LONDON BOROUGH of
SOCIAL CLEANSING

by

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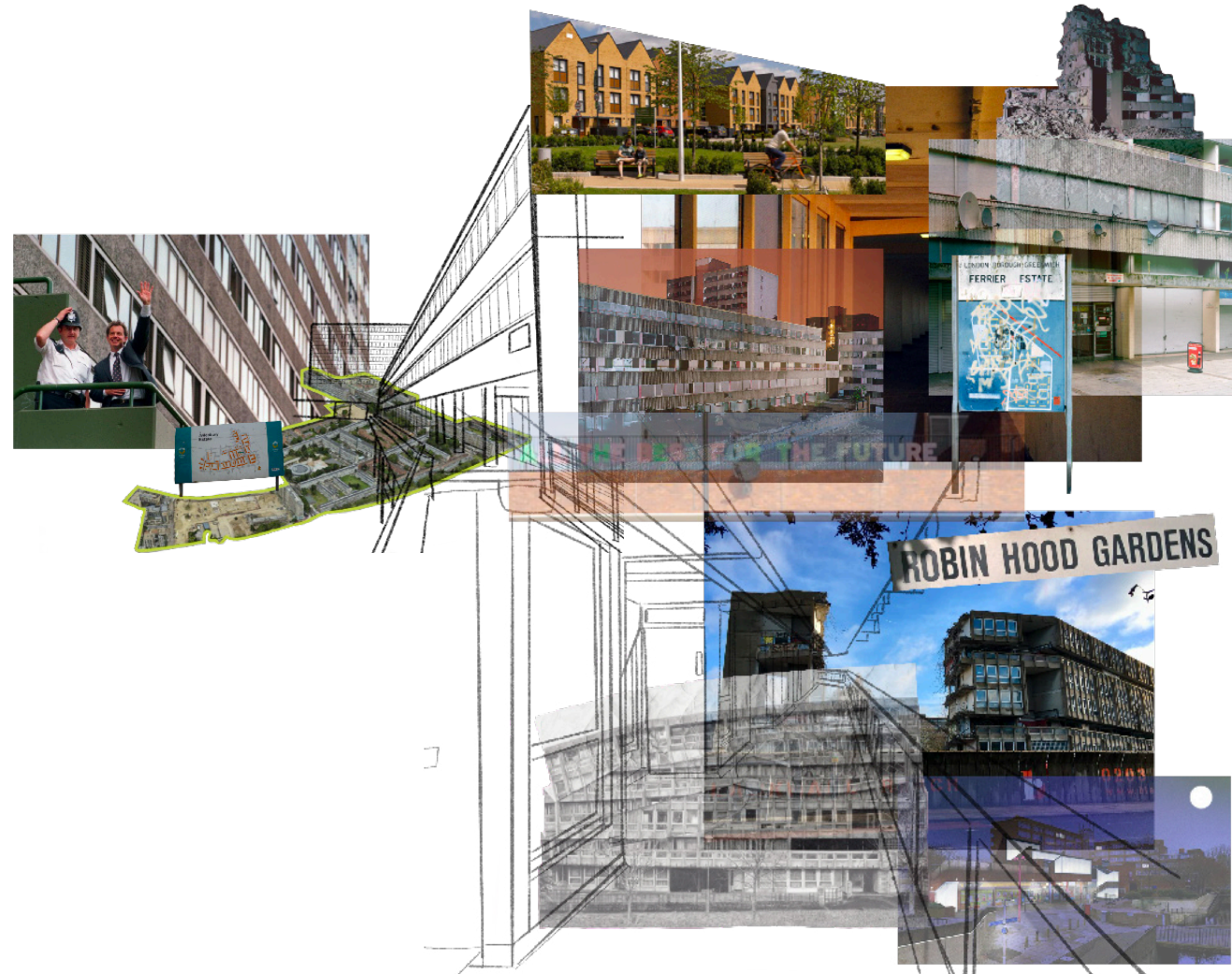
PART ONE - ILLUSTARTED THESIS

RESEARCH QUESTION

Figure 1: Collage of the diffferent chapter throuout the thesis

What role does urban renewal play in the displacement of working-class communities, and how can this be addressed through the design process?

PART O N E   CONTENTS
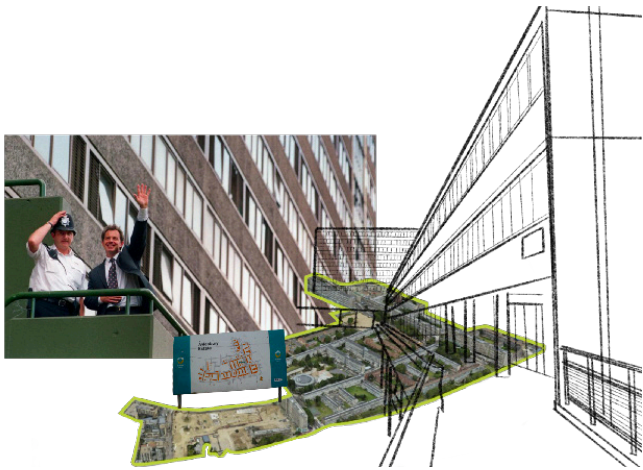
CHAPTER O N E

Figure 2: Conceptual collage of Chapter 1

CHAPTER T W O

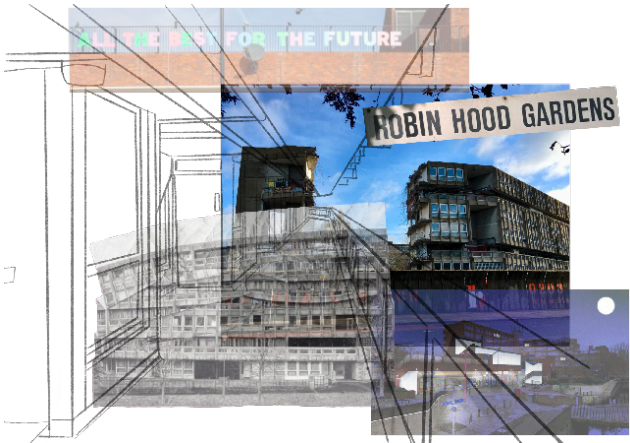Figure 3: Conceptual collage of chapter 2

CHAPTER T H R E E

Figure 4: Conceptual ollage of Chapter 3

Figure 5: Conceptual collage of demolitions and decontrction

"Architecture is always a social act" - Mariam Kamara, 2022

Social cleansing, which is often masked as urban redevelopment, refers to the displacement of marginalised communities under the guise of city progress. Our built environments are ultimately shaped by economic forces and these processes systematically reshape cities and the communities within them. Frequently. redevelopment projects displace low-income communities reinforcing inequalities and eradicating social fabrics within them.

In 2010 the housing estate I grew up in went into the demolition phase of its redevelopment, and we were left to Þnd somewhere else to move to. I was 9 and the only aspect that was unsettling me about this was the memories of my old bedroom. So, my interest in this topic sparked from this early age; at that time it was subtle but then grew into a major question: why are communities not listened to with changes forced upon them that do not suit them? The constant chain of urban redevelopment and demolitions has had a knock-on effect on the exclusion of marginalised groups and could even go as far as the erasure of cultural identities and a pattern of social cleansing.

This essay argues that housing redevelopment projects have contributed to social inequality through processes of displacement. Interior and Spatial design should be the basis for designers are in a pivotal position to address various current issues about social justice being at the epicentre of this as seen from gentriÞcation and social cleansing to be discussed in this thesis.
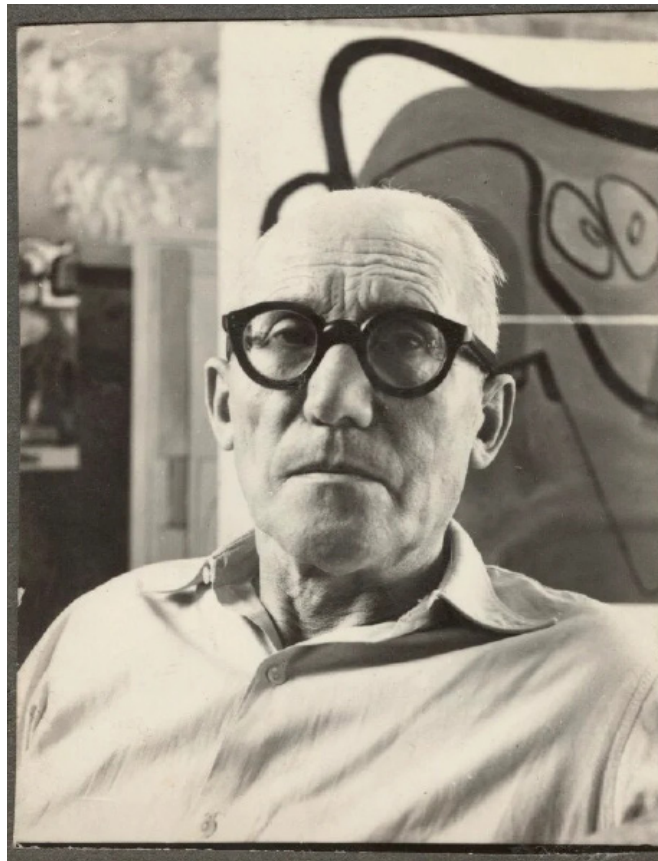
In this essay I intend to present the argument of the social inequalities of redevelopment schemes and the effects it has on minorities that are pushed out of an area as a consequence of this. The discussion will begin by dissecting the theory of 'social cleansing' I will then analyse the impact of social injustices on displaced communities by means of case studies of Aylesbury Estate, Ferrier Estate and Robin Hood Gardens and I will begin breaking down the case studies detailing housing redevelopments that have initiated the breakdown of communities.

I will examine artists, authors and architects who double up as activists in this space of battling social injustices in the instances of urbanist inequalities, those who are trying to reverse this phenomenon and are hopeful to aid the situation. I'll also be looking into artist: Verity Ann Keefe, writer and journalist; Anna Minton, and the collaborative book '*Spatial Agency*' written by Jeremy Till, Nishat Awan and Tatjana Schneider. Jane Jacobs an American Canadian journalist, author and theorist will be a key point in the discussion as she became an urban activist and catalysed protests to 'save neighbourhoods and local communities within cities' (Jacobs, 1961).

Figure 6: Le Corbusier

Jacobs' book *The Death and Life of American Cities* opens with 'This book is an attack on current city planning and rebuilding.' Her ideas were often criticised especially by urban planners, as she went against their common practices and the ideals introduced by Le Corbusier against whom she verbalised how modern planning separated communities. Throughout the postwar period Le Corbusier's ideals of self-contained neighbourhoods were at the forefront of urban planners and developers design strategies. However, in hindsight these methods arguably were merely the start of an ongoing decline.

Figure 7: Jane Jacobs at a community meeting in Washington Square Park in 1963.

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

'Social cleansing' originated in Guatemala during the military dictatorship and the earliest known use was from the 20th century (1960's-70's). It was originally used in Latin America where military groups and death squads were involved in killings targeting those considered undesirable within society - marginalised groups i.e. the homeless, the disabled, the poor, the elderly, drug users, sex workers and the list continues.

Over time, the term expanded to describe urban policies and redevelopment projects that caused displacement, and it shifted from overt violence to a more institutionalised form of exclusion. Social cleansing in the current context of urban redevelopment is not an ofÞcial term but describes redevelopment that excludes vulnerable demographics as a by-product of rising property prices and the prioritisation of capital investment over community needs. Different mechanisms of it include gentriÞcation, evictions and relocations.

Figure 8: Mayan men carrying the remains of their families after an exhumation in Guatemala during the genocide.


Figure 9: Collage of Aylesbury Estate, Ferrier Estate and Robin Hood Gardens

As governments and developers possibly evict tenants under the guise of public good, offering inadequate altrenative housing and as new developments and amenities are introduced to improve an area, the wealthier move in, displacing long-term, low-income residents. Cities become divided, with afßuent areas beneÞtting from it while marginalised groups are pushed to the periphery increasing social segregation. Each chapter of this thesis will cover a different estate that has gone or is currently going through urban renewal, it will start with exploring Aylesbury Estate, follow through to Ferrier Estate and the Þnal chapter will cover Robin Hood Gardens and the Thamesmead Mooring Community centre renewal.

Chapter One: Urban Visions
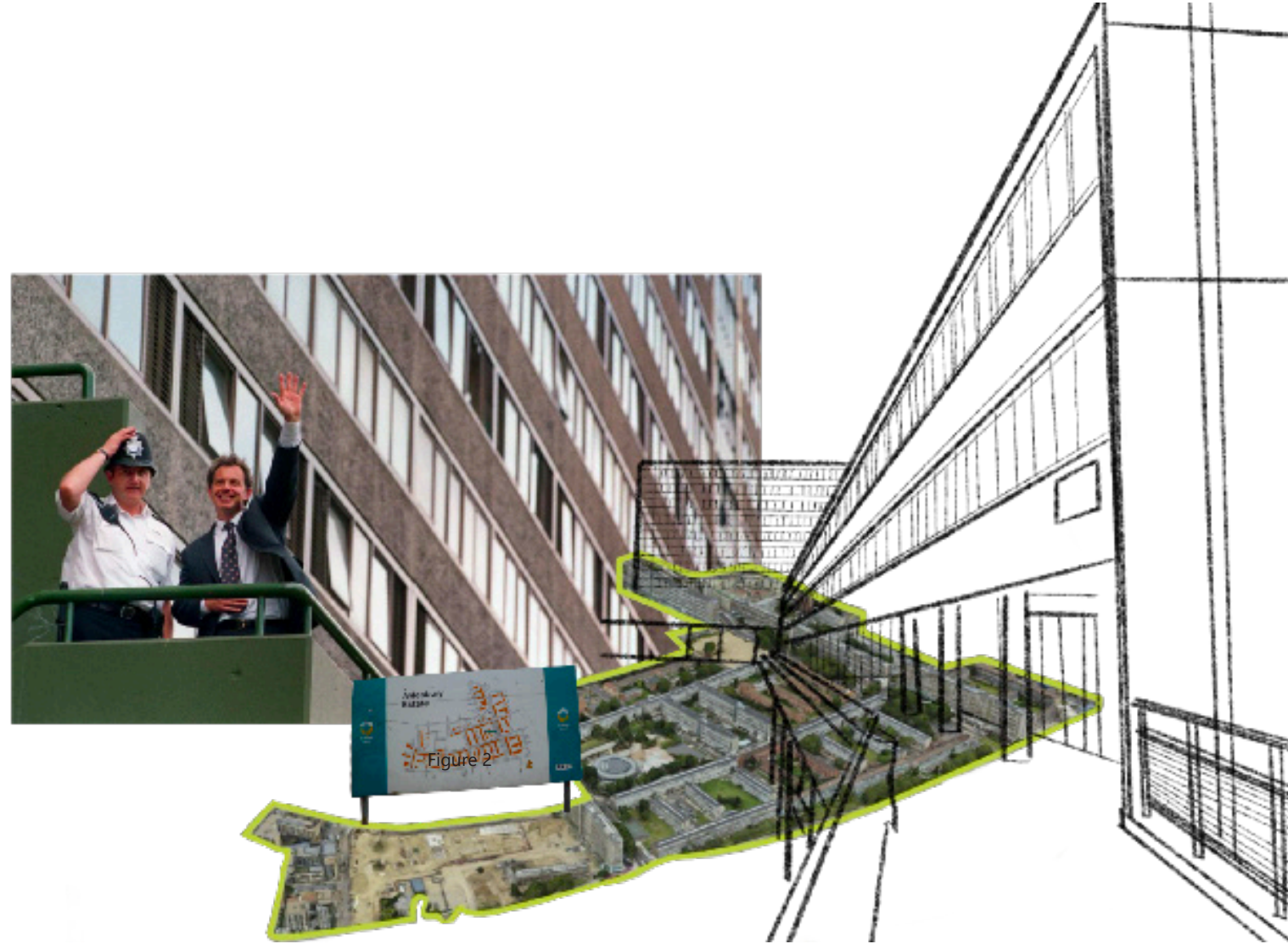
Figure 2
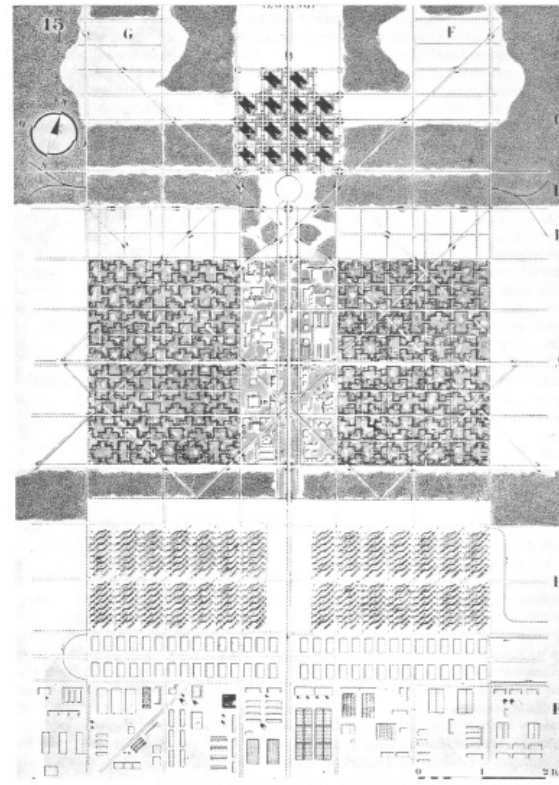
" Architecture is always a social act"

- Mariam Kamara

Figure 10: Aylesbury estate map welcome sign

This chapter centralises the concept of social injustices that arise from redevelopment projects in London. 'Which are tipped for demolition in a process in a process that advocates describe as estate regeneration and critics condemn as social cleansing' (Minton, 2017). This argues social justice for who? One example of this social injustice would Aylesbury Estate.

The Aylesbury Estate has a post war brutalist design built between 1963 and 1977 by architect Hans Peter (Felix) Trenton located in the London Borough of Southwark, south of Elephant and Castle. It intended to embody the social aspirations of modernist architecture and planning with key features that are expressed by Le Corbusier in his 1935 vision of the Ville Radieuse (Simon Phipps, 2016). It wanted to enhance community interaction with low rise and high-rise blocks connected with elevated concrete walkways.

When opened to the public it was designed to house a population of roughly 10,000 residents with 2700 dwellings (Lees, 2010). The ideals of the estate the planners and architects had were leaps and bounds ahead of what the realities of it came to be. During the 80's the estate fell into disrepair and quickly became the face of 'sink estates' and was commonly used as an example of urban decay.

Poor maintenance and infrastructure was a leading factor for this, the brutalist design that was thought to increase community actually isolated spaces and was criticised for encouraging crime, antisocial behaviour and reducing visibility for law enforcement, similar to the downfall of Ferrier Estate which I'll discuss in the next chapter. Aylesbury hypothetically would have beneÞtted from Christopher Alexanders approach to design, he had a bottom-up approach when it came to his processes which mimics the democratic ideals advanced by urbanists like Jane Jacobs who in The Death and Life of great American Cities (1961) criticised the top-down urban planning strategies.

However, in reality the community of Aylesbury was ignored with 73% of 76% of residents who voted in the 2001 ballot voting against regeneration but still they were not listened to, and plans went ahead. The bottom-up approach details how voices that are less powerful or at lower levels of an organisation or community are given the opportunity to share ideas and solutions and, in the end, make decisions. In this approach outcomes ascend upwards which contrasts with a top-down approach where leadership roles make decisions which are then imposed and Þltered downwards.

So, in example a bottom-up approach in urban redevelopment involves engaging local residents to inform projects. Granby Four Streets in Liverpool, the project won the Turner Prize in 2015 as the locals created affordable housing and community spaces, revitalising the run-down area. The residents formed an association in response to demolition plans and successfully campaigned to save their homes. (National Lottery Community Fund, *Granby Four Streets case study*.)

Figure 11: Model of Ville Radieuse

Figure 12: Ville Radieuse Plan by Le Corbusier

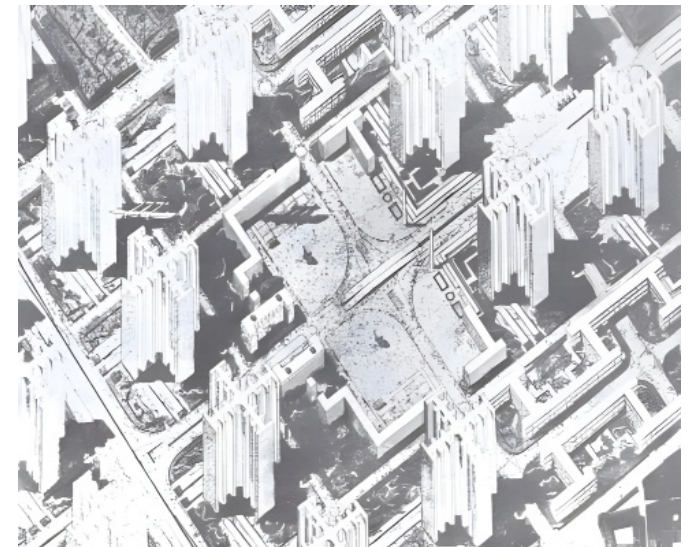Figure 13: Aylesbury Estate original 1980's plan, (Bernstein)

Figure 14: Axonometric of ville radieuse

The plans to demolish the Aylesbury buildings came about in 2005 when the borough decided to decline a £350 million cheque on updating the estate, but instead opted to order its demolition, erasing an opportunity to refurbish and redesign the estate for the existing residents. Rather they wanted to focus on creating a haven for the possible new wealthier residents, furthermore altering the available housing for varying groups.

The demolition of 373 homes in the Wendover and Padbury blocks will result in only 163 new social rent units and most of the new housing will be private. "...existing residents, with their networks of neighbours and friendships, will be decanted elsewhere, probably never to return" (Moore, 2011, cited in Moss, 2011)
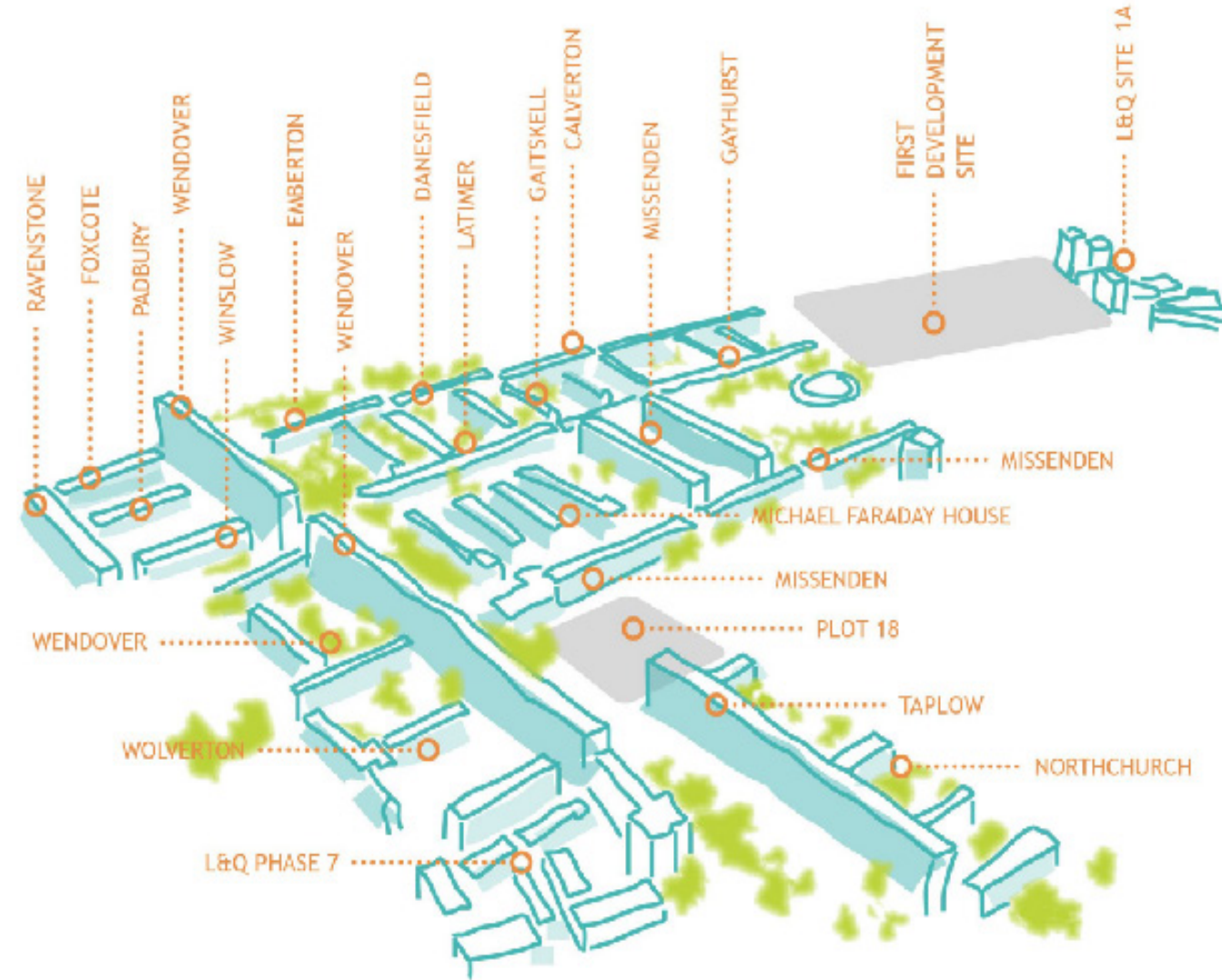

Figure 15: Detailed Aylesbury map of the different block units

Figure 16: Phase of the Aylesbury redevelopment plan
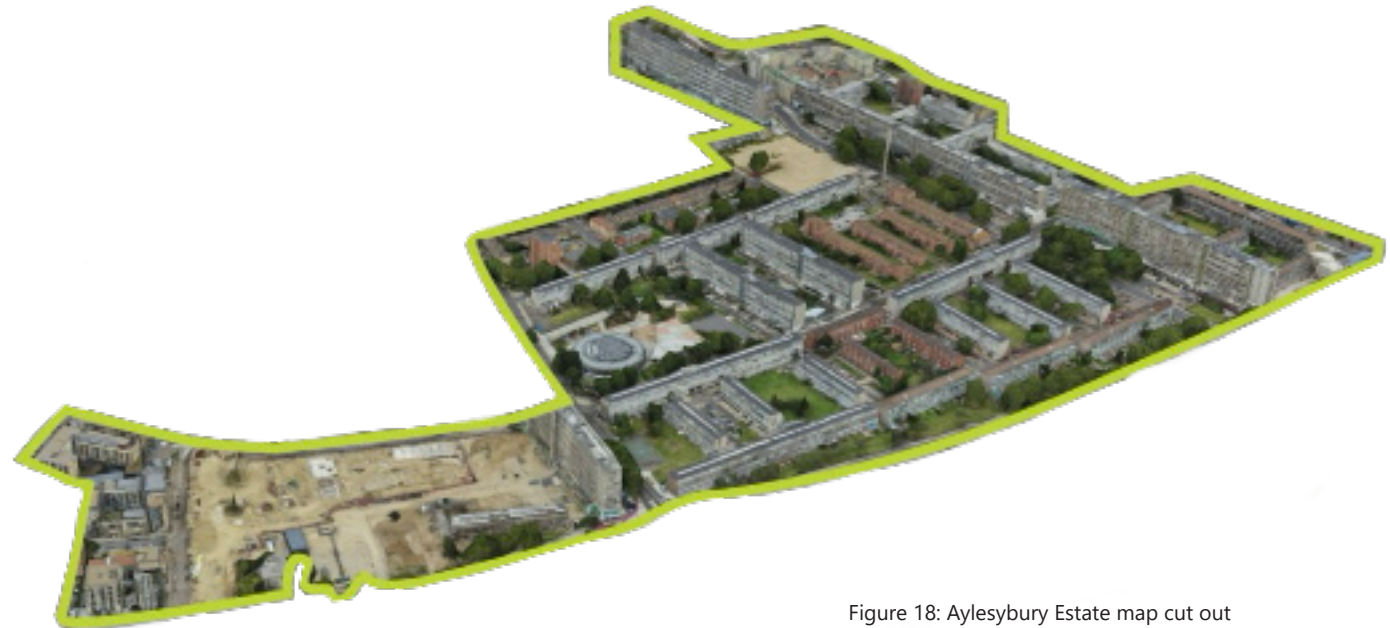

Figure 17: Redevelopment plan

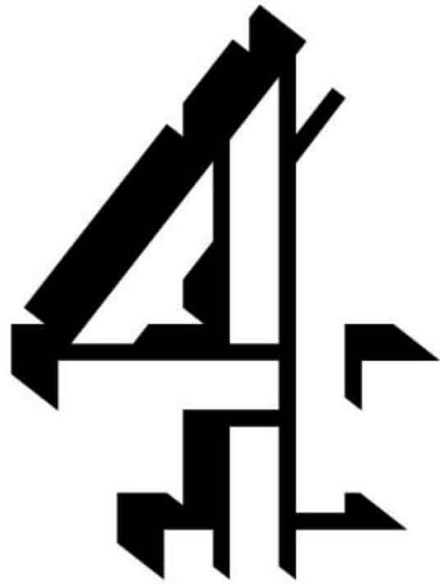Figure 18: Aylesybury Estate map cut out

Figure 19: Channel 4 logo from 2004

Figure 20: Still from the original Channel 4 ident

Since 2004, Channel 4's (C4) ident/logo was always taken from the Aylesbury, (the short clip where the logo would be bouncing around a rundown, rubbish þlled estate with the structure of the housing aligning to shape the number 4) all the trolleys, washing lines, rubbish bags and trash were added in as props by þlm makers to make it look as dystopian as possible. This exaggerated negative stereotypes that already existed of the estate and painted a bleak image of the community- only people from the Aylesbury estate would have known it was their estate that the C4 were trying to make a spectacle of. The further damage the producers and directors of C4 were trying to portray highlighted the demand to label it a sink estate.

The controversy this ident caused heavily reßects deeper issues of how urban spaces and social housing are depicted and the impact of media tailoring the wider public's perception. This ident became a symbol of broader societal issues with it being critiqued as not just inaccurate but exploitative. C4's decision to negatively highlight the estate and exploit a marginalised community speaks to wider issues. The media didn't stop here with portraying Aylesbury as a dangerous and crime-ridden 'sink estate' (Blair, 1998).

Figure 21: Tony Blair used the Aylesbury estate as a background to some of his political campaigns

Tony Blair used it as a backdrop for one of his campaigns, he stood in the middle and claimed 'its biggest employers was the drugs industry'; since then journalists were comfortable enough to refer to it as 'hell's waiting room' (Fletcher, 2008) and 'the estate from hell' (Campkin,2007).

Figure 22: Tony Blair used the Aylesbury estate as a background to some of his political campaigns

Figure 23: Ms Dennis of Aylesbury Estate at her front door wearing 'STOP the Social Cleansing'

Figure 24: Social housing campaigners from Southwark march alongside the remaining section of the Aylesbury estate to call for an end to the demolition of council housing

Figure 25: Ms Dennis of Aylesbury Estate showing frustration at campaign protest

Social injustices arise in a sense where the community is often ignored and somewhat made to plead for their own homes to not be touched. There is always a heavy opposition when these schemes arrive to regenerate and redevelop; however, the brutal facts of these brutalist estates are that the councils who are completely invested in these approaches own the land so 'can drive the policy forward' (Minton, 2017).

This approach is now being known as 'state-led gentrification' this term does not cover at all what is truly happening but rather covers what really is a state-sponsored demolition programme. To academic and activist Bob Caterall, it's 'domicide' cited in Minton, 2017, pg. 38). So the term is used to redress the real ugliness of it and Caterall's description of it would be a more suitable word to reflect the reality. Gentrification to some is a positive term with connotations of creating new jobs, creating more developments, increasing property values etc. For example, according to the report published on Thursday (September 19, 2024), the predicted weekly rent of a two-bed housing association flat on the regenerated Aylesbury estate is estimated to be £212.90 compared to £125.32 for the average two-bed Southwark Council flat.' (Firth, Southwark News, 2024).

However, these so-called advantages actually lead to displacement of original residents and make them subordinate to the new social class replacing them. The Aylesbury redevelopment exemplifies social cleansing in action.

Figure 26: Brutalist designs,

Chapter Two: The Transformed Skyline

Figure 3

Figure 27: Ferrier Estate site plan sign, Hogg, 2006

Figure 28: Ferrier Estate Aerial View

Figure 29: Ferrier Estate demolition Kemp, 2014

Ferrier Estate was located in Kidbrooke, Blackheath in the London borough of Greenwich. Its construction was completed in 1972 and was built as social housing. It was a multiethnic estate with a large number of refugee families and 50% of the demographic were ethnic minorities. In 2009 Boris Johnson had given planning permission, and the demolition of the estate began in 2010. In this year's span, 1500 households had been evicted, and 400 households were being threatened with court action.

It appeared the timeline of this was as speedy as it could be because the second phase of the redevelopment strictly had to begin by March 2011 for the council to receive the 21.5 mil grant from the 'Coalition Government Homes and Communities' agency. 2012 was the year the demolition had been completed (Elmer, 2016).

Figure 30: Ferrier estate, Kemp, 2010

It took only 3 years for the whole ordeal of the demolition to be initiated and then followed through. Greenwich Council was accused by Chairman Nick Russel of using 'bullying tactics' (Russel, 2019). The community was pushed out and it could be argued it was to accommodate a higher social class which forebodes how urban renewal contributes to social inequalities through the process of displacement. This is supported by the planning application published in January 2014 by the Greater London authority where it states 'These were all originally social rented, however some of the ownership has been transferred through 'right to buy' legislation.'.

The proposed application includes the popping up of 4000 units where only 1,475 of those would be affordable leaving roughly 2500 units unattainable for previous locals. The London Plan and SPD targeted a split of 70/30 between socially rented accommodation and shared ownership, but this has been inconsistent with both (page 12&13).

Figure 31: Ferrier Estate demolition Kemp, 2010

Figure 32: Ferrier estate demolition

Figure 33: Ferrier estate demolition

Figure 34: Ferrier Estate, walkways that encouraged crime

Figure 35: Ferrier estate, interior of the connecting tunnels

Figure 36: Ferrier Estate, walkways under demolition London, 2009

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In 2008, an article by Peter Brooks, Councilor and the Deput leader of the Greenwich Labour council responds to questions with 'Kidbrooke Village could be a key place to live and work in London, so I suspect that a different type of person will want to move in. .... I do understand that communities have been torn apart, and I think that's the part of it that you regret. But what I am trying to do is form a new community'. These comments highlight the anticipation of the social shifts with the transformation of the area even when it comes down to linguistics - one example is the term 'estate' being rebranded as 'village', from negative connotations to a positive one and The Berkley Group - a british property developer who were assigned the redevelopment stating on their site that they'll be 'replacing the brutal Ferrier Estate with an exemplary sustainable suburb'.

Whilst forming a new community sounds encouraging it is argued the prioritisation of market rate, upscaled amenities and exclusion of original residents reflect the broader issues of social injustices with urban renewal. The priorities aren't in preserving social fabrics of existing neighbourhoods and maintaining established communities but attracting wealthier, more affluent residents.

Figure 37: Kidbrooke village

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The challenge exists within finding ways to redevelop outside of sacrificing the collective that gives those spaces their character and identity. The estate had a postmodern brutalist architectural design inspired by Le Corbusier's' concepts which ironically spoke to the ambience that was cultivated in the area. With aims to foster a community atmosphere it was arranged in low- and high-rise blocks with interconnecting walkways with over 1900 homes. It fell into decline in the 1980s with a similar story to post-war estates built around the same time, with issues regarding poor maintenance, increased crime and social deprivation even though it was initially designed and built to increase social interaction.

Figure 38: Ferrier estate initial build

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Figure 39: Ferrier Estate under demolition

Figure 40: Kidbrooke Village

Based on the claim 'Regeneration is seen as a mechanism for tackling social and economic dis-advantage' in the book *HIA and urban regeneration: the Ferrier estate, England* (Kemm, John, Jayne Parry, and Stephen Palmer, 2004, pg. 299-308) , the estate was due to be demolished between 2010 and 2012 and replaced with a new development in attempts to redevelop the area and also to reduce the increasing crime rate, one perspective is that Ferrier Estate became a case of 'social cleansing of an entire community' (Elmer, 2016) with over 5000 people evicted from their homes and several residents being ill-informed on the plans of their homes.

As Nigerian architect Mariam Kamara comments during the 'Design Now' podcast – "architecture is always a social act", architecture should be inherently tied to cultural, political and social contexts in which it is created. Designers should be reminded of their ethical responsibility to consider the wider implications of their work. They can either foster community support or lead to decay and isolation if poorly planned, which we have seen to be a cause of this estate's demolition.

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The Berkeley Group commissioned Living at Kidbrooke Village (Berkeley, 2013) a social sustainability report which broke down and highlighted the lives and changes of the initial residents of the village. Throughout the report the interviewees were kept anonymous. The new development of this estate has gained positive interaction from the new residents and some of the old residents that have been able to move back into the area.

They were asked what contributed most to their quality-of-life at Kidbrooke Village and the most common responses were the peacefulness, safety and security, green open spaces and liking the area (the Berkley Group, 2013). The new neighbourhood of residents did agree that the village felt 'significantly safer' since the demolition of Ferrier Estate and when discussing community safety 'It's no longer a concrete jungle' (the Berkley Group, 2013) was a key takeaway.
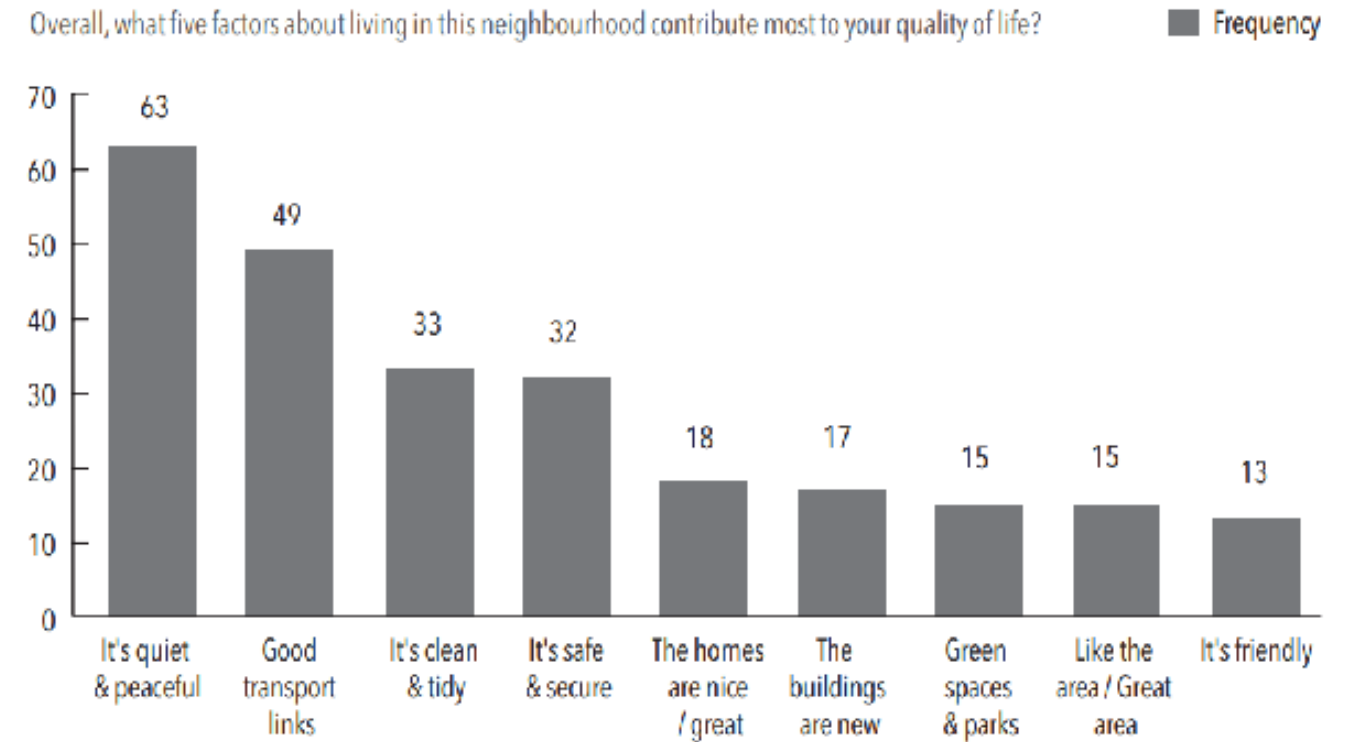
Figure 41: Community interview figures

Throughout the report it is evident local identity and community relationships were slightly strained. with some people feeling that while Kidbrooke Village was friendly 'there is not yet any community spirit' in the area as compared to what they're used to of the old estate, that said it is only fair to allow for this to emerge naturally with the new mix of residents and the ideal of community could grow from more people and shared spaces being created. This was seemingly acknowledged. Overall returning residents expressed happiness in returning to the area and had a high level of satisfaction with the quality of their new homes and enhanced open public spaces.

Nonetheless it shouldn't be disregarded and is important to note that some residents of the old Ferrier Estate were unable to return Kidbrooke Village due to increased cost of rent and higher council tax, making it unaffordable compared to their previous homes. The report produced by Berkeley of course needs to be read with some caution and criticality as it is a developers own report so by nature will have an overly idealistic view/ overly favourable perception.

Figure 42: Kidbroke Village. Blakcheath Quarter signage

Chapter Three : Reclaiming Communities

Figure 4

theme
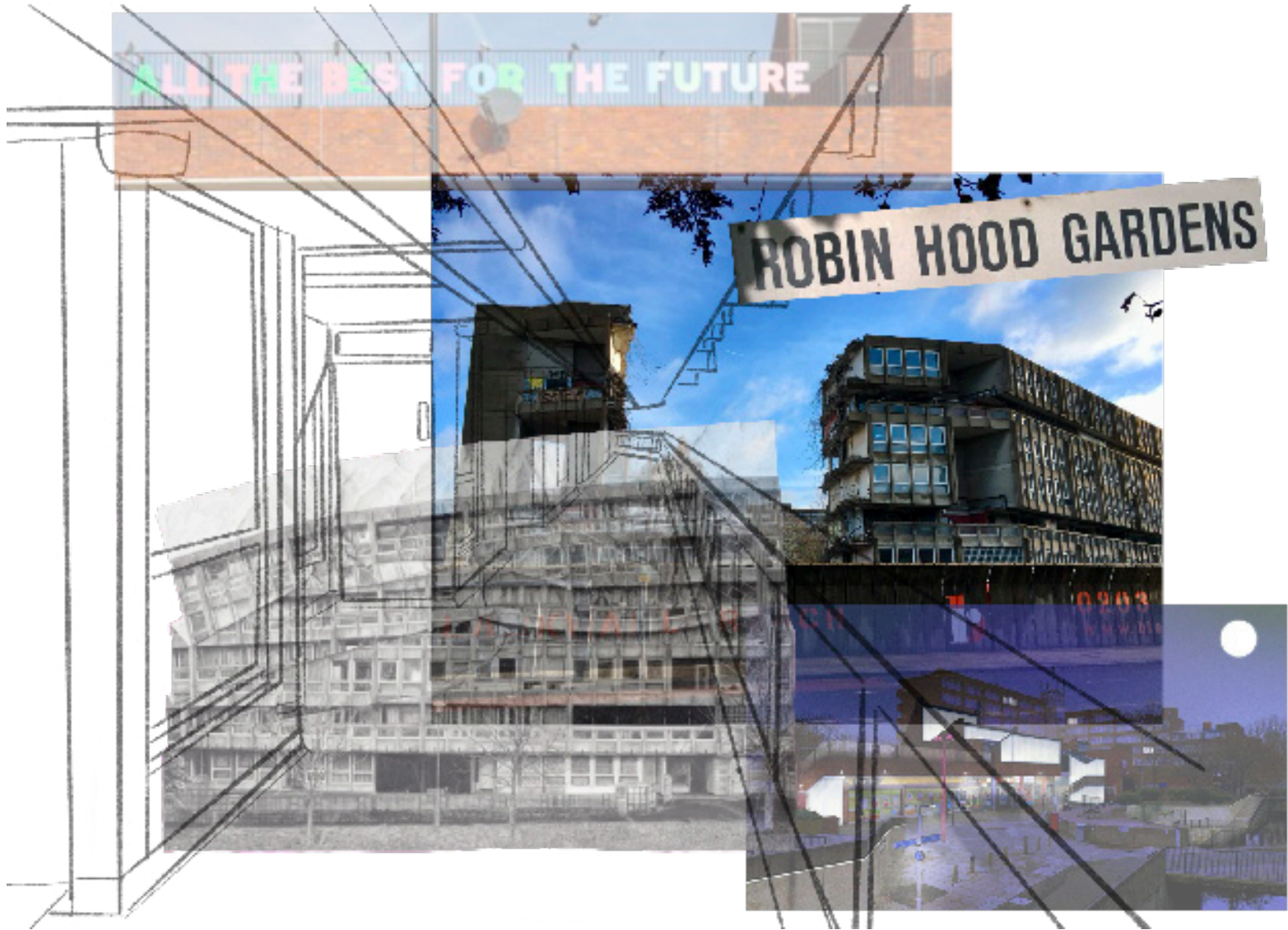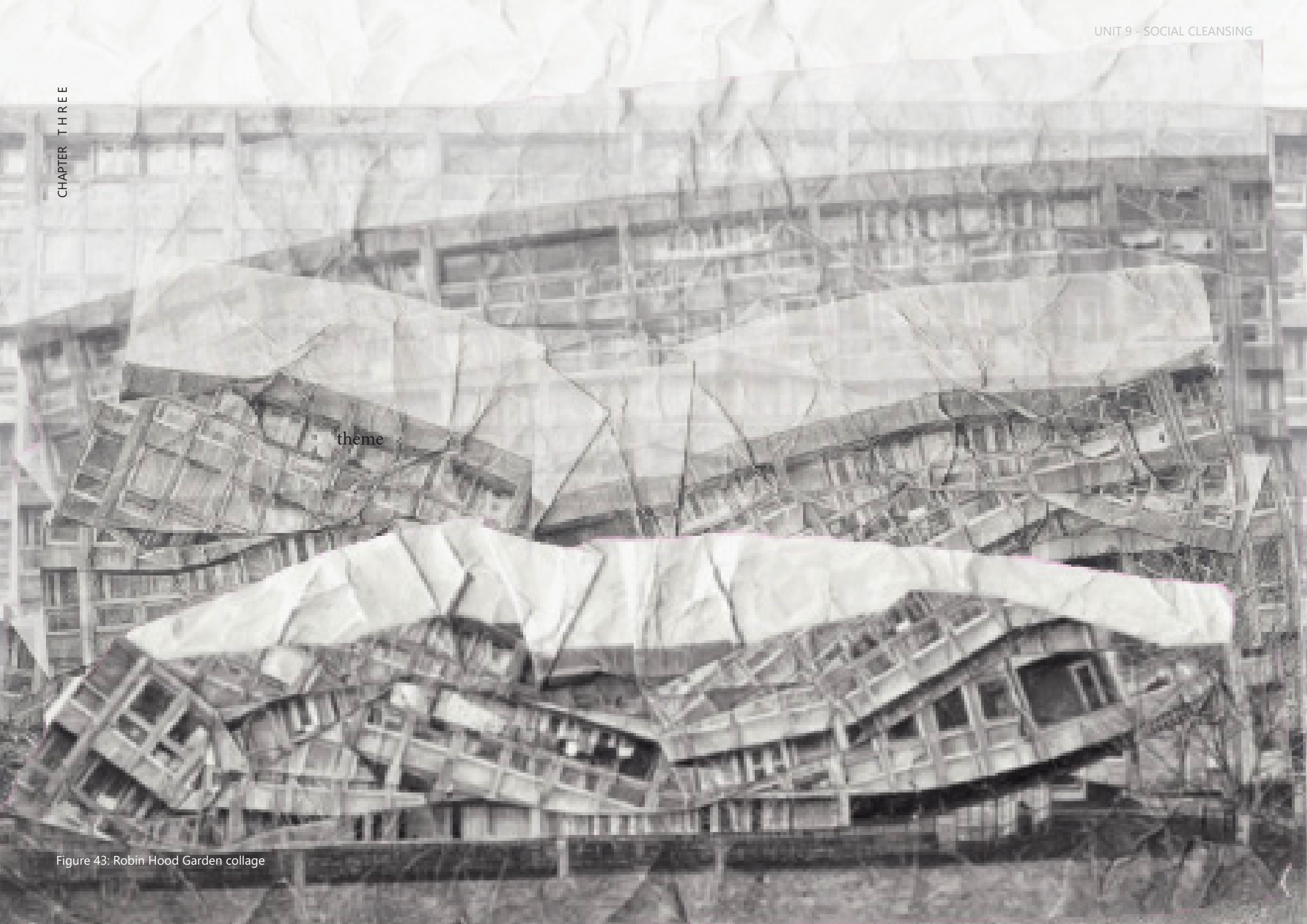
Figure 43: Robin Hood Garden collage

Figure 44: ' Streets in the Sky' , east block

Figure 45: Street in the sky, east block, looking north.

Figure 46: Collage of 'streets in the sky'

Robin Hood Gardens in East London is currently being cleared as part of a redevelopment plan for the area. The V&A Museum has acquired a three-storey section of a demolished wing as a tribute to the estate. They did this in order to keep the heritage alive, they also wanted to honour the estate by keeping the voices that lived there; and ironically the better option may have been to cultivate the area so that there was no need to demolish the estate.

It was originally completed in 1972. The architects were Allison and Peter Smithson, they initially had social intentions with their vision wanting to embody "streets in the sky" which was elevated walkways hoping to encourage interaction among residents; however, Balters writes the lack of upkeep of the estate was due to a 'serious denial' and made the homes less desirable places to live. (Balters, 2011). Even though renovations of the building will cost much less than a whole redevelopment there are still plans to go ahead and demolish it

Figure 47: Robin Hood Gardens demolition

CHAPTER THREE

CHAPTER THREE

image of the open call

image of the v&A   image of the c20 society
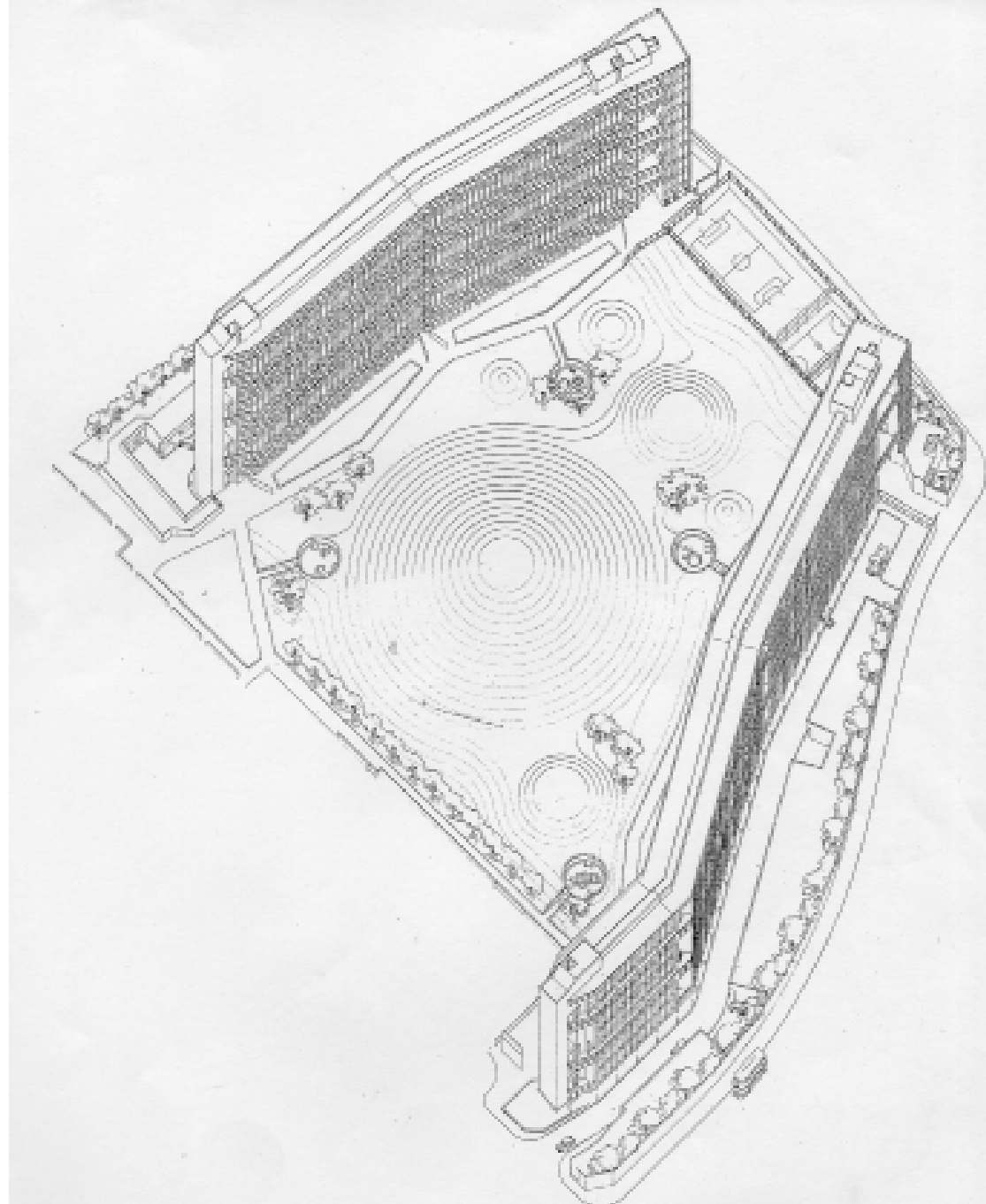
Figure 48: Robin Hood Gardens, axonometric from the north west. Kenny Baker, 1968. Smithson Family Collection.

The V&A put out an open call to the public to 'tell the story of Robin Hood Gardens?' as a bid to bring in the community. Critics such as Alexandra Houghton, Roger Scruton, The Twentieth Century Society (C20 Society) blamed the architects and the design for the high level of crime. The design made it easy to feel disconnected from your surroundings as the layout had a lot of blind spots where criminal activity would take place, being that there was a lack of natural surveillance. Robin Hood Gardens 'scored 14 out of 16 on aegister of building features that encourage crime' (Grove, 1987 cited in Stewart, 2012).

There was an increased amount of censorship on how residents were living, where they were going to be moved and what kind of bonds existed between them. "Residents of eastern block have been evicted and the windows boarded up..." Therefore, The C20 Society, which have safeguarded the heritage of architecture and design in Britain since 1914 in order to save outstanding buildings that shape the landscape with a main focus on preservation, had a campaign working with international and high-proÞle architects including Zaha Hadid, Renzo Piano, Jean Nouvel and the then RIBA president Stephen Hodder.

The C20 Society also published a book: *Robin Hood Gardens Re-visions* with architect Sarah Wigglesworth to raise the proÞle of the estate and demonstrate how the already existing buildings could have been successfully refurbished. They provided a lecture discussing the campaign to save it from demolition, commissioning Sounddelivery Media (a dynamic, media charity) to create a 5-miunte audio slideshow for the lecture to save the buildings (C20 Society, 2008).

Figure 49: The Twentieth Society logo
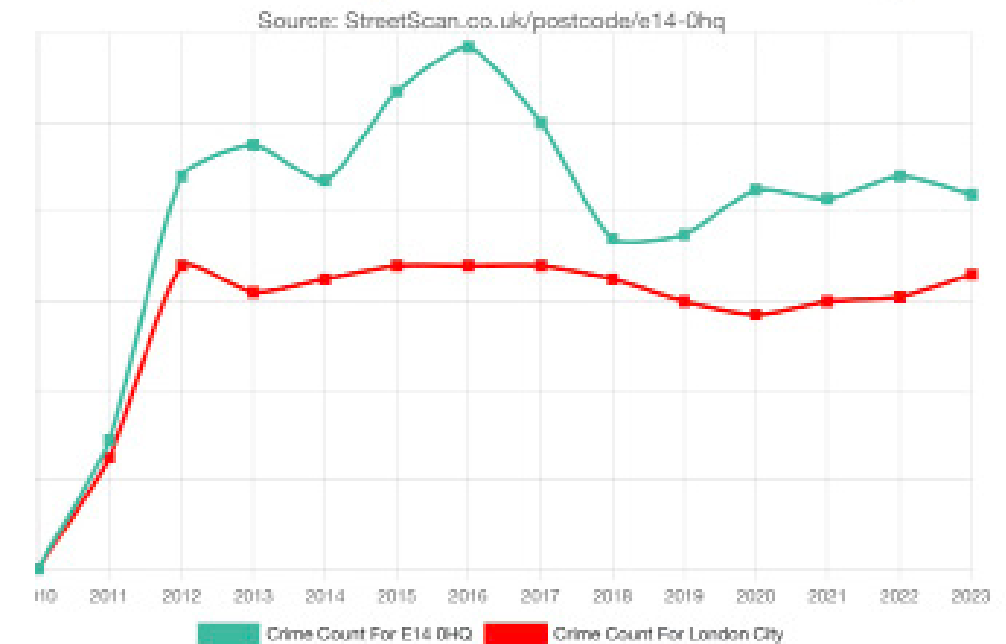
Figure 50: Criminal damge statistics in the area

Figure 51: Robin Hood Gardens for V&A Museum

Figure 52: The 9-m-high facade saved and preserved by the V&A
before the demolition of the estate started,

The estate suffered from underfunding and neglect, and the redevelopment of it has been criticized for prioritising proÞt over community needs, forcing many original residents to be relocated to other parts of London breaking down fully formed social networks.

Similar to Ferrier Estate displaced residents were promised ability to return; however, such promises fall short with these schemes being that those new developments priced them out. The redevelopment contributes to a growing trend of inequality, where afßuent residents beneÞt from regeneration while marginalised groups bear the costs, because the socio-economic proÞle of the area has been shifted. The redevelopment of Robin Hood Gardens encapsulates the tensions between progress and preservation.

Key lessons to take away from Robin Hood Gardens is to not repeat mistakes already found to have a bad outcome as Robin Hood Gardens is not the Þrst brutalist design to be knocked down instead of revitalised. As English Heritage declined several attempts to 'recognise its historical value' with the V&A picking up a section to keep for themselves, this depicts the importance that cities should acknowledge neglecting social housing and replacing it with private developments exacerbates housing inequality - the demolition highlights a broader shift of housing issues, moving away from prioritising social housing in urban development.
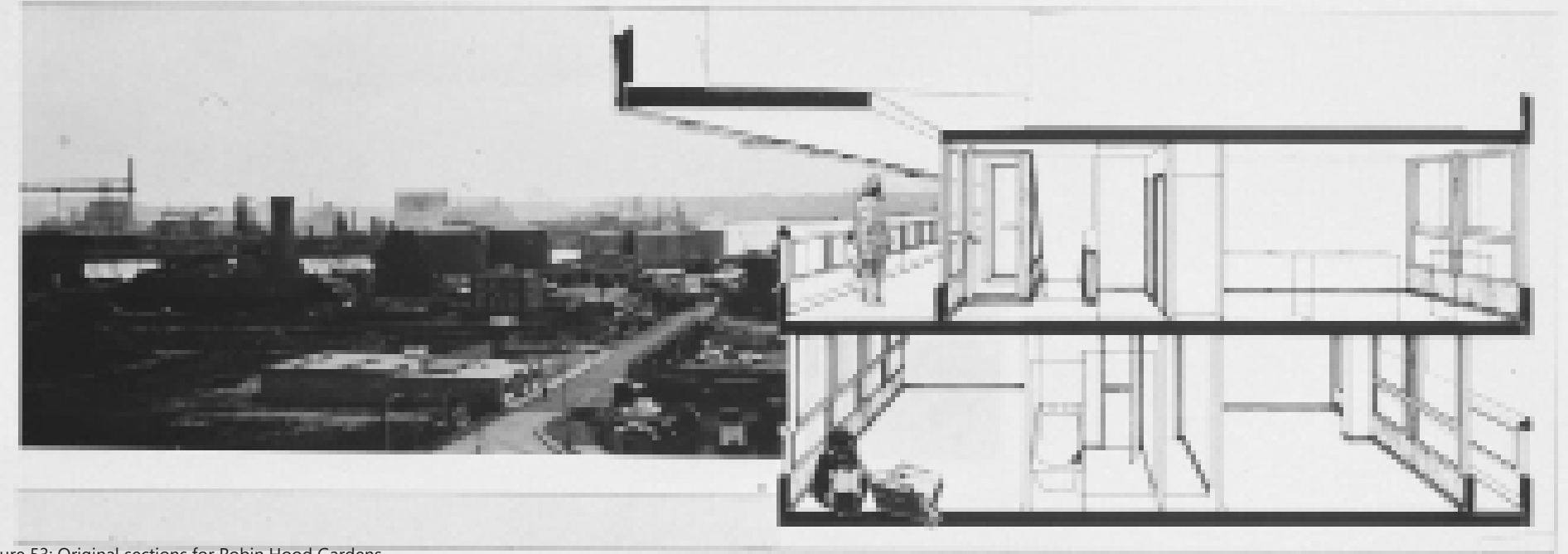
Figure 53: Original sections for Robin Hood Gardens
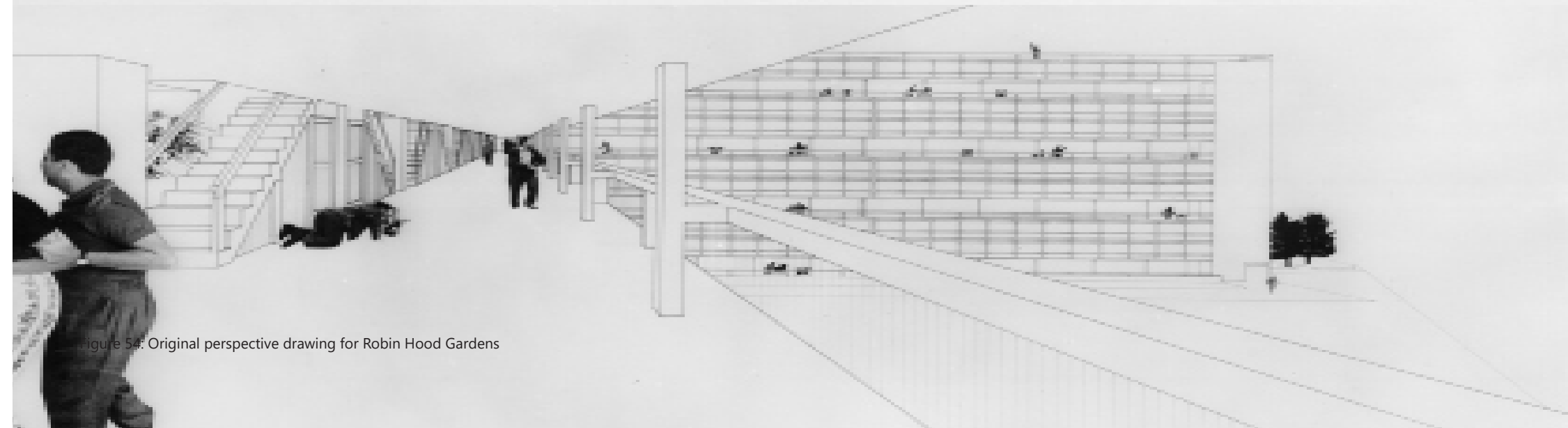
Figure 54: Original perspective drawing for Robin Hood Gardens

Anti Social Behaviour Near E14 0HQ

Source: StreetScan.co.uk/postcode/e14-0hq

Crime Count For E14 0HQ   Crime Count For London City
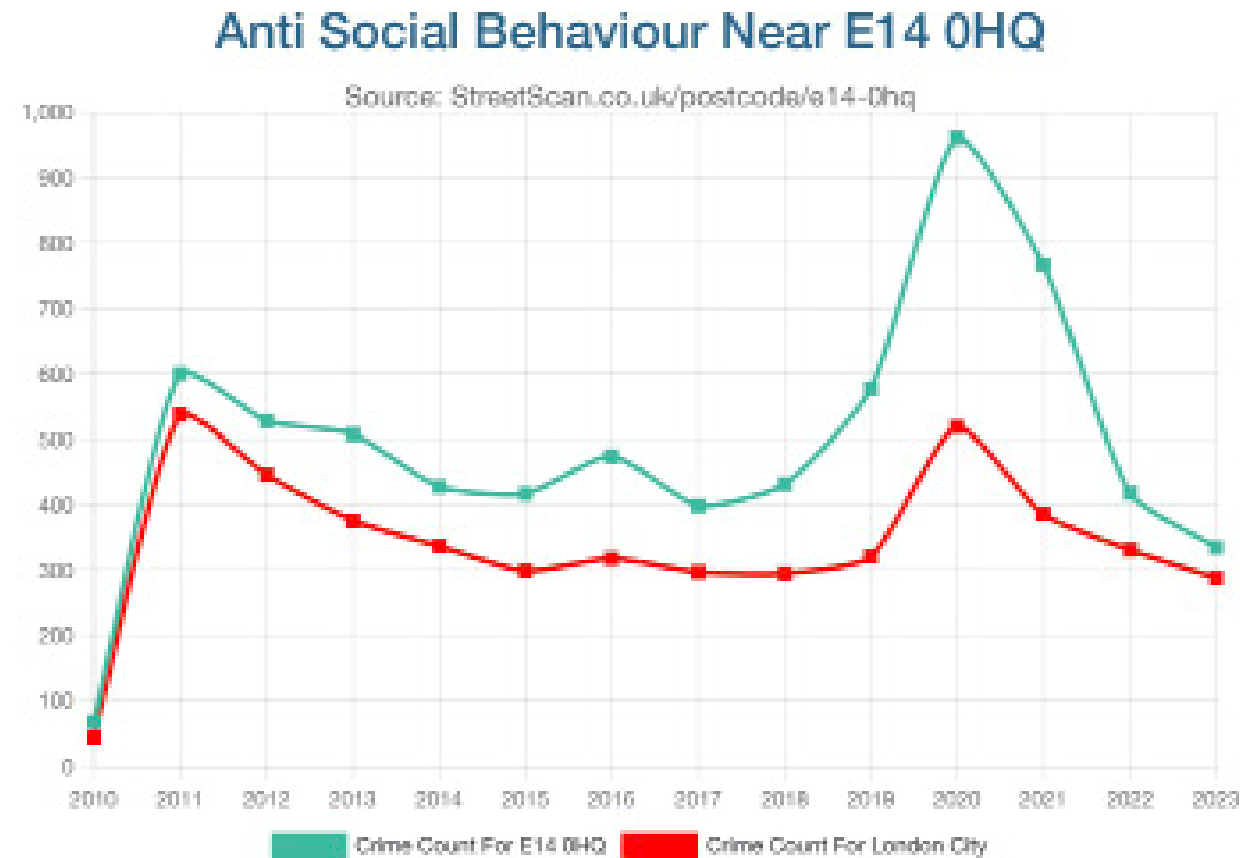
Figure 55: Antisocial behaviour statistics in the area

The problem of Robin Hood Gardens was partly due to societal issues like poor maintenance and underinvestment and part architectural formation. However, blaming architecture alone overlooks deeper structural issues. 'Robin Hood Gardens was built with panels of pre-cast' (Balters, 2011) over time these panels suffered from deterioration from weathering which led to maintenance challenges.

The concept of 'streets in the sky' which featured elevated walkways was intended to foster community engagement and promote interaction however these spaces did not garner this use and this feature lead to a social and functional shortcoming of crime increase. For instance, StreetScan's statistics of the Robin Hood Gardens postcode shows that public order crime was seen at a level of 22% higher than London's average and violent crime as 26% higher than London's average.

The crime counts of anti-social behaviour in this area stayed above the average for London from 2010, peaking in both 2011 and 2016, just before the demolition process for the estates started in 2017 (StreetScan graph). As Jencks (2022) critiques, 'Indeed they are dark, smelly, dank passage-ways, ..., crime may occur more frequently than elsewhere.'

There are a few cases of architects and artists that have had successful projects as they've led with a community first/retrofit approach and wanting to develop minority community spaces rather than abolish and start a new one. Verity Jane Keefe, a community artist who graduated from the AA, comes from an architectural background. She wants to explore the relationship between people and places and so has worked on more community-based projects. Her practice reaches existing and invisible communities, for example, the Thamesmead Moorings Community Centre. The building was dedicated to Stephen Mooring who was a major support throughout the refurbishment till he passed away in August 2021.

She used her restorative approach to give back to communities with her projects and was the lead design artist on The Thamesmead moorings social club. It was originally opened in February 1976 and the refurbishment began in 2016 to which it reopened in 2022. Sadiq Khan gifted Peabody £1.5m towards the project as over 80 residents, businesses and community groups bided for the 'Good Growth Fund'. The social club opened 46 years to the date of Stephen's first membership, showcasing the intent of community driven perspectives.

Figure 56: Thamesmead Moorings

Figure 57: Thamesmead Moorings social club when it was closed down

Figure 58: Thamesmead Moorings community centre after re-opening

The project was funded by Peabody who prides themselves on community bonding. Their mission statement is to 'help people flourish by providing great homes and services and making a positive impact in communities'.

The social club was co-designed with the locals which immediately speaks to the possibility of a community first approach on larger scale redevelopments. Keefe worked with the community to bring in elements of 'place' from the locals. Her design process initiated itself by thinking about the central aspect that the building is, a hub where the locals can gather and continue to bond, and also what happens as its central thread through the 5 years was relationships. bringing them into the decision-making processes – schools, the square, youth club – wanting to include everybody.

The redevelopment of the social club also included the input of the current residents which is ironic as the area's inadequate infrastructure and minor investments led to social and economic challenges. This could be argued as what shut the social club down in the first place. The Moorings social club emphasises bottom-up regeneration efforts rather than the usual top-down, and it highlights the importance of local voices in shaping the futures of estates and neighbourhoods.

Figure 59: Mayor, members of the community and Verity Jane Keefe standing below the centre.

Figure 60: 'All the best for the future' signage outside the community centre Peabody, 2023

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Figure 61: Thamesmead Mooring Communal shelf.

The Social club embodies Jacobs's ideas by fostering "eyes on the street" and cultivating spaces for community interaction which she viewed as essential. Through Verity Jane Keefe's collaborative approach, Jacobs advocation for preserving and supporting the organic activities of communities ßourishes. In *Ground Control*, Anna Minton critiques the privatisation of public spaces and the social inequality it fosters in urban regeneration projects. Moorings social club, to me, is a 'prime example of modern conservation, with improvements informed by the community' (Peabody, 2023) and serves as a resistance against the privatisation of public spaces. This ethos should be conducive to all for a real change in how redevelopment projects are thought out.

In London 'Demolition of council estates has peaked' (Carson) with regeneration schemes being one of the most controversial topics with some contending they can amount to social cleansing.

This thesis describes how housing redevelopments could lead to social cleansing and unknowingly push towards this if not done correctly or if done without listening to the existing community. It speaks to the detriments this causes to local communities and to the possible future of what London could turn to be. The topic is still relevant today because of the ongoing redevelopment across the country. It is still affecting the neighbourhoods because the local councils are still going against their communities by accepting these redevelopment programmmes rather than accepting funding to reinstate current housing estates they argue need to be demolished and rebuilt.

For example, instead of retrofitting, Westminster Council, partnering with Alford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM), went ahead to approve 5 demolitions in the borough in 2024 (Open City podcast). AHMM, essentially being one of the largest practices in the UK, should have been setting a precedent for the rest of the industry to follow suit and lead by example to embrace retrofitting rather than demolishing.

AHMM, essentially being one of the largest practices in the UK, should have been setting a precedent for the rest of the industry to follow suit and lead by example to embrace retrofitting rather than demolishing. The retrofit first ideology describes a development strategy that prioritises improving existing buildings over demolishing them. Nonetheless, "architects love demolition" (Gino, 2024). Listening to the Open City Podcast by Architects Journal I'm reminded of running theme of architecture and political stances.

The Thamesmead Moorings project is obviously not comparable to housing developments when it comes to the restructure of design approaches. Acknowledging a solution hasn't been found but Keefe is creating a catalyst. This thesis has demonstrated that urban redevelopment projects can often serve as stimuli for social cleansing and displacing communities under the guise of progress and modernisation.

Figure 62: The mayor opening Camouflage Café at the refurbished Moorings Sociable Club

By analysing the dynamics of urban renewal and estate decline as a cause of excluding public needs, urban redevelopment restructures physical spaces and exacerbates socio-economic divides. While it aims to improve infrastructure its execution often marginalises the community it claims to benefit. Urban redevelopment is so nuanced and the intentions behind policies often have unintended consequenses so there's a real complexity that lies behind the topic.

The Thamesmead community centre renewal demonstrates the potential of grassroots approaches fostering inclusive redevelopment. It highlighted how incorporating community involvement is reformative even though done on a smaller scale and to further mitigate effects of social cleansing larger organisations, governments and industry professionals must prioritise community led initiatives placing locals at the centre of decision making. Ensuring that progress is inclusive, and no group is left behind with all voices actively involved.

As Noam Chomsky argues, 'a truly democratic society is one in which all persons have a say in public economic policy' (Cited in Chomsky: language, mind and politics, McGilvray, 2014).

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