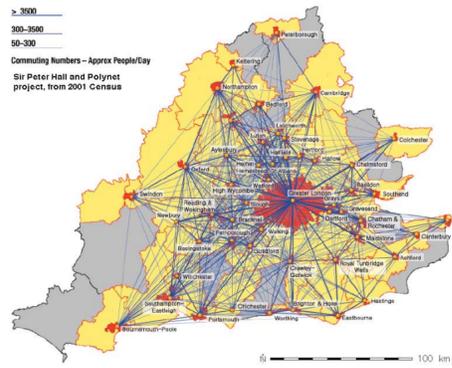
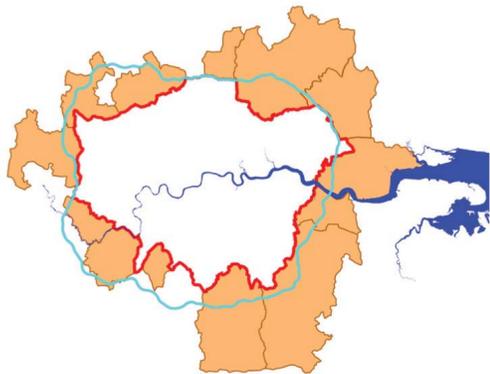
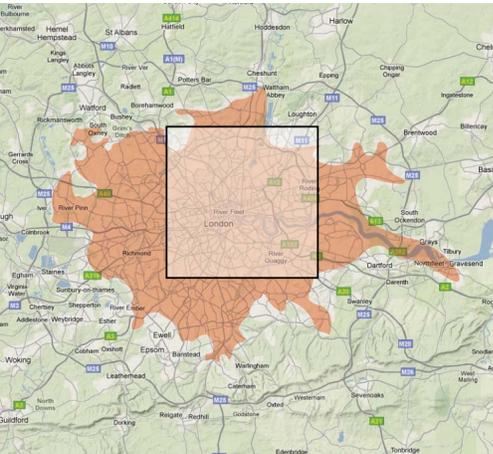


City with global reach: imperial, post-colonial, financial, cultural

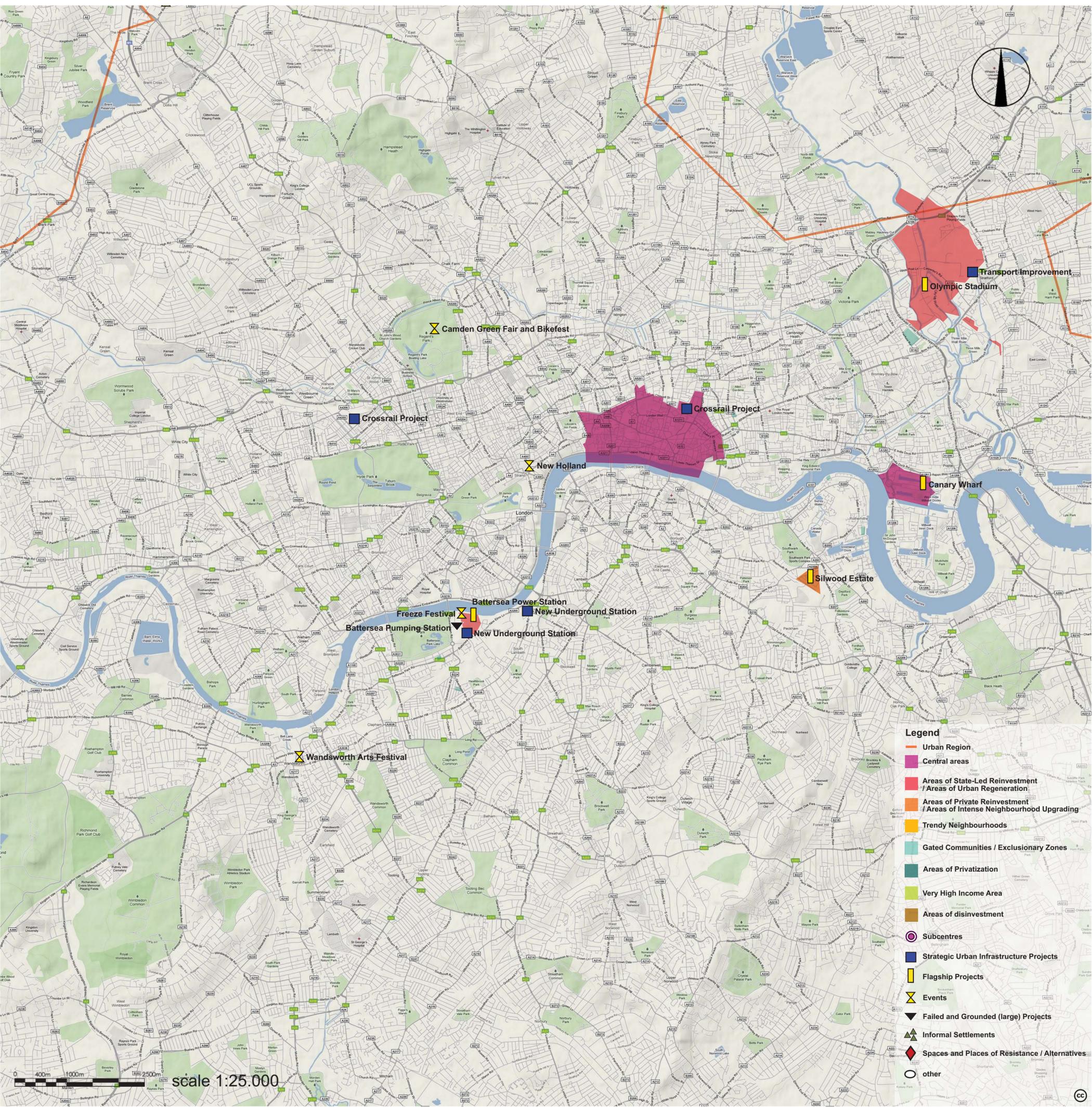


England 130'395Km2 * Inhabitants 51'446'000
 Urban Region * Inhabitants 7'800'000

Greater London boundary and M25
 The administrative border is "Greater London" = roughly area inside M25 motorway / green belt.
 This area has about 7.5 million of the 15 million people in the functional region.

Polynet commuting map (Peter Hall et al)
 Due to the expenses of living in London, the commuting region is very extensive: many people commute between one and two hours a day.

The entire region is interspersed with a great deal of privileged 'countryside' and is thus the opposite of 'compact'. It is heavily dependent on car trips, except for commuting to Central London.



King's Cross

Silwood Estate Regeneration

London Olympics 2012

Battersea Power Station

Purpose "regeneration" of ex-railway land but really to help finance TGV and make a profit.

Dimensions 55ha in 1990; now 27ha. Building of 713,000 m2 now approved; offices predominate

Projets costs unknown; perhaps £4bn

Investors Argent plc, backed by BT pension fund. Also private railway consortium and others

Architects Many. Master plan by Allies and Morrison and Dimitri Porphyrios; Arup planning



Description / Reason for this choice / Background / context

Site of struggle for over 20 years between corporate office/commercial development and social housing, community uses and non-market services. Valorisation of former railway land by state railway (becoming increasingly privatised);

Significance for New Metropolitan Mainstream

First attempt 1990± defeated by multiple forces: citizen resistance + incompetent costly engineering + collapse of office market. Recent resistance weaker. Huge projects can take so long, they miss the boom (twice in this case) Smaller owners/developers adjoining the project can make more money faster Power of hegemonic "global city" idea.

Stakeholders and their interests

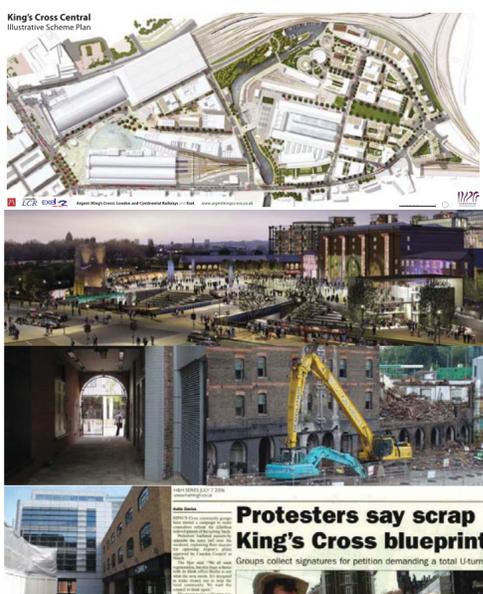
Local politicians divided; this slowed the decision process. Politicians at all levels finally supported the project. Private stakeholders have normal accumulation motives + imperative to reduce state subsidy to private TGV project. Citizens endlessly 'consulted' but gain, at best, small benefits.

Deals

Work on the approved scheme could not start until 2007 when railway engineering was complete. By then, however the crisis meant investors pulling back and potential office occupiers cancelling plans to move. Thus in 2010 only projects supported by state money are going ahead: some social housing and a university building.

Impacts

Strong displacement effects on local households and non-corporate enterprises. Surrounding areas, previously blighted, have seen a large number of small developments making their profits, while the core site sits and waits. Working class area becomes luxury spot. Central London air quality will further worsen.



Purpose 900 private new flats to be built on vacant land

Dimensions Silwood Estate

Projets costs £60 million

Investors London and Quadrant

Architects PRP Architects



Description / Reason for this choice / Background / context

The land has remained unused for a number of years despite proposals and input from local residents, who want the area to be a space for children to play since the former play area and youth centre were demolished. The plans to allow private contractors to build 900 flats are heavily opposed by local people.

Significance for New Metropolitan Mainstream

The decision to build the flats is being upheld by Lewisham Council despite formal resistance from local residents. This comes after the local community centre was also demolished and replaced with a much more expensive, privately-owned community centre. Further investment in local infrastructure has not followed. Example of dominant private interest fuelled by competition and quasi-public space.

Stakeholders and their interests

London and Quadrant has already profited substantially from the community centre regeneration and will make further profit from the sale of private housing to major local landlords.

Deals

The application ignores local need and desire and is for the purpose of private gain, with which the local council has been complicit. Profit will be shared with local landlords.

Impacts

The project serves only the business interests of London and Quadrant, who have so far shown no sign of further investment in developing the area. Due to the demolition of local provisions – for the youth in particular – there is a desperate need for open green spaces as opposed to more homogenous tower blocks. With an over-expensive community centre and limited spaces for young and old to mix, community integration could be stagnated, with growing resentment between the residents and local government. In the long term, private ownership could drive up prices and become a catalyst for indirect eviction and displacement.



Purpose Global nomadic sports events

Dimensions Hackney / Stratford, East London – Velodrome and supporting venues

Projets costs Estimated £6 Billion

Investors Numerous Public and Private

Architects Hopkins (Velodrome)



Description / Reason for this choice / Background / context

The bid to host the Olympics 2012 in London was surprisingly successful, with most commentators expecting the decision to declare Paris the winner, due to London's inflexible transport system and generally monolingual society. The proposal stated that the stadia and supporting infrastructure would be built in East London across Hackney and Stratford for the four week event, claiming it would be the greenest Olympics in history.

Significance for New Metropolitan Mainstream

The Olympics is an example of a mega-event inspired by global city competition that physically redefines existing infrastructure. Funded by the government and sponsored by large corporations and businesses, the site will – and has already begun – to demolish existing heritage, local business and community provisions in favour of urban regeneration, private gain and opportunism, and temporary financial stimulus.

Stakeholders and their interests

The Olympics has numerous big-name private and public investors, contractors and sponsors. Private gain will be spiked by the exclusive rights these companies have to advertise and sell products in and around the event. It purports to be the greenest ever Olympics and to leave a legacy of substantial benefit to the local communities, but the physical and financial impacts seems likely to contradict these promises.

Deals

Big names like McDonalds have secured exclusive rights for business practices at the event, meaning that unofficial and local businesses will be unable to market their products at the event. Architectural and steel firms – such as Arcelor Mittal – have been given huge construction contracts for the stadia. General public-funded expansion around facilities and transport have also been commissioned.

Impacts

Several of the promises made by the government over the Olympics are polemic in that they seem to be practising against their stated outcomes. The Arcelor Mittal sculpture, the digging up of Hackney Marshes, and the demolition of the 100 year-old Manor Gardens Allotments and parts of Lea Valley are just a few examples of the hypocrisy of claiming the Olympics to be green and sustainable. The very notion of creating large scale infrastructure for a four week event puts the idea of its sustainability into question. The long-term effects will perhaps be the most damaging. Backed by the government, undemocratic land grabs will not only destroy spaces for community integration, but will also inspire private landlords and contractors to slowly gentrify the area, reducing the amount of affordable housing, creating yet more homogenous gated developments and displacing people from their homes.



Purpose The current planning application for Battersea Power Station proposes a gated community with a shopping centre, hotel, leisure facilities and restaurants.

Dimensions Battersea Power Station, Wandsworth. South Bank of the River Thames. World's largest brick building.

Projets costs £400 million +

Investors REO / Treasury Holdings

Architects Rafael Vinoly



Description / Reason for this choice / Background / context

Battersea Power Station is one of the UK's grandest cultural icons, gracing the skyline of London. It has been disused for nearly 30 years, having been decommissioned in 1983. Since then it has been in the hands of several different contractors, each time proposals being scuppered. It has accrued considerable financial value and is currently owned by REO and Treasury Holdings who plan to develop housing and commercial business opportunities on the site, possibly leading to the removal of the chimneys and the adjacent Grade II listed pumping station.

Significance for New Metropolitan Mainstream

The regeneration of the Battersea Power Station site would be a big example of the removal of significant heritage in favour of private business interests. The introduction of a gated community would be a continuation of standardised architecture as opposed to any adventurous ideas for usage or renovation.

Stakeholders and their interests

REO and Treasury Holdings are the owners of the Battersea Power Station site, which they inherited for £400 million. The current planning application, which is being decided on in July by Wandsworth Council, is likely to be approved.

Deals

The sale of private housing and the rent for business and leisure space will provide considerable private gain, and there is likely to be less affordable housing or public space because of the company's rising debt.

Impacts

In the event of the demolition of the pumping station and elements of the power station, a substantial amount of heritage will be lost. Private housing is likely to drive up prices and force those living in less expensive housing in the area away, displacing families. The proposed application includes gated housing which, in conjunction with the privatisation of public and riverside spaces, will make for a less integrated community. If successful, the plans will prove to be another example of an undemocratic planning process, with private business interests outweighing the demands of the local residents, and the advancement of the commodification of public space.



Synthesis over all four projects and outlook

London shows the successes and the failures of the neo-liberal world city very strongly. Labour and (private) housing markets are very open and transparent, attracting strong flows of migrants to fuel a dynamic economy. This drains talent from the UK and the world and permits London not to reproduce its own labour. Inequalities, in a society always stratified, have become the worst in advanced Europe since the 1970s, driven partly by the extreme escalation of rent in the housing markets. Floods of money into land and property drove prices up, enriched the rich and impoverished the poor. Gentrification pressures are thus very strong, and penetrate almost every part of the city - conflicting with ever-more-squeezed low- and middle-income residents. Densification policies introduced for environmental and housing-supply motives seem to have made land speculation even more attractive.

"Regeneration" schemes, often targetted at poor populations, tend to benefit private investors, replace small enterprises by corporate occupiers and deliver few benefits to the supposed beneficiaries - as we see at Silwood and King's Cross. The largest and most ambitious 'regeneration' sites are very vulnerable to crises - Battersea Power Station and King's Cross seem to need everlasting boom conditions to get completed. Meanwhile many smaller projects can start and finish within a single boom period. And of the mega-projects only the Olympics are exempt from these problems. There, however, the supposed 'legacy' benefits will probably be lost because of the need to commodify and sell everything to repay public debt and make good the withdrawal of 'private partners'. Resistance is patchy and localised, strongest among the shrinking social housing tenants and the (soon-to-

shrink) public service workforce. The three main political parties share neo-liberal views and are all backing the pre-Keynesian 'sound finance' measures which will now worsen inequality dramatically in London and heighten social tensions. There is some dissent, as always, within the Labour Party; the Green and left parties are weak still. The threat from the far right has been fought off a bit in London, but continues to lurk. Rapidly worsening contradictions and tensions in the coming years may revide the far right unless alternative resistance channels open up. Some right-to-the-city type resistance is found in localities in London, and there are scattered victories - e.g. in protecting local markets at Queen's Market and Ward's Corner. At a London level the Just Space alliance is opposing the new Mayor's ne London Plan, aiming at least to show that it has its head in the sand about both

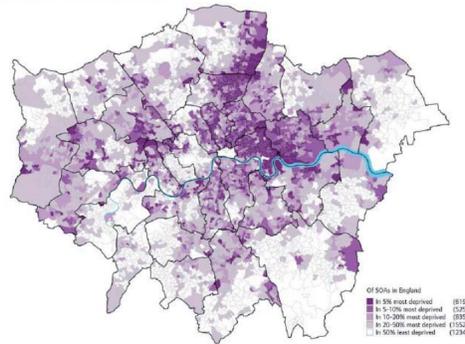
the economic crisis and the environmental crisis.

Social structure

Average income per head is high by national and European standards, and in terms of income it is the most unequal city in the world with the richest 279 times the lowest earners. Middle incomes are under-represented thanks to the drive to own housing in the eighties. Increasing gentrification means that affluence varies greatly borough to borough.

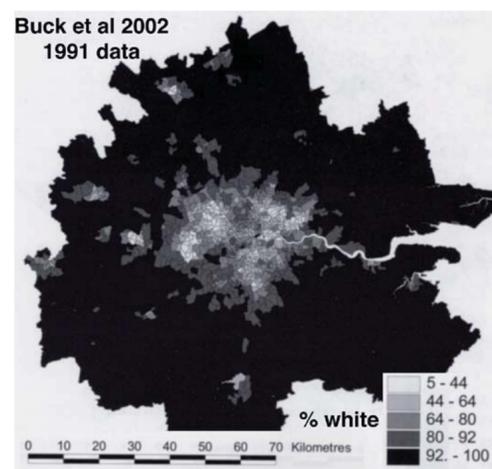
Social class mixture varies, but even wealthier areas are not exclusively populated by high-earners, mainly because of the long history of social ("council") housing which still embeds some middle-income earners and pockets of poverty.

Figure 7.8: Deprivation affecting children



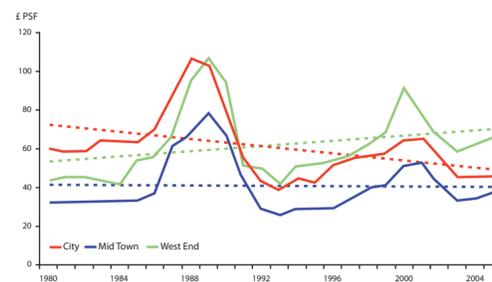
Source: Department of Communities and Local Government Indices of Deprivation 2007

Child deprivation inside Greater London (GLA)

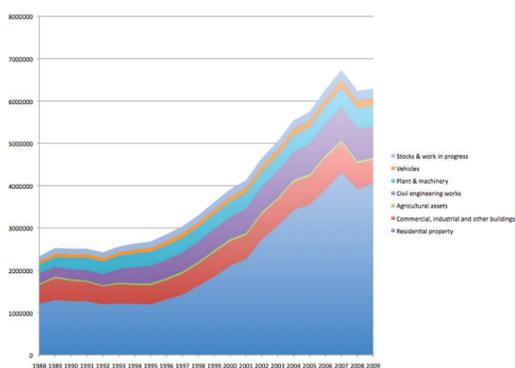


% of Population white, 1999 (Buck et al)
Inner (and now more outer) parts of Greater London also have ethnic diversity, but beyond Greater London the population is substantially white, except in a few industrial towns like Luton, Slough.

Real estate market



Office rent



Asset values
The UK has experienced severe inflation of housing and other real estate asset values, becoming a rentier economy.