independence in 1964, and the decline in the numbers of visiting servicemen between 1964 and 1979, when the navies finally left, the street effectively closed down. Such was the stigma attached to the place that it has remained empty ever since, the locked doors sealing the fabric within and the memories and stories that accompany it. In 1965, *Titbits* magazine included the following description of Strait Street under the title 'The street that shames Hero Island':

British tourists should steer clear of Malta till the island's government take this advice: stamp out the vice in a street that is the shame of Malta – Straight Street (sic).

This is an area of vice and prostitution that ranks with the world's most notorious sin spots. ...

Officially, the problem does not exist. The Gut is not mentioned in the newspapers, on radio, TV, by parliament or even in polite conversation. ...

[The Gut] is a dirty, squalid alley that is packed from noon to early morning with prostitutes who sell themselves for the price of a drink. ...

A street where teenage British sailors are accosted by women old enough to be their grandmothers. ... (Saxon 1965).

Dench (1975, 109) has assessed the impact of this article, exploring further the contradiction between Malta's strong identification with the Catholic faith, and the activities associated with Strait Street. To Maltese priests, Dench explains, deviant sexual behaviour and vice are almost unmentionable – even uttering immoral words is unacceptable, with 58 men committed to prison for doing so as recently as 1960–65. Recourse to a prostitute is a mortal sin, like other sexual acts outside of marriage, for which absolution is necessary. Open reference to vice is considered utterly offensive and respectable Maltese try to close their eyes and ears to the topic (ibid.)

Local response to the *Titbits* article was unsurprising therefore, exciting 'a curious sensitivity in which evident consternation combines with half-hearted and equivocal denial that such a thing might be possible – in Malta at any rate' (Dench 1975, 109). The magazine was banned in Malta, but a few copies circulated. Local people were incensed to the extent that public comment became necessary.

Clearly a vigorous denial would have been a nonsense, as the article's allegations were true. Yet passive acceptance would have been painful and offensive to many, and would have led to calls for Malta to be 'cleaned up'. So the issue was fudged, stating that it did not merit public scrutiny. '[E]yes were averted, and the vague belief entertained that the authorities have matters under satisfactory control' (ibid., 111).

A study of Strait Street in 2004 revealed the extent to which material components of the bars had survived despite forty years of closure, and the receptive attitude and support of local residents. The details of the survey can be seen elsewhere (Schofield and Morrissey 2005; 2007). What interests us here is the attitude of people to the work. All our preparatory work suggested this study would not be welcomed in the city. We wrote to the *Times of Malta* requesting assistance, and received one anonymous reply:

If you have some respect for the [G]eorge [C]ross Island, skip the idea of shedding light on Strait Street. ... Yours truly, A.D. (anon letter nd).

A map included with this reply directed us towards Fort St Elmo instead, where – we later discovered – various attacks on tourists had recently occurred! At least one local resident thought this was no coincidence.

We were introduced to a jeweller who once owned a bar in Strait Street. He strongly indicated to us that Strait Street was a respectable place, that prostitution never occurred there, and that we should ensure that our study and any published reports made this point. He then posed for photographs in his shop, surrounded by religious icons.

On visiting Strait Street, and talking to those that still occupy this alternative and neglected city space (one of Keeffe's compost heaps perhaps), the attitudes were very different. We encountered surprise that we were interested, and then an enthusiasm to show us around, to point out which bars were which and to tell us stories. Some people really stood out, people that despite closure retained many of the bar's fixtures and fittings, and the artefacts and gifts given by sailors. Tony and Anna Pace of Rox Bar showed us around, and proudly showed us their photograph albums of busy nights here and at Tico Tico, another bar they owned. They showed us ship's photographs, signed and framed for them; and a ship's flag carefully folded and stored away. These were precious objects, and clearly represent fond memories. We met mostly women but some men who once worked in the bars of Strait Street, and who spoke with great passion about the life that existed there, and what fun it had been. Joseph Buttegieg told us about his father, who owned a bar at the bottom end of the street, building all of its fittings himself. He then ran the business successfully for years. After closure and his father's death, Joseph opened it again as a workshop, but kept all the fixtures and furnishings intact. He showed us the art-deco style bar his father had made, and spoke very warmly of him and of his achievements.

There was great pride amongst the people we met on the street, contradicting the attitudes of authorities towards this hidden space. This is unquestionably an alternative view of public archaeology and landscape, involving a public who simply have never been asked what they think. Without this project, and without the involvement of Victor Scerri, whose accounts of people's lives on Strait Street have become a regular feature of the Maltese language newspaper *it-TORCA*, Strait Street might have been irrevocably changed without any reference at all to those that actually *live* there, or who did so with great joy and enthusiasm until the 1970s, when most bars closed down. Why should their views not be heard? And more to the point, why are their views not pre-eminent in assessing future plans for this area? It is their street after all.

Now, four years on, and talk is of Strait Street becoming the city's cultural quarter, with a return to bars, exhibitions, galleries, street theatre, live music and so on. Currently the street appears largely empty. The bars are all locked up and have been for three to four decades. A problem is often that nobody knows who owns them as, following independence, bar owners transferred their business to places like London's Soho, and simply locked up and left. There is now no connection with the former owners, and no prospect for making one. But assuming that problem can be overcome, those that once worked in the street and now live in damp and decrepit accommodation above the bars can have a better quality of life. Some improvement and investment is needed; a community centre could be generated for those who have no central place to congregate of an evening other than a statue in the main square. In 2008 the *Times of Malta* featured an article that discusses the street's future prospects. Emmy Bezzina wrote, on 10 May, of 'A vision for seductive Strait Street'. She notes how 'fascination is one of the hallmarks of this narrow stretch of street, harboured on both sides by protective long buildings which provide an idyllic array of shades and shadows throughout the day,' and that '[T]he Valletta local council should wake up and undertake a truly worthwhile rehabilitation project for our capital city'.

On 2 September in *The Malta Independent Online*, Michael Carabott wrote about Valletta's pedestrian zone, which is gradually extending into streets adjacent to Strait Street. 'The new system' he notes, 'allows pedestrian access to Strait Street, which is fast becoming the cultural street of Valletta with various exhibitions, wine bars and restaurants.'

Things are changing therefore. The landscape is a complex and challenging one, for all its past troubles and contradictions, and for the cultural achievements of its artistes and musicians. Most significant though is the recognition of the values attached to this place by those who once lived and worked here, and – in some cases – live their still, often in very poor conditions. Strait Street matters, and finally, slowly, that fact is being realised.

**The public and their landscapes #2 – People's Republic of Stokes Croft (Bristol, UK)**

(By Rachael Kiddey)

Stokes Croft is a short street close to the centre of Bristol (UK) (Figures 3 and 4). Locally, 'Stokes Croft' is the term used to describe not only the street of that name but also the immediate surrounding area. The People's Republic of Stokes Croft (PRSC) began life at the tail end of 2006. Self-funded and informally organised, it is a growing community group who work together on an overwhelmingly voluntary basis to preserve and enhance all aspects of the Stokes Croft Conservation Area (being areas whose architectural and design characteristics are considered worth retaining – there are some 8000 of these in England), to promote the wealth of creativity that exists within the area and to encourage community cohesion and inclusivity (BCC, 2007, 1, 1.1).

Tactics employed by PRSC include a mix of non-violent direct action, such as street cleaning and preservation of historic fabric, undertaking street art, contacting, bringing together and genuinely engaging with those in positions of authority and improving community links by organising fully inclusive social events. PRSC hopes to facilitate genuine public engagement in the way Stokes Croft develops.

Once Bristol's main shopping street, Stokes Croft was badly damaged during World War II and went on to suffer increased isolation through a combination of highway schemes, lack of investment, retail competition from a nearby (post-war) shopping centre and the fact that hostels and services for drink- and drug-dependent people are sited within the immediate vicinity, attracting clientele whose behaviour is considered by many to be undesirable. An 'action plan' put together by the city council in partnership with several community groups, published in February 2006, describes Stokes Croft as:

... a 600m long historic street lined by shops and buildings ranging from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to recent years. It is part of the A38 and is a main access route into central Bristol from Gloucester and Cheltenham and a link to the popular shopping area of Gloucester Road and to Broadmead [shopping centre]. Its southern junction (North Road) is with the St James Barton Roundabout and the main road network serving the city centre.

It was noted in the same document that: '... the local functions of the street have not evolved ... and modernised. Many buildings are derelict and a staggering 22% of the total number of properties has a vacant ground floor' (Buchanan and partners 2006, 5).

From at least the late 1970's, the availability of large spaces at very low rent attracted artists, musicians and performers to the area. Several buildings are squatted. Three large ex-industrial buildings became alternative music venues in the early 1990's which went on to develop reputations for being 'home' to bands and DJ's of international fame. One of the largest sites along Stokes Croft, Westmoreland House and the carriage works, has been derelict since the late 1970's. It is adorned on every floor with examples of street art and graffiti dating back thirty years. Although much of the graffiti is 'tagging', some work is clearly attributable to increasingly respected graffiti artists such as Banksy, Cyclops, Paris,

Xenz and Cheba. One floor of Westmoreland House has been converted into an 'illegal' skate park using materials from the building's previous use as an office block. A community of travellers has been given permission to live on wasteland behind Westmoreland House while the owner decides what to do with it.

Alongside a growing community of artists and alternatives within Stokes Croft is a large homeless population, over 350 families on low income, many immigrant families and asylum seekers. Despite the social problems that are evident in almost any pocket of economic deprivation, the eclectic cultural and social mix of people and businesses has bred a sense of tolerance and co-existence that is unique within Bristol. As we have seen, Keeffe describes such areas as 'compost heaps' (op cit.). Stokes Croft is certainly a fertile place, creatively speaking.

Central to PRSC's campaign is the notion that Stokes Croft should be officially recognised as Bristol's Cultural Quarter. The imminent opening of a £500 million shopping centre close by - Cabot Circus - has prompted a plethora of planning applications from developers whose plans include demolishing many buildings and replacing them with flats which would not be affordable to the majority of the local community and far exceed the traditional height of buildings within the Conservation Area. Much of PRSC's recent work has included researching and publicising the history of the area, reproducing traditional street signage and bill posters in situ and attending planning meetings to make the case that, as a Conservation Area, the eclectic mix of historic fabric found within Stokes Croft is worthy of retention unless there is an overwhelmingly good reason for it to be lost (DoE/DNH 1994, 27). Despite this legislation, buildings within the Stokes Croft Conservation Area continue to come under routine threat from demolition. For example, the council's own character appraisal of the Stokes Croft Conservation Area published in 2007 identified a nineteenth century former malt house as being an 'unlisted building of merit' (BCC 2007, 44). However, permission was granted recently for the demolition of the former malt house and for a development of flats to be built in its place (BCC 2008a). To some, the decision to sanction the loss of the former malt house was seen as proof that 'blue collar' historic fabric is not seen to hold as much 'heritage value' as 'white collar'.

In July 2008, the council held a public consultation on how a small iconic triangle of land, known locally as Turbo Island, should be improved. The name Turbo Island originates from a brand of cider that was for many years the preferred tipple of street drinkers who continue to congregate on the land. PRSC volunteers offered to help the council by handing out surveys for completion and as a direct result of PRSC's involvement the consultation results included the opinions of those people whose views are traditionally marginalised or left completely unrecorded. Several homeless street drinkers, when asked how the derelict land they frequent daily could be improved said 'some flowers' would enhance its appearance (Neil [street name Bin Laden], personal communication; BCC 2008b).

The People's Republic of Stokes Croft is characterised by its belief that we, the public, in all our varied guises, can and should influence how the landscape we exist within develops and by the fact that everyone's view is genuinely considered,

recorded and valued. It is true that some lifestyles are more difficult to identify with than others but what makes the way one person experiences place or engages with heritage any 'better' or 'more correct' than the next? The dispossessed, traditionally excluded, those who actively seek to live on the margins, are still members of 'the public'; their existence is culturally significant to us all. If we exclude their views and opinions on how even 'compost heaps' should develop, whose heritage are we prioritising?

### **The public and their landscapes #3 – The Pivvy, the Picket and the 'hood (Popular music landscapes, Liverpool, UK)**

(By Brett Lashua)

The Pavilion was once a grand music hall located near the junction of Smithdown Road and Lodge Lane in Liverpool. Also known as 'the Pivvy', the Pavilion caught fire in 1986 and much of the Edwardian interior and all of the backstage area were destroyed. Opened in 1908, the Pivvy was able to seat over 2,500 people in eight private boxes, stalls, pit, circle and balcony. At the time, it was the last of several new music halls built outside the city centre in Liverpool's fast-expanding suburbs. It later became a variety theatre known for glamour girls in elaborate costumes and featured live performances by Arthur Askey, George Formby, The Quarry Men, Ken Dodd, and the Beatles - who performed there only once, on 2 April 1962. Following the fire, part of the building was reconstructed and the Pavilion is now a Bingo Hall.

On his hand-drawn map of his neighbourhood of Wavertree (Figure 5), a hip-hop MC named Pyro has clearly identified the Pivvy ('Bingo') along the border of his neighbourhood. Just beyond the Pivvy lies Toxteth, or Liverpool 8 (L8), a different post code from his turf in Wavertree (L15). In UK hip-hop and 'grime' music scenes, post codes and home territories matter; gang wars are fought over these boundaries. Pyro told us of a palpable web of invisible borders criss-cross the city whereby 'you just know' when you've crossed a line. To some, the Pivvy represents one small part of the Beatles story in Liverpool, to others it represents an older, bygone era of music hall. To young people like Pyro, it marks a dangerous edge.

[Insert map 1]

Wavertree is an area of Liverpool that generally attracts scant public attention other than from those who reside there. Wavertree is a densely packed grid of Victorian terraces and narrow streets that branch northward off Smithdown Road like teeth in a comb. According to Pyro's map, Wavertree is a 'bubble' encompassing his everyday social worlds. Unlike the maps drawn by musicians involved in the 'indie rock' music scene that primarily focus upon venues, Pyro's map, like many hip-hop artists with whom we have spoken, shows a landscape populated with fellow MCs and DJs and their homes ('cribs'), and local gathering spots such as the football pitch and corner shop. Other sites – the city centre, record shop, and college – are worlds apart from Pyro's neighbourhood.

Like the two previous cases, Pyro's mapping also illustrates the disconnection between official heritage landscapes and the lived everyday experiences of many local musicians. Lately, Liverpool has taken much pride in its popular music heritage, especially during its 2008 European Capital of Culture year. For instance, the long-overlooked punk/alternative music venue, Eric's Club (1976-1980), received notable public attention this year. Yet, in a city where even the notorious story of Eric's has struggled to be told, it is perhaps no wonder that less 'visible' histories such as the Pivvy remain unheard, and even less surprising that Pyro's hip-hop musical landscape is almost entirely disconnected from other Liverpool musical landscapes.

Liverpool is a city of many legendary venues. One such site, neither quite as mythic as Eric's nor as obscure as the Pivvy, yet still in operation, is the Picket. The Picket opened in 1983 as part of the Merseyside Trade Union Community and Unemployed Resource Centre, 'the Peoples Centre', which occupied a building on Hardman Street that had once been a home for the blind. The Picket housed a live music venue, a recording studio named Pinball Wizard, and a music information service. Paul Weller and the Style Council were the first band to perform there but the Picket was a key venue for local musicians too, hosting performances by the La's, Rain and countless others. While drawing his map of Liverpool (Figure 6), a successful singer/songwriter told us:

The Picket is central to this entire story. Out of all of these venues, I come out of the Picket. That's my heritage, the Picket, really. The Picket is absolutely central to the story.

[Insert map 2]

When the People's Centre building was put up for sale in the early 2000s, a high profile 'Save the Picket' campaign was supported by such well-known musicians as Elvis Costello and Pete Townshend of The Who. The Picket has since relocated to the nascent 'Independent Quarter' in the docklands south of Liverpool's city centre (another 'compost heap' perhaps).

Interestingly, as a great supporter of local musicians, the Picket is one of the few venues in the city that hosts hip-hop and urban music events, and thus one site where Pyro and other MCs we have met have performed live. Not surprisingly, even in the Independent Quarter, one cannot escape the 'invisible web' of territorialisation which Pyro has described. For all of its independence, this area on the city's south side represents foreign, and often dangerous, turf for an MC from L15.

Thus understandings and experiences of musical landscapes often collide and abrade, yet also partition and isolate. Ironically, 'urban' music is afforded little space in the city; few venues will host events for young hip-hop acts. Yet those maps drawn for us by hip-hop MCs illustrate the most intimate relationships with the micro-topographies of city, its streets and neighbourhoods, and power-laden social interactions that take place there.

The hand-drawn maps and stories of the Picket and the Pivvy inspire questions such as how something as intangible as popular music is mapped upon the landscape of the city by musicians themselves, in different ways to public officials, planners and tourists. These examples read against the grain of higher-profile sites, such as those linked to the Beatles, and spotlight the varied music landscapes in Liverpool, differing across racial, classed, temporal and other markers of difference. As in the other case studies, 'whose heritage counts?' and 'what places are put on 'the map'?' remain important questions, not necessarily so that definitive answers are provided, but to invite broader participation in the processes of mapping musical heritage and valuing popular music landscapes.

### **Conclusions**

The landscapes of these case studies are a far cry from those others have selected or spoken of in much heritage and cultural landscapes literature, just as the public may be different to other 'publics' referred to by planners drafting and formulating policy for their own particular publics. What we present here is unquestionably an alternative view of landscape, both in terms of its character and heritage credentials; and the public we refer to is predominantly that at the margins. But what these examples have in common with many others is that people care about their environment – not the state necessarily, or heritage officialdom, but the people who live and work there, or did so in the past. For them it is special, and who are we (the heritage profession) to challenge that view?

The chapter ended with case studies, but started with general principles that appear to be gaining acceptance within heritage management practices, and planning. There is finally a recognition that 'the public' is multi-vocal and increasingly diverse in its attitudes, interests and perceptions; that decisions about place can no longer be justified where they are the concern of only state or local authority officials. There will be a minority view, but that minority is always significant, or should be. Public archaeology and landscapes are closely linked in all sorts of ways. Here we have focused on one: what people think about the places that matter most to them, and how they can make their views heard, and count.

### **Acknowledgements**

BL would like to thank Sara Cohen and Ellen Loudon for support and advice in producing his case study. Sara Cohen and BL are collaborating with John Schofield on the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK) project 'Popular Musicscapes and the characterisation of the urban environment'.

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CAPTIONS:

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| Figure 1 | SS   |
| Figure 2 | SS   |
| Figure 3 | SC   |
| Figure 4 | SC   |
| Figure 5 | Hip-hop MC Pyro's map of Wavertree, Liverpool.                 |
| Figure 6 | A singer/songwriter's map of important Liverpool music venues. |