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Planning for hospitable public spaces and the changing city: A content analysis of the city of Sunderland Unitary Development Plan

Abstract

A plethora of new public spaces have been developed in central areas of many British cities. There is evidence of the emergence of new tourism and hospitality developments (particularly hotels) close to public spaces, which could influence how the spaces are used. Whilst an on-going discussion of the hospitable city is prevalent within the literature, no study to date has focused specifically on the symbiosis of tourism, hospitality and public space in planning policy documents. In order to gain a better understanding of how cities plan for a productive relationship between tourism and hospitality and public space and hotel development this article presents a content analysis of the city of Sunderland's Unitary Development Plan entitled UDP Alteration No. 2 (Central Sunderland) Adopted Policies, this being the central legal urban planning policy document that guides change in the city. The results of the content analysis suggest three central themes of prestige, variety and vibrancy.

Introduction

Many western post-industrial cities are currently engrossed in future defining processes of urban regeneration, where the very nature of their purpose as cities is being decided. In very many ways, this is clearly influenced by the direction and preferences of market forces and the international flow of money and expertise (Turok, 1992; Madanipour, 2006; Carmona et al., 2012; Pacione, 2013). However, in addition, urban planning policy created by the state provides vision and strategy to influence the types of cities that emerge and how this happens (McCarthy, 2007).

Critical in determining the future purpose of post-industrial cities undergoing urban regeneration is the role that tourism and hospitality will play (Bell and Binnie, 2005; Bell, 2007a; Bell, 2007b). Indeed, within the process of urban regeneration, questions a city must often reflect upon are: in what ways are we hospitable and how do we best demonstrate and market that to the outside world. A recognised sense of hospitality is an asset for attracting and entertaining leisure visitors as well as for attracting investment. Critical hospitality literature (Ruhanen, 2013; van den Broek Chavez and van der Rest, 2014) tells us that local government finds itself uniquely responsible for providing a reasoned assessment of the level to which the city as a whole can be considered a hospitable city and for planning strategic interventions to improve the depth, reach and quality of hospitality offered. Van den Broek Chavez and van der Rest (2014) also help us to conceptualise hospitality and the city by providing insight into two contrasting stories of origin for urban settlements, the city where the agora or marketplace is predominant in its founding story and where hospitality for the visitor is paramount and the city designed as a fortress to defend residents from the hostilities of outsiders - inherently the antithesis of the hospitable city. Taken as metaphors, the agora and the fortress provide a useful lens through which to view the travails of the contemporary western city, trying hard to position itself to prosper in a globalised world in which extremely mobile capital and a professional workforce seek high quality destinations.

A critical and highly visible element of urban regeneration and an invaluable arena through which a city can be hospitable is public space (Derrida, 2001; Chan, 2005 cited in Bell, 2007b, p.11; Mordue, 2017). It should be hoped that urban regeneration

processes endow cities with high quality, flexible and highly usable public spaces. The level of success that tourism and hospitality enjoy in a city is linked to how existing public spaces are used and whether new ones are developed. However, the relationship is also inverted – the quality and existing use of public space partly determines how attractive a city is to visit and for tourism and hospitality ventures to invest in.

A plethora of new public spaces have been developed in northern English cities, all seeking ‘cultural urban renaissance’ to some extent or another. For instance Mordue (2007, p. 453) discusses the case of York which he describes as ‘both a post-industrial city and an internationally recognized heritage city’ where there have been attempts to create a renewed offering of central public space. As Bell (2007b, p. 16) has noted the Manchester’s ‘spectacular regeneration’ has seen the creation of new public spaces. Recent among these new public spaces is Hardman Square in the cities newly developed Spinningfields district. With reference to Sunderland itself the Sunnyside conservation zone spearheads an urban renaissance in the city centre, most notably through city centre living, culture and the hospitality industries. Integral to the areas regeneration is the award winning Sunnyside gardens a centrepiece public space.

However, the problem of public spaces struggling to meet the aims with which they were designed, that of attracting a regular flow of visitors who ideally will stay awhile, rather than simply walk briskly through, is well recognised (Low, Taplin and Scheld, 2009). In the central areas of some cities, there is evidence of the emergence of new tourism and hospitality developments (particularly hotels) close to public spaces, which could influence how the spaces are used. For instance, a 160 room hotel opened in 2015 in the former Baron House office building in central Newcastle

upon Tyne, located opposite a public space adjacent to the central train station. Another example is a 333 room hotel developed in the redeveloped Granary Wharf area of central Leeds and adjacent to a public space overlooking the Leeds Liverpool canal. In Sunderland, a new four star branded hotel now accompanies public space in the Stadium Park area.

Planning is a vital process that shapes and changes places and societies. There remains, however, a dearth of studies that unpacks the relationship between urban planning policy and hospitality. This article seeks to address this gap in knowledge by critically examining local government planning policy as a logical first step in scrutinising the relationship between new public spaces, new hotels and the hospitality of the city more widely. Local authorities produce development plans, which once adopted form the predominant legal document governing land use in the area. Existing studies have considered the role of public space in facilitating hospitableness in British cities (Jayne, Holloway and Valenine, 2006; Bell, 2007b; Mand and Ciliersm, 2013). However, an analysis of the role of specific planning policy in governing the role of public spaces in hospitable cities is lacking. As Ashworth and Page (2011) have commented despite issues associated with the use of public space being a key debate in urban studies is rarely discussed in tourism and leisure literature. Indeed, this article hopes to contribute to knowledge by addressing the dearth of interdisciplinary coverage of hospitality that Lynch et al., noted in 2011. Furthermore, whilst the public private continuum is a recognised feature of the domains of hospitality (Lashley, 2000) the spaces that constitute the public domain, which cross commercial and civic interests remain under researched (Bell, 2007b; McNeil, 2008).

Sunderland is a post-industrial city, its main heavy industries having been glass manufacturing, shipbuilding and mining (Robson, 1969). The UDP Alteration no.2, the document analysed for this article covers the city centre, which is a relatively poorly performing commercial centre and in the throes of major on-going regeneration. In England and Wales, lower layer super output areas (LSOAs) are geographic areas with a mean population of 1500, created for the reporting of statistics including indices of multiple deprivation. A number of LSOAs within Sunderland including the city centre are within the 1% most deprived of England's 32,844 LSOAs (UK Department for Communities and Local Government, 2015). Tourism is seen as being key to the future of the city centre with the council seeking to maximise inward investment in this area as stated in the UDP. Tourism and hospitality industries support 5,309 jobs (+5% pa) in the city (Robertson, 2018)

In terms of the visitor market in the north east of England and urban tourism, Sunderland is affected by competition from the traditionally more successful cities of Durham and Newcastle. Many of the city's most prominent visitor attractions pertain to its industrial heritage, e.g. the National Glass Centre and large sections of the exhibitions in the city's Winter Gardens and Art Gallery, and a number of its attractions occupy modern buildings located on land previously developed for heavy industry, e.g. the Stadium of Light as well as the National Glass Centre.

Sunderland also boasts remains of a much older history. The tower of St. Peter's Church in the city is one of the few surviving Anglo-Saxon structures in England and the monastery, which was once located around it was home to St. Bede, one of English history's most influential scholars (DeGregorio, 2010). Despite, the historic value of

the site, it currently attracts relatively few visitors and so far has failed in its application for UNESCO World Heritage status.

The coastal suburbs of Roker and Seaburn boast a long and well-used beach strip of hospitality establishments, from cycle themed coffee shops to the Marriott Hotel and events venue. The area hosts the largest annual event in the city, the internationally renowned Sunderland Air Show. In addition, the banks of the River Wear, once a place of heavy industrial activity, is now once again becoming a focal point for the city, this time for service sector led regeneration.

The specific aim of this article is to provide a critical analysis of the planning policy context surrounding the phenomena of new hotels and new public spaces being sited together in northern English cities. In order to gain a better understanding of how cities plan for a productive relationship between tourism and hospitality and public space and hotel development this article presents a content analysis of The city of Sunderland's Unitary Development Plan titled UDP Alteration No. 2 (Central Sunderland) Adopted Policies this being the central legal urban planning policy document guiding change in the city.

Hospitality and the city

A number of studies have taken the notion of welcome as defining or as being synonymous with hospitality (Bell, 2007a; Lynch et al., 2011). Fostering a sense of welcome is a strategic goal that city planners should aspire to (Bell, 2007b). Craggs (2012, p.215) describes hotels as 'key spaces of welcome' and as such hotels form a symbol of the hospitable city. Working along a hospitality hostility continuum a hotel may also be conceived as a safe haven, a respite from an unfamiliar or hostile city

(Wharton, 2001). The building of a hotel can be a pertinent symbol, not only of welcome, but also of the changing city and urban renewal. Their development is often conceived as a city asset that can bolster civic pride (McNeil, 2008). Hotels can be iconic in structure and can form a city landmark and an integral component of regeneration projects (McNeill and McNamara, 2009). New chain hotels whilst sometimes considered as dreary or emblematic of the generic city are often highly sought for their value in regeneration terms. Indeed the building and siting of a hotel leaves a lasting impact on the architectural aesthetics of a city and may constitute a form of spatial branding (Yakhelf, 2004).

The relationship between the hotel and the city is explored by McNeill (2008), who sees changes in the space within hotels as being expressive of changing consumption choices. In McNeill's (2008) essay, the changing configuration of the public space of the lobby, a space on the threshold of the urban, is noted. The lobbies of major hotels may traditionally and historically have been rather grandiose, forming a destination for wealthy visitors and residents. There often remained a rather sombre disconnect between those enjoying the lobby and the city outside. More recently, however, the lobbies of many hotels have come to fulfil the requirements of the cosmopolitan city, providing a simpler, more practical interior and the grounds for guests to engage with the city.

Rethinking the relationship between the hotel and the city outside it, by inviting the hotel or lobby guest to be a participant in the city allows for what Grit and Lynch (2011, p 210) describe as a 'spaces of hospitable' to occur. That is to say different assemblages of the hotel, the city and space that potentially pave the way for different forms of hospitable consumption that connects the visitor and the city to come into being. A

number of authors (Bell, 2007b; Mand & Cilliers, 2013) have also commented on the role that food and drink can play in adding diversity to and animating public spaces, contributing to the buzz of the city, all of which may be appealing to forms of consumption associated with the creative class.

As has been said, cities undergoing processes of urban regeneration featuring tourism and hospitality, must ask themselves the fundamental questions: in what ways are we hospitable and how do we best demonstrate and market that to the outside world? A number of authors (Ruhanen 2013, van den Broek Chavez and van der Rest 2014) have spoken of it being, in practice, local governments in western cities who have the challenging responsibility of judging ‘the quality of hospitality of the [their] city’ entire (van den Broek Chavez and van der Rest 2014, p.32) and bringing about interventions for its improvement. Ruhanen (2013, p.80) notes that it is common in the local context of cities to find an ‘absence of strong industry leadership’ insofar as offering an assessment of and/or plan for the quality of hospitality of the city as a whole, as opposed to creating and marketing single sites of hospitality such as individual commercial establishments, strips or zones. Indeed, the ‘dynamic model of hospitality’ (Lashley et al., 2007) conceptualises the host-guest relationship as being composed of three dimensions of hospitality, one of which is the civic.

Van den Broek Chavez and van der Rest (2014) also interrogate the spirit of hospitality engendered by the city and seek to understand it by positioning two extremes of hospitality associated with dual historical origins of different urban settlements, namely the ‘agora’ and the ‘fortress’. The agora, or marketplace being the historical raison

d'etre of some cities - a marketplace both physically for the exchange of tangible goods and in spirit in terms of being the site of the exchange of ideas, in both senses being a place relatively open to outsiders and valuing openness of communication between people. The fortress represents the means of becoming of other cities - sites developed as defensive settlements, intended to protect inhabitants and their resources from the hostilities of outsiders. Such an origin therefore contrasts entirely with the agora as it is a place founded to resist and prevent, at least on occasion, communication between outsiders and residents.

State urban planning and tourism and hospitality

State urban planning in the UK has its origins in efforts in the 19th century to address the worst damage caused by industry in cities to the environment and public health (Cullingworth and Nadin, 2006). In a fascinating story of transformation of its roles and aspirations, planning, or at least policy planning, has also, by the beginning of the 21st century assumed responsibility, along with certain other areas of local government policy, for finding an answer to the modern challenge for cities articulated by Leigh and Blakely (2017, p.1)

Cities, towns, counties and all local entities in a global economy have the challenge and opportunity of crafting their own economic destinies

Urban planning in the UK is now seen as having a central role in preparing a city to be competitive on a global stage and attractive to the resident, visitor and potential investor. Paddison (1993, p.339) uses the term 'urban entrepreneurialism' to describe this elevated level of responsibility for city governments. The state urban planning system manages protection and change in the physical environment, with

the much the vaunted vitality and creativity of the latest ‘chic’ urban destinations always a target (Gunder and Hillier, 2009; Pugh and Wood, 2004).

Urban tourism has grown dramatically as a sector within the global tourism industry (Pearce, 2001). Growth as an urban tourism destination is something of a holy grail for local government (Chang et al., 1996) and cities have an interest in both numbers of visitors and the geographical spread of places they come from (UNWTO, 2012). Bell (2007b, p.18) highlights specifically the emergent relationship between planning and hospitality, which he terms ‘planning for hospitality, conviviality or sociality’ or the ‘staging of hospitality by planners and city managers, those tasked with the entrepreneurial governance of the post- industrial city.’ Part of the planned transformation of the city of Sunderland is the planned creation of new public spaces in four key development zones Keel Square, Stadium Park, Sunnyside and Sheepfolds each of which will have significant hospitality provisions. In particular Sheepfolds a former industrial estate food and drink start-ups play a prominent role in the hopeful transformation of, and crucially attracting visitors into the area

Planning policy documents are critical elements in determining the type of physical and then social and economic change that cities undergo. They are legal documents setting out what can, can’t and should (in the view of local government) happen to land and existing physical structures in a city. Furthermore, as Castells (2002) alludes to, the physical character of a city is a key determining factor in shaping the society within it.

Public spaces as iconic sites in the city

Public spaces consistently feature among the most memorable of sites in cities for visitors (Hayllar, Griffin and Edwards, 2008) and are critical locations for contact between visitor and resident; and the sense of welcome and hospitality that is or is not created (Derrida, 2001; Chan, 2005 cited in Bell 2007b, p.11). The sensation of being outdoors and enjoying what are often iconic views of the city, sharing the same space as local people and, if the space is historic, continuing the traditions of past generations prove compelling. Sunderland's Keel square is a new public space that attempts to be a meaningful site of welcoming by heavily referencing the story of the city. A council leader has been cited in the local press as stating:

Officially opening Keel Square is an important step forward in Sunderland's journey of change. The square celebrates our world-class shipbuilding prowess and proud industrial heritage. It gives the city a space for events and a landmark to be proud of. (Sunderland Echo, 2015 no page)

Low, Taplin and Scheld, (2009) celebrate the role of successful public space as sites of genuine interaction between groups in society that otherwise have relatively little to do with each other. Such interaction can range from simply seeing others and being seen by them – perhaps for the first time, to tacit acknowledgement of one another within the public space, to direct verbal communication – possibly repeated on a consistent basis over time. The perception of public space as civic space – belonging to the city rather than to any specific corporate or cultural group – means such spaces develop meaning that begins from a reassuring basis of neutrality.

The function of public space as bringing together disparate groups is often visible in marketing material for cities: from the image of the thriving public space enjoyed by an ethnically diverse mixture of residents to the idea that tourists can enjoy public spaces as sites where they can meet local people on an equal footing – in an authentic way.

In the contemporary western city, it is recognised that the relationship between mixed land uses and vitality and diversity of users in public spaces is an important one. Tourism and hospitality are considered prime uses in this relationship (Grant, 2002; Butler, 2008). For example, in the introduction to this article, examples were given of recent hotel development in northern English post-industrial cities in, around or close to public spaces.

Hospitality and mixed-use development

Following the Second World War – much regarded as a time when the UK's urban planning polity was particularly charged with a zeal to transform society – spatial separation of land uses and not mixed use development was considered critical to achieving order and providing the highest quality of living, leisure and work spaces. Hospitality functions were dealt with in this regard in the same way as other urban functions. Hospitality was not seen as a tool for invigorating urban space – by having the two mixed spatially – as it often is now. In fact, urban space was not particularly thought of as needing invigorating at all, in the sense of attracting greater footfall or energy, rather it was thought important to make urban space cleaner, more ordered and more functional (Cullingworth et al., 1994).

In contrast, a central theme of the urban renaissance agenda, which has been dominant in UK planning policy since the 1980s, is that it is the close and nuanced mixing of uses in urban environments that helps bring us closest to achieving safe, vibrant and environmentally sustainable places (Lees, 2003). Indeed, the post-war spatial separation of land uses was referred to as ‘planning apartheid’ by John Gummer, then UK Secretary of State for the Environment (Gummer, date not given, cited by Coupland 1997, p. 223). In current thinking, hospitality along with land uses such as housing, office space, educational institutions, creative industries and public spaces, if located close to one another, complement each other in complex, multi-faceted and ultimately positive ways. Within central Sunderland, the large brownfield site of the former Vaux Brewery is an example of mixed-use development being key to plans for the city’s future. As Ford (2018, no page), quoting the leader of Sunderland City Council, writes in the Newcastle Chronicle, the Vaux site will ‘become a business hub, as well as a destination for leisure and housing’

Mommaas (2004) discusses the benefits of clusters of diversity – mixed land uses, closely located in an urban setting, between which lasting connections are enabled. Mommaas pays particular attention to the clustering of cultural functions – he discusses how it has become an explicit tool in economic development and destination management, helping to ‘creat[e] spaces, quarters and milieus for cultural production and creativity’ (Mommaas 2004, p. 508).

Even where there are a variety of urban functions within a small spatial setting, Townshend and Madanipour (2007, p.1) make clear, there can still be ‘homogenization.’ For example, if ownership is dominated by very large private

companies, if the setting is patronised by people from a narrow range of socio-economic backgrounds and if the urban character is one of monotone and uneventful architectural style. This cannot be considered as truly mixed use development. Townshend and Madanipour (2007, p.1) raise concern about the growth, across the UK, of:

privatized, socially exclusive enclaves and characterless ‘anywhere’ regeneration schemes, filled with the same retail outlets, coffee shops and anonymous pieces of public art.

Townshend and Madanipour’s article (2007) draws findings from a study of public spaces in North East England, where despite on-going challenges, they find some cause for optimism as there now seem to be a greater number of higher quality public spaces than in the past and enduring local traditions seem to be active in parts of the urban realm.

The character of public space

What is it that determines what a particular public space, and indeed any space within an urban environment is like – and by extension, whether or not visitors find them attractive and amenable? Low (1996, p.861) discusses the concepts of social production of space and social construction of space, which can be of help in developing our understanding. Low describes them as twin ‘mutually complementary perspectives’ and they seek to comprehend how the character and qualities of urban spaces in the present are a product or construction of multiple layers of forces, such as social and economic, which have reached and influenced the spaces over time. What Low (1996) has done is to present the production of space and the construction of space as a package of twin perspectives which can be brought to bear on the specific problematic

of better understanding the successes and failures of planned public spaces in their intended roles as sites central to civic attention.

The social production of space, whose theoretical emergence and development Lawrence and Low reviewed in 1990, considers how the physical character of urban spaces is formed. Low (1996, p.861) elaborated that the forces involved were ‘social, economic, ideological and technological.’ In 1996, Low went beyond physical character in conceptualising how the social and cultural feeling and/or meaning of urban spaces are constructed – referred to as social construction of space. This looked at ‘the phenomenological and symbolic experience of space as mediated by social processes such as exchange, conflict and control’ (Low 1996, p.861-862).

Within the competitive western model of urban tourism, in which cities, many of which are post-industrial, vie with each other to attract and satisfy visitors (Ashworth and Page, 2011), the ‘quality’ of feeling and/or meaning that visitors gain from being in public space has been brought to the fore. The social construction of space is a perspective that can aid in the analysis of specific public spaces - some of which may already be considered successful, while others may be the focus of regeneration plans, hoping to provide a renewed offer to the visitor. Clearly, if the two perspectives of social production and social construction are ‘mutually complementary’ (Low, 1996, p. 861) greater elaboration and application of one will both rest on and support greater elaboration and application of the other.

Methodology

This article presents a qualitative content analysis that aims to understand how local government plan for and govern tourism and hospitality development in public spaces in the city of Sunderland. The content analysis is applied to the city of Sunderland Unitary Development Plan, UDP Alteration No. 2 (Central Sunderland) Adopted Policies and seeks to understand how local government planners guide tourism and hospitality development through policy in the city and with a specific emphasis on a identified trend of hotels being sited within or close to public space

Content analysis

Content analysis is a method in which the researcher codes and explains these codes in order to make replicable and valid inferences of texts or other meaningful matter and of the context of their use (Krippendorff, 2018). Content analysis is a useful method to reflect on cultural patterns and to reveal the focus of individual groups, institutions and societies (Weber 1990, p9). Indeed as Krippendorff (2018, p. 20) states ‘content analysis provides new insights, increases a researcher's understanding of particular phenomena, or informs practical actions’. Content analysis can be applied quantitatively or qualitatively (Elo and Kyngas, 2008). When applied qualitatively the goal of content analysis is to interpret meaning from the content of text data (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). Therefore qualitative content analysis is a valuable method in which to gain meaningful insights into how local government plan for public space, tourism and hospitality through policy and frame such developments through the press.

Content analysis is commonly used to gain an understanding of policy (Richie and Spencer, 2002). In tourism research, content analysis has not been readily applied to

planning policy and is mostly used when evaluating representations of destination image (Heslinga, Groote and Vanclay, 2018). According to Camprubi and Coromina (2016) the majority of tourism content analyses are qualitative in application. Typically tourism content analyses set out to discern meaning from text as opposed to quantifying (Stephenkova, Kirilenko, Morrison, 2009). A common purpose across studies is that codes are developed as themes and the relationships between these themes and matter are explored and meaning inferred (Tseng et al., 2015). Coding frameworks developed can be, and often are, applied to a combination of documents images and texts.

Whilst content analysis is not readily applied to tourism planning documents some studies have used the method to explore how related policy might impact on tourism development. Chaney (2015) conducted a content analysis of political manifestos in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, which involved an initial quantitative focus on frequency of keywords etc, followed by a qualitative investigation of how the term tourism is employed in the documents. He demonstrates a threefold increase in the references to tourism between 1989/9 and 2011. This quantification then led to a qualitative analysis of how manifestos frame tourism in the context of regional party politics and local histories concluding that there is a need to further explore the roots of tourism policy and its application.

With specific reference to local planning and policy, Heslinga, Groote and Vanclay's (2018) content analysis identifies changes in how local planning documents frame interactions between tourism and landscape. It notes that greater synergies between tourism development and environmental protection occurred overtime. They conclude by stating 'a content analysis of past documents can be an effective tool to

systematically reveal the past patterns that have shaped the current situation' (Heslinga, Groote and Vanclay, 2018, p.188). Building on the above, the content analysis in this article seeks to explore how local government planning policies might impact on public space, being transformed through tourism and hospitality development.

With any form of content analysis transparency and validity is essential to ensure trustworthy results are generated (Elo and Kyngas, 2007). To achieve trustworthiness the data collection and analysis process should be described in sufficient detail so that readers have a clear understanding of what was carried out (Elo and Kyngas, 2007).

Content Analysis Process

The content analysis in this article is applied to the City of Sunderland UDP Alteration No. 2 (Central Sunderland) Adopted Policies. The document is the current statutory document that sets out the council's planning policy guidelines that determine planning applications within the central area of the city. The document can be downloaded in PDF format from the Sunderland City Council webpage at www.sunderland.gov.uk

Having identified the document the next stage is to decide the codes used in data evaluation. Weber, (1990, p.12) states 'to make valid inferences from the text, it is important that the classification procedure be reliable in the sense of being consistent: different people should code the same text in the same way'. In this content analysis, both researchers searched the UDP using codes that were decided in advance and initially limited to four keywords: tourism, hospitality, hotel and public space. The keywords: bar, public house, restaurant, cafe, were subsequently added to deepen the enquiry to include further recognised aspects of hospitality. As the article addresses an

emerging trend of new hotels and new public spaces being sited together in cities the keywords hotel and public space were selected. The keywords tourism and hospitality were used in order to gauge an understanding of how these umbrella terms are accounted for in the central planning document. This approach is consistent with what Foreman and Damschroder (2007) term ‘prior coding’ as codes are structured from the stated aims of this article. Furthermore using prior codes meant that the interpretation was consistent, stable and reproducible (Weber, 1990).

The use of computer software can aid content analysis and in this case Preview for MAC was used to perform a search for each of the keywords within the UDP document. To uphold inter-validity each of the authors independently searched the document arriving at the same number of instances that each keyword is used. To ensure that instances were not missed a manual check of the printed document was also performed.

This basic content analysis identified the number of instances each keyword was mentioned in the document. Thereafter analysis moved to a qualitative approach, the objective of which being to infer meaning regarding how each keyword is framed through the document. This close reading and data interpretation was performed independently. The authors then compared findings. Following Chen and Peng’s (2016) approach, discrepancies were discussed and scrutinised before agreeing on assessments made.

Having identified the incidence of the keywords in the document, qualitative analysis was completed over two stages. First, for each instance that a keyword is mentioned in the UDP a qualitative descriptor was applied as a means of explaining how it (the

keyword) was used within the document. This first stage of analysis forms the basis of the results section of this article. In order to develop an understanding of the synergy between the uses of the keywords and their meaning across the document as a whole a second stage of analysis was applied. The second stage of analysis involved grouping together the descriptors and identifying common underlying relationships and themes. This stage of data analysis forms the discussion section of this article and is consistent with the method used by Santos, (2004) when identifying common descriptions and underlying themes across a body of textual data.

Results

Tourism

The keyword 'tourism' appears prominently as part of core statements in the UDP about the types of development and functions the city council want to see in central Sunderland and their aspirations for the future character of the area. There is a sense that tourism is one of the main 'goods' possessed by a successful, competitive city and that attracting tourism, as a culturally oriented socio-economic flow would bring a particularly elevated level of prestige to Sunderland. Culture is strongly associated with the treasured goal of the city being thriving and attractive. On p.16 of the UDP, it is said that:

The City Council's vision for Central Sunderland is of a thriving urban area, which is attractive as a place to live and work. The council anticipates, and would welcome, proposals for prestige developments in the area Such developments are likely to comprise major facilities for *tourism* (our emphasis), cultural activities, education, business conferences. (UDP, p.6)

The fact that tourism features in these core statements of the UDP, where only the central themes of what the city council considers important appear, and that the adjective ‘thriving’ is chosen above all others to describe the central Sunderland of the future chime with what Bell, (2007b) has said about the frequently perceived link between tourism and vibrancy and increased footfall.

In the UDP, tourism is identified as one of the mixed uses the city council wants to see in central Sunderland. The concept of mixed use development is significant in the UDP and is frequently mentioned. It is a well-established concept in contemporary western urban planning and is often described in literature (Coupland, 1997; Lees, 2003) as a useful route to better natural surveillance and safer places (as will be covered later, the need for more surveillance of the public realm in central Sunderland was detected in the content analysis under the keyword ‘public space’) as well as more thriving places (identified above as being central in the UDP’s core statements describing their aim for central Sunderland of the future). In extracts of the UDP where the word ‘tourism’ is stated, the term ‘mixed use’ is also used for instance on page 23 of the UDP document it is stated that tourism alongside other mixed uses are to be focused in the city centre.

It is a clearly stated policy in the UDP that the heavily favoured location for new mixed-use developments (prominently including tourism and also implied as including retail, office space and hospitality functions) is the city centre and not the suburbs. The ultimate goal for the city centre as expressed in the UDP is a fully mixed use ‘total city,’ burgeoning with visitors and residents. From an overall reading of the UDP, rather than explicitly from the extracts where the keywords appear, another critical aspect of the

vision for the city centre is that it be high or medium high density. The vision presented shares much with the typical character of the English pre-modern city. Tourism is one of the uses the city council want to secure in this melting pot of the future. Indeed, it has been said before in academic literature that contemporary visions in the West of the future of the city centre are in part influenced by a rather simplistic nostalgia for the medieval city and perceptions of its compact and energetic hustle and bustle (Neuman 2005, Roberts et al., 1999).

Hospitality

The keyword ‘hospitality’ does not appear at all in the UDP. It is surprising that given that mixed use development is covered so prominently in the document and tourism is identified as such an important mixed use, hospitality – whose varied functions like hotels, bars, restaurants etc. have such a direct impact on visitors’ experiences in a city – is not mentioned. Speculative possible reasons for this are, firstly, that hospitality functions are simply mentioned in the UDP by more specific terms, e.g. hotels, restaurants, cafes and bars. Secondly, as stated above, the UDP projects a sense that tourism as a culturally oriented socio-economic flow would bring a particularly elevated level of prestige to Sunderland.

Deepening the search for hospitality in the document, the keywords: bar, public house restaurant and cafe were searched for. Within the UDP, the keywords public house and bar are sparsely mentioned however the following statement is made

Within the City Centre a policy of differential grants of planning permission will apply to the sub areas. A clear delineation of types of licensed premises will

be made, with a distinction between public houses, bars, café bars and bistros, wine bars and restaurants. (UDP, p.66).

Throughout the document there is an attempt to control and manage some forms of licensed establishments with the so-called evening economy being designated into four distinct development zones each of which target specific markets. For instance, the ‘night life quarter’ is to provide a concentration of late night activities in a manageable area and can be contrasted to the designated ‘cultural quarter’ about which the following statement is made.

This area is designed to encourage those activities which would support cultural activities, with limited and an appropriate selection of bars and live music venues to be developed in order to complement the cultural activities and encourage linked evening activity trips, which appeal to all age groups. (UDP, p.64)

In the UDP, zoning provides separation of uses in an attempt control and manage evening activities. Delineating allows planners to be selective over the types of licensed establishments present within a particular area of the city.

Public houses and bars are sparsely mentioned in the UDP document whereas restaurants and cafes are prevalent. Throughout the UDP, restaurants and cafes are banded together as land use A3. In contrast to public houses and bars (that are restricted) restaurants and cafes are positioned as an acceptable mixed use in a number of development zones and are spread throughout the city. Indeed, within the UDP restaurants and cafes provide a mechanism for conversion and infill where mixed use

and diversification of the area is encouraged. In relation to restaurants and cafes in the City Centre West development zone the following statement is made:

The council will support the diversification of food and drink and cultural opportunities within the City Centre West area, as defined on the Proposals Map. Proposals for conversion, redevelopment and infill to provide the following uses, [restaurants and cafes] having regard to UDP Supplementary Planning Guidance, are particularly encouraged. (UDP, p.60)

Cafes and restaurants are used as a mechanism to stimulate what the UDP terms as underdeveloped areas. For instance, in the Sunnyside development zone cafes and restaurants are cited as land uses that can transform the area into a lively and varied cafe quarter. In keeping with existing literature, hospitality provisions are used to breath life into areas of the city (Bell, 2007). Furthermore, restaurants and cafes are used as a vehicle to stimulate activity at differing times of the day in different areas. For example, in the nightlife zone restaurants and cafes help to balance evening and daytime economies and in other areas of the city are used to stimulate activity in the evening.

Hotel

As previously mentioned, the UDP establishes that the preferred location for new mixed-use developments is the city centre and not the suburbs. The keyword ‘hotel’ appears in the UDP to state explicitly that it is one of these mixed uses. The nature of the other uses with which ‘hotel’ appears is notable. They are ‘arts, culture and tourism (theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities)’ (UDP, p.25). With the exception of ‘conference facilities,’ these are all uses that are examples

of high culture. There is a sense that new hotels are seen as rather elevated and prestigious developments for the city.

‘Hotel’ appears as one of the mixed uses required (that there is an ambition to see developed) as part of the ‘redevelopment proposals’ (UDP, p.14) for a number of strategic sites in central Sunderland, which are identified in the UDP. In addition to the theme of mixed use development, brownfield development and urban regeneration/renewal are key here. Smith (2012) recognised that new hotel development, from a strategic regeneration perspective, can be a very desirable anchor land use. He also notes that the formative role hotel development can play in urban regeneration is neglected in academic literature. Interestingly, within each of the strategic sites where hotels are mentioned as a land use, some of the land is devoted to public space. The redevelopment is at a different stage in each of the various strategic sites. In some cases, it is advanced and the hotel and/or public space exist while in other cases there is a vision for the site’s redevelopment in the UDP but physical change has not yet begun.

Public Space

The keyword ‘public space’ is mentioned in the document where it is stated that surveillance is required for public spaces and other pedestrian areas in the city to be safe. Fyfe and Bannister (1996) discuss the practice of electronic surveillance in British cities, in lieu of pedestrians taking ownership of the public realm and providing a reliable enough presence for natural surveillance and self-policing to occur. In fact, the Sunderland Business Improvement District, as part of their aim to improve the quality of the urban environment in central Sunderland, decided that a network of

talking surveillance cameras merited investment (Sunderland BID, 2018a). It is clear that pedestrian footfall and the vibrant activity of various mixed uses in central Sunderland is not currently great enough or reliable enough, on its own, to secure the public realm. This rather sets the scene as to the challenges facing existing and planned public spaces in the city.

As discussed earlier, city governments now find themselves having to be urban entrepreneurs (Paddison, 1993), doing what they can to position their city to attract and accept investment, incoming professional residents and visitors (Leigh and Blakely, 2017). They are also responsible for maintaining the quality of the urban environment (faithful to the founding vision of the British planning system based on securing a higher quality of health and housing (Cullingworth and Nadin, 2006). There must be a judgement over how these roles should be balanced when policy is written and when planning applications are considered. Interestingly, it is conceivable that the two roles pull in different directions or also that they support one another, i.e. by securing high quality development projects for the city the quality of the urban environment is improved which in turn makes it easier to attract future investment. On p.27 of the UDP, there is the following statement:

Development should acknowledge that cities change and adapt over the longer term. The design of new places and buildings should be robust taking account of the need for future flexibility. Public spaces should be suitable for a variety of activities, and the layout should anticipate the need for future change. (UDP, p.27)

In the extract, the terms ‘change,’ ‘adapt,’ ‘flexibility’ and ‘future change’ are used and ‘places ... buildings [and] ... public spaces’ are mentioned. A flexibility to new uses and developments in the city’s places, buildings and public spaces is established based on the justification that cities change. Indeed, transformational change in land use is inherent in the character of the post-industrial city, such as Sunderland (Gospodini 2006). The extract states specifically that ‘public spaces should be suitable for a variety of uses.’ This is interpreted as meaning that the physical layout of the spaces themselves can be such that they can host a variety of activities but also the location and characteristics of physical structures around spaces can be introduce flexibility, e.g. units with large windows that can completely open looking out onto the space which can accommodate a variety of functions which can contribute to the life of the space. The link between mixed use development and well used public spaces is well established in literature (Grant, 2002; Lees, 2003; Mommaas 2004).

Discussion

The results of the content analysis outlines how each of keywords within the UDP document are used in a singular sense i.e. tourism, then hotel, then public space. Descriptors have been applied to instances when the keywords are mentioned in the document as a means to ascertain meaning. In this discussion section we shift analysis towards unpacking the core themes that are underpinning the usage of the keywords and as they relate to the symbiosis of public space, hotel, and tourism through the UDP document. In discussion we would suggest three interconnected themes that underpin the usage of the descriptors of the keywords these themes are prestige, variety and vibrancy.

Prestige

Prestige is a theme that is apparent across all of the descriptors of the keywords identified within the content analysis of the UDP. It has been suggested that attracting tourism is a prestigious goal. As a marker of a thriving and attractive city, hotels in the UDP are positioned alongside high culture and sought after conferencing facilities. The UDP champions public spaces in the transformation of heavy industrial landscapes and within certain redevelopment zones. The concentration of hotels and high quality public space within the UDP prestige continues to cut through the document serving as a marker of regeneration.

Within the land use category of public houses, bars, restaurants and cafes, some but not all of these functions are seen in the UDP in a supportive role for culture and the most prestigious developments. The UDP maintains that 'a clear delineation of types of licenced premises will be made' (UDP, 2007 p 64). In the UDP, public houses are very rarely mentioned and are never projected in a supportive role to prestigious developments. Bars are mentioned 4 times and are used in a supportive role but only when prefaced with the term 'an appropriate selection of.' The inference that only certain types of bars are considered able to offer something positive in a prestigious setting. Restaurants and cafes are quoted more frequently than public houses and bars as a potential land use and are the only of these functions specifically mentioned in the most strategic sites where public space and hotels come together.

Sunderland like many other post-industrial cities is undergoing a process of redefining and reimagining itself (Paddison, 1993). As noted by Short et al., (1993, p. 207) for such cities:

constructing a new, more positive picture includes the marketing of a new image, constructing a new environment, and reorienting a city's relationship with its physical environment

This reconstruction of the city would include input from various actors including marketers, investors and planners (Short et al., 1993). For many post-industrial cities tourism is taken as a possible catalyst for regeneration and employment creation (Gospodinim, 2006). Such sentiments echo Joppe's (1996, p. 477) assessment that there is a 'universal acceptance by governments that tourism's job- and wealth-creation potential is a good thing'. Many of these projected future jobs for the city fall within the hospitality sector for instance, the local newspaper the Sunderland Echo reports that the opening of a four star hotel at Sunderland Keel Square will create 130 jobs (Brownson, 2017). Like so many of its post-industrial counterparts Sunderland suffers an image problem and might not be easily conceived as a tourist destination (Bramwell & Rawding, 1996). Prestigious projects as laid out by the UDP: the proposed hotels, public spaces alongside the very thought that the city might attract visitors can be considered as a much needed confidence boost for the city.

Such prestigious developments not only bolster civic pride but also help to put Sunderland on the map. Indeed for Sunderland BID (2018b) 'putting Sunderland on the map' - 'a city to be proud of' are two of the key priorities for the group, which prestige developments would help to go towards achieving. However as a note of caution speaking on prestige project Loftman and Nevin, (1995, p. 305) state

prestige projects are merely mechanisms for achieving physical and economic regeneration of discrete parts of urban areas rather than integrating urban systems

One of the functions of planning policies such as the UDP is to set limits and guidelines as to what can and cannot be considered for planning - but also to generate investment. Indeed cities are often in global competition vying for visitors, events and flagship buildings and alike (Urry and Sheller, 2004). The UDP as a planning document gives space to sites for prestige developments in such a way serves to entice investment projecting a sense of confidence

Variety

The second theme is variety, which consists of two sub-themes: 'variety as mixed use' and 'variety as flexibility'. The first is faithful to the mixed-use tradition, fundamental to western urban planning philosophy since the 1980's. Segregation of uses and zoning was largely discredited because it was thought responsible for creating sterile streetscapes and isolated islands of development (Cullingworth et al., 1994). The content analysis reveals that the UDP considers hotels, restaurants and cafes as valuable mixed use, the terms repeatedly appearing together.

Filion (2001, p. 156), in relation to suburban districts, wondered whether the spaces in between large developments such as 'malls of various sizes and big box stores' could ever be filled by pedestrian friendly mixed uses, stating that

it is doubtful that sufficient retail and *hospitality* (our emphasis) establishments will ever be found to create the desired pedestrian-engaging street-level environment

In the UDP, public space and hotels as land uses are concentrated in what Filion refers to as ‘large developments,’ occurring in 3 key sites of change in the city. The UDP sees restaurants and cafes as possible mixed use functions spread in a more versatile fashion across the city, particularly in the spaces between large developments. Public houses are not given the same versatile infill role. Bars are given a less significant than restaurants cafes, though appropriate bars are thought to ‘encourage linked evening activity trips’ (UDP pp.64) between strategic sites. This is in keeping with existing literature, e.g. Bell (2007b), which has noted that hospitality is a practice that is able to enrich the street scene on a day to day, micro level.

Of further relevance to the theme of variety as mixed use is that smaller hospitality land use functions such as restaurants and cafes are capable of injecting great variety into a particular streetscene or pedestrian corridor because there can be large numbers of separate establishments. The small numbers of sizeable land use functions such as public spaces and hotels which commonly make up large landmark developments as described by Filion and evident in the UDP involve are at risk of great disruption if a single function fails, e.g. a hotel and cannot inject variety into an urban setting in the same way as a series of smaller hospitality establishments.

The second use of variety is that of flexibility. For instance with reference to the planned use of public spaces it is stated in the UDP that

Development should acknowledge that cities change and adapt over the longer term. The design of new places and buildings should be robust taking account of the need for future flexibility Public spaces should be suitable for a variety of activities, and the layout should anticipate the need for future change. (UDP, p.27).

Although it is debatable whether it is the state urban planning system, private market forces or personality politics, which is predominant in determining the shape of the urban product (Guy and Hanneberry 2002), it is clearly heavily influenced by the direction and preferences of market forces and the international flow of money and expertise (Turok, 1992). There is a fascinating ‘dance’ that goes on in the UDP, in having to: on the one hand, be open to inward investment for the city – though always maintaining that there is an emphasis on high quality projects (in a time of global competition for investment) and on the other hand cultivating the image of state urban planning in the city as being very much in charge and ultimately selective over the type and location of land use investment. The UDP establishes that variety is dependent on dynamic change over time, something that the council’s stated flexibility is open to.

Vibrancy

Vibrancy is the third theme to resonate highly in relation to the keywords identified within the UDP. Tourism, for instance, appears in the UDP as part of a vibrant city centre offering. Vibrancy goes hand in hand with the second theme variety and it is notable that the council’s mixed-use policy is repeatedly said to install a sense of vitality to the city within the UDP. Vibrant city spaces are said to have a positive impact on

entrepreneurial activity by nurturing talent and by attracting external talent and investment (Landry, 2008)

The synergy between public space and hotel development in the UDP is important not only as a mechanism helping to populate the planned for public spaces but also draws attention to high quality public spaces as an attractive destination, a site of welcome to the city, or starting point for experiencing the vibrant city. It is stated in the UDP that:

The City Council will require the highest possible quality of public realm. In designing public realm, spaces should create an attractive, safe and friendly pedestrian environment. Streets should be designed as public spaces and the development, which frames the street, should help to animate it. The public realm should be designed with a purpose and should not comprise leftover and neglected space. (UDP p.28)

The use of the term animate is particularly relevant here as it has been noted in the literature that the hospitality industries enliven space contributing to the buzz or vibrancy of city and public spaces (Bell, 2007a). In the UDP, restaurants and cafes are used repeatedly as a mixed use capable of breathing life into areas of the city. The Sunnyside area is a particularly strong case in point. The term 'lively' is used only 3 times in the UDP, in each case in reference to the Sunnyside area. It is only this area of central Sunderland where the vision is one of 'a lively and varied restaurant and cafe quarter' (UDP, p.64). The area already features a public space but clearly a series of small separate hospitality establishments are seen as key for animation of the area. The UDP says of Sunnyside:

This area is to be developed to become a dynamic and distinctive mixed- use quarter, with a recognized business location primarily for small businesses and a niche retail area, a lively and varied restaurant and café quarter and a desirable, centrally located living area. (UDP, p.64)

Managerial Implications

Sunderland is a post-industrial city that is in recognised need of regeneration and growth in its hospitality industry, particularly hotels, which offer considerable employment creation potential. The planned development approach outlined in the UDP is to have key strategic sites of prestige, where desirable functions including public space and hotels are concentrated and then to have more dispersed smaller hospitality establishments, which add vibrancy – located between key strategic sites as well as at them. Planners forming visions for the city need to consider hospitality and the fundamental role it plays. The Sunderland UDP forms a vision for how key strategic alliances between closely located public space and hotels invites guests to Sunderland to participate in its regeneration. Such a development approach has synergies with the agora model of hospitality and the city developed by van den Broek Chavez and van der Rest (2014).

Sunderland has been successful in attracting several high quality hotels across the city, which it is argued is in great part a result of planning provisions made in the UDP. Through our analysis of the Sunderland UDP three central themes in policy appear critical to Sunderland's success, these being prestige, variety and vibrancy. Given Sunderland's success at bringing about high quality hotel development on more than one site, other cities with similar regeneration goals, may benefit from considering how

these themes can play a part in the identification and realisation of strategic development sites in their cities, capable of sparking and maintaining the interest of investors. In the case of Sunderland, it was not simply that the sites for the new public spaces and new hotels existed, but the UDP made the sites capable of accommodating such developments and the three key themes of prestige, variety and vibrancy were brought together to create a narrative and policy direction that developers found appealing.

However, there have also been difficulties. For instance, Sunnyside, an example of a prolonged regeneration scheme in central Sunderland, has, despite multiple efforts, still not succeeded in attracting a prestigious hotel development befitting of its character. Therefore, in this case, the planned development approach is incomplete. There can be risks with focusing on large prestigious developments including public space and hotels as land uses. Crucial to the planned development approach is for sites to attract hotels, for the hotels to attract guests and for the guests to use the public space. If one of the small number of key land use functions fails the strategy backfires.

Conclusion

This article seeks to critically examine local government planning policy as a logical first step in scrutinising the phenomena of new hotels and new public spaces being sited together in northern English cities. In doing so, the work addresses a gap in existing critical hospitality literature, namely that of looking at hospitality led regeneration in cities through the prism of planning policy. Outside of the area of hospitality, planning policy is recognised as having central influence in the shaping of society. In this article, the city of Sunderland, where land use is governed by the Unitary Development Plan

(UDP Alteration No. 2 (Central Sunderland) Adopted Policies), is studied. The content analysis critically explored the synergy between the keywords: tourism, hospitality, public space, hotel, restaurant, cafe, public house, bar. From this, three central themes of synergy have been identified, prestige, variety and vibrancy. The Sunderland UDP identifies strategic locations where public spaces and hotels are to coincide, supported by smaller hospitality establishments which add vibrancy at and between key strategic sites.

This process has achieved an understanding of the vision enshrined in the UDP – the city’s central legal land use planning document. The planning policy has been a relative success, it remains to be seen how the new sites of convergence play out in practice, into the long term, as part of the changing city of Sunderland. Moving forward from this work, our research will look at the practical application of this synergy and these central themes ‘on the ground.’ For example, specific ‘sites of synergy’ have been identified in central Sunderland, where the keywords and themes come together in the planning document.

Other possible routes of progression in terms of future research could include applying and extending the investigative model used in Sunderland to the critical examination of planning policy documents in other cities, with the ultimate aim of developing an extended understanding of the relationship between new hotels and new public spaces including the role of supporting hospitality establishments. As this article focuses on planning policy, another possible way forward is to examine the relationship between new hotels and new public spaces from the perspective of developers, perhaps informed by Guy and Hanneberry’s (2002) work on the sometimes competing and sometimes

complementary efforts of the state and private sector developers in determining the outcome of land development. Alternatively, the experiences and opinions of the public, whose voices were not a focus for this article, could be examined, as regards how the relationship between hospitality and public space is played out in the everyday lives of city dwellers and city visitors. There is much existing work on how people experience public space but not specifically how spaces and experience are impacted by new hotel development.

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