Urban Transformation of Deprived Neighborhoods in Metropolitan Regions: The Cases of Greater Manchester and the Ruhr Metropolitan Region

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Synopsis: Urban transformation is a complex process influenced by different challenges specifically in metropolitan regions facing structural change. Regeneration efforts in the wake of economic slowdown, highly dependent on financial means, present another challenging issue. This comparative study aims at exploring the mechanism that enabled successful urban transformation of deprived neighborhood.

1. Introduction

Urban transformation of deprived neighborhoods in metropolitan regions facing structural change is a complex process influenced by different forces and challenges. Displacing industrial production has positive impacts on the environment in regard to air, water and soil quality and consequently on the residents’ health; nevertheless deprived living environments still remain as well as socio-economic and demographic challenges that can have a significant influence on the quality of life. In many cases these challenges are regarded as multiple deprivation indicators, which in some countries present the starting point for initiating a regeneration process.

Throughout the last century urban regeneration has undergone different phases, from the post-war reconstruction to ‘holistic’ approaches and urban renaissance at the end of the 20th century. In recent years new tendencies have strived towards the integration of regeneration policies and sustainable urban development focusing on an integrated approach in planning and implementation phase. The Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities (European Commission 2007) with special attention to deprived neighborhoods emphasizes the importance of integrated urban development, economic stabilization and education. Focus is also on upgrading the physical environment, improvement of public open spaces, compact structure for energy-efficiency and improved urban transport in and between cities. In addition, the report Cities of Tomorrow (European Commission 2011) highlights the importance of compact urban form and quality of urban environments as well as flexible urban governance and strong metropolitan regions that enable good accessibility to services.

As argued by Cochrane (2007) and Tallon (2013), urban regeneration is multi-dimensional and can assume different approaches in different contexts. Although a global phenomenon (Leary and McCarthy 2013), it is framed with specific urban policies, which differ for growing and stagnating or shrinking cities. Two case studies presented here from the United Kingdom (UK) and Germany, are located in former heavy industrial cities undergoing structural change and facing different stages of shrinkage and stagnation.
In both countries, the United Kingdom (UK) and Germany, regeneration projects in deprived areas are identified as important issues. However, since improvements in the built environment are mostly related to investments that are profit oriented, deprived areas outside the inner city largely lack financial means because private sectors see no opportunity for profit. Adair et al. (2003) argue that deprived neighborhoods' lack in private investment is due to high uncertainty and risk of investment. Local and national governments, which are struggling with austerity measures due to the economic crisis in 2008/09, have limited sources to support improvements in urban fabric in the neighborhoods outside the inner city. This is especially emphasized in secondary cities due to their less important role in the national and global economy.

Adair et al. (2003) further emphasize the important role of the public sector in providing adequate policies to attract the investors and developers while at the same time balancing social and environmental aspects in vulnerable regeneration areas. Other authors (Squires et al. 2015, Karadimitriou et al. 2013) argue that innovative financing schemes are necessary to overcome effects of economic crisis, but also emphasize the importance of the public sector as an actor to ensure better security of investment and to enable non-market housing delivery.

The importance of non-market housing delivery is reflected in the issues of social justice, which is closely related to deprived neighborhoods and urban regeneration. In many cases regeneration and improved neighborhoods lead to increase of land and property values, which are considered as positive from an economic perspective. However, increase in value leads to gentrification; thus, the improvements in the built environment, which were aimed to, or should have been aimed to improve the quality of life of vulnerable population groups, are not reached. As argued by Leeds (2008) urban renaissance and other similar terms are conveniently used by policy makers to mask gentrification. Social mix, which is widely used when talking about improvements of deprived neighborhoods (ibid.), could also be considered as an initial phase of a gentrification process. Although it may have been intended to improve the socio-economic situation of the neighborhood in order to assure better access to goods and services, as well as to prevent social segregation (ibid.), it can also result in the increase of properties' values and unaffordable housing for the existing low-income population groups. Furthermore, effects of social mix are hard to measure and it is not clear what kind of social mix can assure benefits for the existing population (ibid.).

2. Challenges of deprived neighborhoods

The state of the living environment is one aspect that is taken into account when measuring the level of deprivation. Level of deprivation in the UK is measured by the Deprivation Index compounded of seven main indicators including income, employment, health, education, housing and services, crime and living environment (CLG 2011). English indices of deprivation are used to identify the most deprived areas and allocate means from the Neighborhood Renewal Fund as well as to initiate regeneration processes through the Neighborhood Management Pathfinders (McLennan n.d.).

In Germany deprived neighborhoods are identified according to the above average level of unemployment and socio-economic segregation. Most of those identified areas take part in a program "Districts with special development needs - the Socially Integrated City" ("Stadtteile mit besonderem Entwicklungsbedarf - Die soziale Stadt") and are characterized with
‘above-average long-term and/or youth unemployment, large sections of the population relying on government transfer payments, the decline of local economies, increased migration away from the area of more affluent sectors of the population, structural and urban development deficits, vacant properties, disinvestment, tensions between social and/or ethnic groups, individual psychosocial problems such as resignation and substance abuse.’

BMVBS/BBR 2007, p.63

Governments in the UK and Germany have recognized that disadvantaged socio-economic groups in deprived neighborhoods are characterized by lower life expectancy compared to other neighborhoods (HC 2008, RKI 2005). Many factors influencing these differences could be related to economic and geographical accessibility as well as to the built and social environment (CSDH 2008). Lower life expectancy due to low levels of education and income, a high level of unemployment, as well as limited accessibility to and quality of services (Lopez 2012; Dannenberg, Frumkin and Jackson 2011) increase the gap between different population groups, contribute to the isolation of deprived neighborhoods and their possible further decline.

Köcker and Hornberg (2012, p. 84) argue that people in certain areas are considered vulnerable due to lack of individual and collective skills to cope adequately with certain challenges or to mitigate them. Limited political power and access to decision-making prevent these disadvantaged groups to influence policies and plans that could improve their living environments (CSDH 2008) and provide access to better education and employment opportunities. As a result these vulnerable population groups have to bear a greater environmental burden of disease than the total population (Köcker and Hornberg 2012).

Unlike other population groups, people with lower income have fewer opportunities to move away from their deprived living environment, although it may have negative influence on their health (Grant et al. 2012).

Regeneration efforts, although crucial for vulnerable population groups, are highly dependent on financial means, which in the wake of economic slowdown presents challenging issue. This is especially emphasized in those deprived neighborhoods, which still carry the burden of exploitation by the industrial development. Transforming these areas and enabling sustainable development while at the same time preserving the existing population and avoiding gentrification processes presents another challenging issue.

3. Methodology

The purpose of this study is to explore social, economic and environmental factors that may have contributed to the successful urban transformation of the deprived neighborhoods in the metropolitan regions. Success of urban transformation is reflected in the improvements of both, the physical and social environment of deprived neighborhoods. Therefore, two most-similar cases of neighborhoods in the cities of Salford in Greater Manchester in the UK and Gelsenkirchen in the Ruhr Metropolitan Region in Germany were chosen for comparison. Both cities have undertaken industrial expansion and are currently in the process of structural change, however differ in terms of regeneration outcome of deprived neighborhoods.
Case selection

Gelsenkirchen with the lowest life expectancy and the highest level of unemployment in the State of Nord-Rheine Westphalia (izg.nrw n.d.) was identified as a most vulnerable city in the Ruhr Metropolitan Region. Bulmke-Hüllen, a deprived neighborhood in Gelsenkirchen, is taking part in the initiative "Districts with special development needs - the Socially Integrated City" - City renewal “South-East” and was selected as a neighborhood with the poorest accessibility and connectivity to other parts of the metropolis.

Based on the typology of the German Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development (BBSR 2011) seven metropolitan regions were identified as similar to the Ruhr Metropolitan Region; however Greater Manchester and West Midland Conurbation were selected as the most relevant. Different regeneration projects in these metropolitan regions were identified and selection was narrowed down to only few of them located outside of the city centers.

New Broughton Village regeneration project in Lower Broughton in Salford was selected among six others as a successful case of urban regeneration. A main goal was to identify and understand mechanisms that lead to an improved physical and social environment as an important condition for reduction of environmental inequalities.

Research method

A qualitative approach was selected to explore the process of transformation and to understand the context necessary for its successful planning and implementation resulting in improved living and social environment as well as possible reduction of environmental inequalities. Main indicators for evaluating the regeneration process were selected from the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities (European Commission 2007) and narrowed down to: the state of the built environment, access to quality open spaces, and access to public transport and connectivity of the neighborhood to other parts of the city and metropolis. Main methods for the assessment of the built environment such as reconnaissance, observation, photo documentation, and mapping were combined with semi-structured interviews with main stakeholders in the regeneration process as well as residents.

Selected case studies are part of the dissertation which is still in progress. Descriptions of the case studies in this paper are based on preliminary analysis of the data obtained during the field work including interviews and own observations.

4. Case studies

New Broughton Village, Salford, Greater Manchester, UK

New Broughton Village regeneration project is located in Lower Broughton, Broughton Ward, East Salford district which is 1.5 km to the northwest of Manchester’s City core and bounded on the west and south by the River Irwell. From the period of industrialization and rapid urbanization until the 1950 the Lower Broughton was densely populated. An industrial suburb, characterized by Victorian ‘terraced’ housing with only few amenities. The situation changed during the 1970s and 1980s when most of the terraced housing was demolished and replaced with low density housing (City of Salford 2004).
Constant population loss due to deindustrialization led to a sharp population decline. Drop in population and the high level of unemployment (Table 1) consequently led to a lower supply demand, which was coupled with lower purchasing power. Low level of education (Table 1) was a significant barrier to access the labor market and had influenced further the unemployment level. These conditions created an unsustainable environment for local services and retail as well as recreational and community facilities leading to their closure or abandonment. High levels of abandoned land and properties as well as increase in crime and anti-social behavior created a downward spiral and thus making the Lower Broughton neighborhood a place to be avoided.

Deprivation level in Broughton Ward in the year 2001 was significantly below the city level (Table 1). One of the indicators that is strongly related to deprivation, life expectancy, was the lowest in Broughton for women from 1999-2003 and one of the lowest (after Pendleton) for men in Salford (Salford NHS 2010, p.14).

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Broughton</th>
<th>Salford</th>
<th>England</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001 Population number</td>
<td>7,784&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>216,103&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>49,138,831&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People aged 16-74 with no formal qualifications (%)</td>
<td>47.02&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>35.52&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>28.85&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People aged 16-74: Economically active: Unemployed (%)</td>
<td>5.31&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.81&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.35&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of deprivation (%)</td>
<td>67.17&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>50.9&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Table 1: Population in Broughton in 2001 with levels of education, unemployment and deprivation

<sup>1</sup> Neighborhood Statistics 2001 – Office for National Statistics (ONS 2001)
<sup>2</sup> Neighborhood Statistics 2000 - Office for National Statistics (ONS 2000) – experimental data
<sup>3</sup> Health Profile 2006, value for period 2001 (NHS 2006)

High deprivation level was a main indicator for initiating the regeneration process in Lower Broughton.

**Planning urban regeneration**

Local authority has recognized the challenges of Lower Broughton and in the year 2000 appointed consultants Taylor Young to estimate the regeneration potentials of the area. Although the study was conducted in 2001, lack of financial means prevented the initiation of the urban regeneration. However, in 2003 the national government set up nine Housing Market Pathfinders - one of them being Manchester-Salford. Lower Broughton was one of the areas selected for improvement due to multiple indices of deprivation and convenient location in the proximity of Manchester City.

In 2004 public-private development agreement was formed between the Salford City Council and Countryside Properties, a private developer of new housing. Urban Vision, a public-private Joint Venture Partnership, was responsible for legal issues and overarching structure for the development as well as support to the City Council and Countryside Properties throughout community consultation and information about the overall progress.
During one year of consultation period with the local community and all other stakeholders, different themed workshops, steering group meetings and a study trip were organized to engage the existing community. The consultation activity provided information that was integrated into the strategic vision for the regeneration of the area in a form of Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Lower Broughton Design Code, which was adopted in January 2006. Strategic vision was focused on the improvement of the quality of life and sustainable development of the area by tackling economic, social and environmental issues (Salford City Council, 2006). An action plan, developed to address issues related to Housing, Environment, Consultation and Community, Crime, Anti-Social Behaviour, Traffic and Transport, was led by six teams compounded of different experts.

The vision was shaped into a ‘New Broughton Village’ regeneration project for Lower Broughton. A new name for the project and the area, New Broughton Village was significant in order to change the perception of the area and provide it with a new identity.

Improvements in the built environment

Key element of the regeneration, as stated in the SPD, was to reverse the population loss and to attract new residents into the area in order to increase the number of inhabitants from 3,200 (in 2005) to 7,500-10,000 over the period of 10 to 12 years (Salford City Council, 2006). Population growth was seen as an important precondition to sustain a range of services and support the local economy. Significant improvements in the built environment are visible in Figure 1 by comparing the housing conditions and street layout in 2003 (right photograph) with a new housing development (left photograph). Mix of property types was envisioned to create vibrant and diverse community (Salford City Council, 2006). Market and non-market housing were designed in the same row or block and therefore, not differentiable from the outside (Figure 1, left).

Figure 1: Lower Broughton in Salford in 2003 on the left (source: Urban Vision) and new development on the left, May 2015 (source: author)

Implementation of the planned regeneration was divided into eight phases. In May 2015 Phase 6 (Figure 2) was still under construction, while Phases 5, 7 and 8 were in the initial
phase of site preparation. Starting with relatively unoccupied land in Phase 1 (Figure 2) gave chance to plan and build new homes prior to clearance of the old ones. This was a favorable situation for the existing residents of council housing because they were able to engage to a certain extent in planning their new homes, as well as in selecting their future neighbors, which may have contributed in preserving a strong community feeling in the area.

![Figure 2: Part of the New Broughton Village implementation plan with phases (source: Urban Vision)](image)

One Phase followed the other, based on the same principle it enabled that residents had to move only once. This was of great significance because the most of the residents were from the lower-income and vulnerable population groups, living in council housing.

However, the regeneration process is still not completed and it was interrupted and delayed due to the economic crisis in 2008/09. Some of the great challenges for the private developer were buffered by government support, which prevented further delays. Government funding to support affordable and social housing provided means for the developer to continue the regeneration process independent from selling the market properties. Furthermore, unfavorable location on the River Irwell’s flooding area (a 100 year flood), meant that housing should be elevated, which added extra costs of the construction; however, all the costs related to flooding were taken over by the UK Environmental Agency.

**Access to quality open spaces**

Green Grosvenor Park, a new public open space in Lower Broughton, is located on a site of the century old Grosvenor Square Park, which was a center of local community. The Park was developed in an early phase of the regeneration process due to its role as a flooding basin with channels intended to conduit the water away from the settlement. This was introduced as one of the flood mitigation measures. Additionally, early development of the park was important for the provision of a new social infrastructure. A primary school “River View”, which aimed to attract new residents, was built on the east side of the park. Many of its possible outdoor activities are extended to other parts of the park. The Park accommodates different activities and it is equipped with an outdoor gym and children’s playground.
Albert Park, an existing park on the northern border of the regeneration area was significantly improved by the mechanism of Section 106 (S106) planning obligations agreement of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Planning obligations are aimed at supporting the development of sustainable communities (ODPM 2005) and help to assume different improvements in the neighborhood as a compensation for the newly developed area. In the case of the public open spaces:

\[\text{Planning obligations should be used as a means to remedy local deficiencies in the quantity or quality of open space, sports and recreational provision. Local authorities will be justified in seeking planning obligations where the quantity or quality of provision is inadequate or under threat, or where new development increases local needs.}\]

\[\text{DCLG n.d., p. 13}\]

Before the improvements took place, Albert Park was underused due to crime and safety concerns. One of the first actions was placing special barriers on the entrances that enable trolleys and wheel-chairs to enter, but prevent motorcycles, which were the main concern for the visitors due to their high speeds and theft.

In 2006, a voluntary group “Friends of Albert Park” started working together with the Neighborhood Management team on the improvements of the parks and supervision of its state and maintenance. They are still eligible for the various funding options for the further park improvements. Equipment for picnic area as well as table tennis area was financed from government funds. In addition to football pitch, bowling green and pavilion, as well as fitness area with equipment, new tennis terrains are planned to respond to diverse users demands. Besides areas for different sport activities, there are assigned locations for young children, which are fenced due to safety reasons. In the case of Albert Park, Urban Vision has developed a Master Plan, which was a starting point for the voluntary group to apply for funding and the improvements.

The voluntary group is meeting regularly and discussing a range of issues such as safety and maintenance but also appearance and future activities for the residents. They are cooperating with the police in regard to safety issues. Furthermore, Salford Community Leisure supports them in regard to the organization of activities and events. Additionally, the Neighborhood Manager networks them with various sectors that may be relevant in certain occasions, and their issues are reported on the regular Community Committee meetings.

**Access to public transport and connectivity of the neighborhood**

According to the SPD, enhancing accessibility in terms of better connectivity of the area with other parts of the city was one of the design principles (Salford City Council, 2006). Streets are designed to accommodate different modes of transport; however, there are no separate bike lanes. The emphasis was on the improvement of existing pedestrian routes as well as creating new pedestrian friendly routes (Figure 3) with slow traffic speeds (20km/h), while preserving the existing highway network. Although there are significant improvements in the street layout and street network, car use is still predominant in the area.

Private providers of bus services as a part of Transport for Greater Manchester are operating in the area on the two main corridors, Lower Broughton Road and Great Clowes Street. Public transport stops are located in comfortable walking distances of housing and are...
Universally accessible; however, evening and night timetables, as well as long waiting times at some points during the day are not responding to residents’ needs, which reinforces car use.

**Figure 3: Key accessibility/connectivity improvements in the Lower Broughton redevelopment**

Source: SPD: Lower Broughton Design Code 2006, p. 32

Although the area has very good connections to Manchester City, the regional center and its traditional retail locations lacks direct lines to the west of Salford where new employment centers are developed. These and other issues related to transport are reported on Community Committee meetings and further stated on the Transport Advisory Group meetings in order to improve public transport in the area.

**Evaluation of the urban regeneration**

Regeneration process, which is still uncompleted, have already shown some positive trends in the area, such as the number of households in East Salford district which has increased by 10.8% from 2001-2011, while the amount of households with no adults in employment has decreased by 9.1% in the same period (Salford City Council 2015). Population number in Broughton ward has almost doubled in 2011 comparing to 2001 (Table 2), which is a positive trend. Although there is an improvement in education level it is still below the city average and England’s average level (Table 2). Unemployment has increased in 2011 compared to 2001; however, that is a general trend which can be observed in Salford and England (Table 2).
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<td>53,012,456</td>
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<td>People aged 16-74 with no formal qualifications (%) in 2001</td>
<td>47.02</td>
<td>35.52</td>
<td>28.85</td>
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<tr>
<td>People aged 16-74 with no formal qualifications (%) in 2011</td>
<td>38.90</td>
<td>27.10</td>
<td>22.50</td>
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<td>5.20</td>
<td>4.40</td>
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Table 2: Population in Broughton in 2001 and 2011 with levels of education and unemployment

Source: ONS 2001 (values for 2001) and ONS 2011 (values for 2011)

Indices of deprivation have been changed several times since the year 2000, and they are not comparable due to changes in geographical units, domains and subdomains (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 2004).

Although life expectancy at birth has improved in the Broughton Ward from 2008-2012 it is still low (70.4 years for men and 76.7 women) when compared to the city of Salford (75.5 years for men and 80.1 years for women) and lower than the national level (78.9 for men and 82.8 for women) (Public Health England 2013, p. 17). However, the time period from 2006 when the changes in the built and social environment were first initiated until today is too short to be reflected in the increase of life expectancy in a population.

It is important to understand the regeneration area in larger context to identify other factors that may have also influenced the improvements and positive trends in the area. Lower Broughton regeneration cannot be regarded as an isolated project and its initiation may be related to other events, such as Salford Quays regeneration in the western part of the city of Salford, which was labeled as successful. Additionally, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) announced in 2004 that they plan to move some of their production to Salford or Manchester (Breen 2004) and eventually selected Salford and its newly developed “Media City” on Salford Quays in 2006 (Deans 2006). This probably has had some influence on other regeneration projects including Lower Broughton.

Furthermore, other urban regeneration initiatives in East Salford district, such as the government initiative “New Deal for Communities in Charlestown and Lower Kersal” have helped to improve the perception of the area. Due to their experience in community engagement they were able to transfer their knowledge to Lower Broughton.

**Bulmke-Hüllen, Gelsenkirchen, Ruhr Metropolitan Region, Germany**

Bulmke-Hüllen is part of the administrative district Gelsenkirchen-Mitte located next to the city center with nearly 23,500 inhabitants (Stadt Gelsenkirchen 2010). On the south of the area there is a large brownfield site “Schalker Verein”. Bulmke-Hüllen was created from the
scratch during the industrialization period and it was densely populated; however, the situation has changed after the closure of the industrial plants, when structural change was initiated.

As a result of structural change, dramatic loss of population, as well as high levels of unemployment in Bulmke-Hüllen compared to the whole city of Gelsenkirchen (Stadt Gelsenkirchen 2011) created an unsustainable environment for local services and its further decline. In the year 2011 unemployment rate had reached 18,62% in the area (Stadt Gelsenkirchen 2011), which is 3,72% more than on city level. Life expectancy at birth in Gelsenkirchen in 2010-2012 was 74,62 years for men and 80,19 years for women (lzg.nrw n.d.), which is 3,1 years less for men and 2,61 years less for women than the national average (Statistische Bundesamt 2014). According to the Census 2011, the proportion of the population leaving school without qualifications was 13,4 in Gelsenkirchen (lzg.nrw n.d.a), which was higher comparing to 3,8 on the national level (Statistisches Bundesamt 2015).

In 2011, disposable income of household in Gelsenkirchen was with 79,4% compared to national average (100%) the lowest in the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (lzg.nrw n.d.b).

The difficult socio-economic situation was tackled through the national program “Districts with special development needs - the Socially Integrated City” (“Stadtteile mit besonderem Entwicklungsbedarf - Die soziale Stadt”). It was a part of the urban development policy as a government’s response to the increasing amount of districts with special problems which were caused around 1970 by a deindustrialisation and growing socio-spatial segregation in urban areas (Krummacher et al 2003). As a part of the “District Program Gelsenkirchen South-East” („Stadtteilprogramm Gelsenkirchen Süd-Ost“) Bulmke-Hüllen has been taking part in this program since 2002 (Stadt Gelsenkirchen n.d.).

The urban renewal program has four main work fields:

- Improvement of housing, residential environment, traffic situation and urban ecology
- Strengthening of local economy, creation jobs and qualification opportunities
- Social work within the districts for a better social cohesion
- Participation and activation of the residents

Stadt Gelsenkirchen n.d.

This incorporates an interdisciplinary approach and horizontal cooperation between different departments on the municipal level, as well as inclusion of all stakeholders and active participation of residents aimed at improving local conditions holistically (MWEBWV 2011). Projects are funded from the European, national and state funds as well as from municipal funds for a limited time period (ibid.).

**Improvements in the built environment**

Improvements in the built environment are only one aspect of the renewal program in Bülmke-Hüllen, which has very strong emphasis on social integration. Housing improvement is focused on the enhancement of the existing housing stock, rather than new housing development. The most important project in this area is the conversion of the 100 ha brownfield “Schalker Verein” into a commercial area (Soziale Stadt NRW 2015). This former steelwork industrial plant, which has operated until 2004, is now equipped with solar panels for energy production; nevertheless, no other improvements took place so far (Figure 4).
In the north of the “Socially Integrated City” program area “South-East” (“Südost”), a large multi-story residential building “Tossehof” was built up in the 1970’s. It was deconstructed and restored in the period from 2005 - 2012 in order to improve the appearance and functionality; moreover, social struggles in the neighborhood were also reduced. Limited access to retail was one of the challenges, which was tackled by opening the alternative supermarket “Carekauf” in 2009. Carekauf was envisioned as an integrative supermarket supported by the big supermarket chain REWE and charitable organization Caritas to offer affordable prices to the vulnerable population groups in Tossenhof (Stockmann 2009). Its social dimension of employing disabled and long-term unemployed people was coupled with a special home delivery service for elderly (ibid.). However, purchasing power of residents was very low, and although highly supported from different actors it was unsustainable for the supermarket to operate, which led to its closure in 2012 (WAZ 2012).

Access to quality open spaces

There is a relatively high amount of green spaces, 14,8%, in Bulmke-Hüllen compared to the city level of 11,5% (Stadt Gelsenkirchen 2010). Area is characterized with many allotment gardens as well as parks and open places. One of the initiatives of the urban renewal was the refurbishment of the playground in one of the biggest parks in the area, Bulmker Park. Park is highly used by local residents during the daytime, while underused during the night due to bad lighting and security issues.

In the north-west of the old industrial site “Schalker Verein”, public open space “Garden for Residents Orange Square” (“Bürgergarten Orangeplatz”) was renewed as a part of the initiative “Socially Integrated City” and reopened in 2006 (Stadt Gelsenkirchen 2007). Although planned in cooperation with local residents, the park is marked as a place which is rarely used due to safety concerns.

Access to public transport and connectivity of the neighborhood

The bus stop network is on a walkable distance of 400m, universally accessible; however there is a lack in frequent timetables, which is for most of the residents a reason to use the
Although many of them, 18.62% are unemployed (Stadt Gelsenkirchen 2011) or on low-income, they opt for car use due to inefficient public transport, which is additional burden for these vulnerable population groups.

A street network with a high number of dead ends makes the area less attractive for walking and biking. Furthermore, barriers such as a fenced open sewer canal Sellmannsbach, a part of the River Emscher’s system, prevents direct routes from the east of the neighborhood to the city center. The canal’s transformation is planned by 2017/18 (Emschergenossenschaft 2015), which could improve the situation regarding the connectivity of the neighborhood.

5. Cases comparison

In this paper Lower Broughton urban regeneration is evaluated as successful and certain aspects are compared with the urban regeneration in Bulmke-Hüllen in Gelsenkirchen, which has showed only modest improvements. Urban regeneration strategies in both areas aimed to improve built and social environment of deprived neighborhoods. It was recognized that only a holistic and integrated approach can overall improve the situation.

Different levels of government and governance were employed to reach the goals. In the case of Salford six teams were formed to tackle the issues identified as the most important in Lower Broughton. Cooperation of different actors and experts in improving those aspects as well as meaningful citizens’ involvement has proven to be crucial for the success of the project. Community Committee meetings where residents including vulnerable population groups could present and discuss important issues in their neighborhood gave them a chance to influence the situation in their living environment. Since an important aspect of the urban regeneration is not only to improve the physical environment, but also to create sustainable communities and improve the social environment, direct involvement of residents plays an important role in achieving that goal.

In Bulmke-Hüllen the greater emphasis was on the social integration, rather than on the improvements in the built environment. Except for the high-rise residential buildings in Tossenhof, there were only very limited improvements of certain parks, playgrounds and school yards compared to the new development in Lower Broughton. It can be assumed that new residential buildings, high quality open spaces and the new school had significantly increased the population of Lower Broughton.

The new developments have also enabled an improved street network and direct street connectivity instead of cul-de-sacs, which was the case before the regeneration in Lower Broughton. A better street network, as well as cooperation with the police and the Neighborhood Management Team created a safer environment. Similar mechanism was employed for the Albert Park, where Friends of Albert Park group is working together with Neighborhood Management Team and other sectors to sustain the park and make it a central point for local residents. This approach of direct engagement of local residents in sustaining the park has benefits not only for the visible changes in the park but also for the social cohesion and for strengthening the community.

Although “Orange Square” in Bulmke-Hüllen was improved according to residents’ suggestions in the planning phase, it is still underused, meaning that some important aspects
such as safety, were not completely solved. The example of Alfred Park and direct involvement of residents would probably have the beneficial effects in the case of Orange Square as well.

6. Conclusions

Besides the visible improvements of the built environment, factors contributing to the successful urban transformation and reduction of environmental inequalities in Lower Broughton are related to the access of vulnerable population groups to decision-making as well as to better education and employment opportunities. Furthermore, success of the urban regeneration was highly dependent on meaningful and active community involvement, as well as cooperation of different sectors and stakeholders. In Bulmke-Hüllen cooperation of different sectors was planned, however horizontal collaboration was developed only to a certain level which gave modest results.

In the case of Salford, proximity to Manchester plays an important role in regenerating Lower Broughton, however initiating the regeneration process was highly dependent on national government support. Furthermore, regeneration efforts and private developer were highly supported by both local and national government. A significant event, such as moving BBC offices to Salford, was an important signal for developers to invest in the city.

Although, different external factors may have influenced the urban regeneration it is of great significance that local community is not only playing a passive role in the regeneration, but rather being an active stakeholder involved in the regeneration process from its very beginning to the end and furthermore. It is the local government that made provisions for the local community to be a part of the regeneration process. Involvement and maintenance after the completed project is crucial to reinforce sustainability.

Maintenance and park improvements can be provided by using different means and ways of financing and organization, such as in the case of Lower Broughton. Albert Park was underused before the regeneration due to safety concerns, which is a case in many deprived neighborhoods. Thus, a simple provision of a green area without meaningful improvements is insufficient. A good quality and maintenance are keys to frequent use that benefits residents and decreases inequalities. In addition, involvement of voluntary groups in park improvements not only results in better quality of the park that responds to residents' needs, but also provides a sense of pride, which is crucial especially in deprived neighborhoods. Local identity, an important factor for the existing residents, was preserved in the case of Green Grosvenor Park, which was built on a site of the century old Grosvenor Square Park.

Urban regeneration driven locally, as a combination of top-down with bottom-up approach, and different interventions that range from temporary to permanent have enabled the improvement of the urban environment in a deprived neighborhood in Broughton. Aspects such as cooperation between the public, private and civil sector as well as different models of financing were identified as the main enabling factors, which have facilitated improvements in the built environment and better access to facilities and services. In that sense non-market housing delivery besides better security of investment provides important stability of housing supply for vulnerable groups. Good proportion of non-market housing delivery in the
regeneration of deprived areas, as well as meaningful involvement of local community, is significant for preventing gentrification process.

Unlike neighborhoods that have undergone urban regeneration and then faced gentrification, this approach allowed for preserving to a great extent the existing population, especially vulnerable groups and enabling them to benefit from these interventions that were designed for them and with them in the first place. However, since urban regeneration is related to national and regional policies, lessons learnt from this case study may in part be transferred to another region that is facing similar challenges.
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