

From 'Red Clydeside' to 'Scotland with Style': the transformation of Glasgow, Scotland

Best known for its proud ship-building past, Glasgow is a post-industrial city still struggling to come to grips with the impacts of deindustrialisation. Our title for this poster aims to be suggestive of such impacts. It wants to open some windows onto the political and socio-cultural challenges that arise from the forms of rapid urban change cities like Glasgow have experienced in the past 50 years and ask questions about how a city responds.

As a heartland of industrial activity from the early stages of the industrial revolution, Glasgow as a work-house became the 'Second City of Empire', a crucial cog in the machinery of producing and sustaining Empire. The city's merchants became wealthy from cotton and tobacco production in America, inevitably built on slavery and land dispossession. Drawing its workers from Ireland and the Highlands, industrial bosses created forms of accumulation and industrial production in Glasgow that capitalised on the poverty, land dispossession and restructuring of land ownership that began with the Enclosures in the 16th Century and took its peculiar Scottish formation in the Highland Clearances during the 18th and 19th Centuries. The concentration of workers, in impoverished conditions, created deep concern with

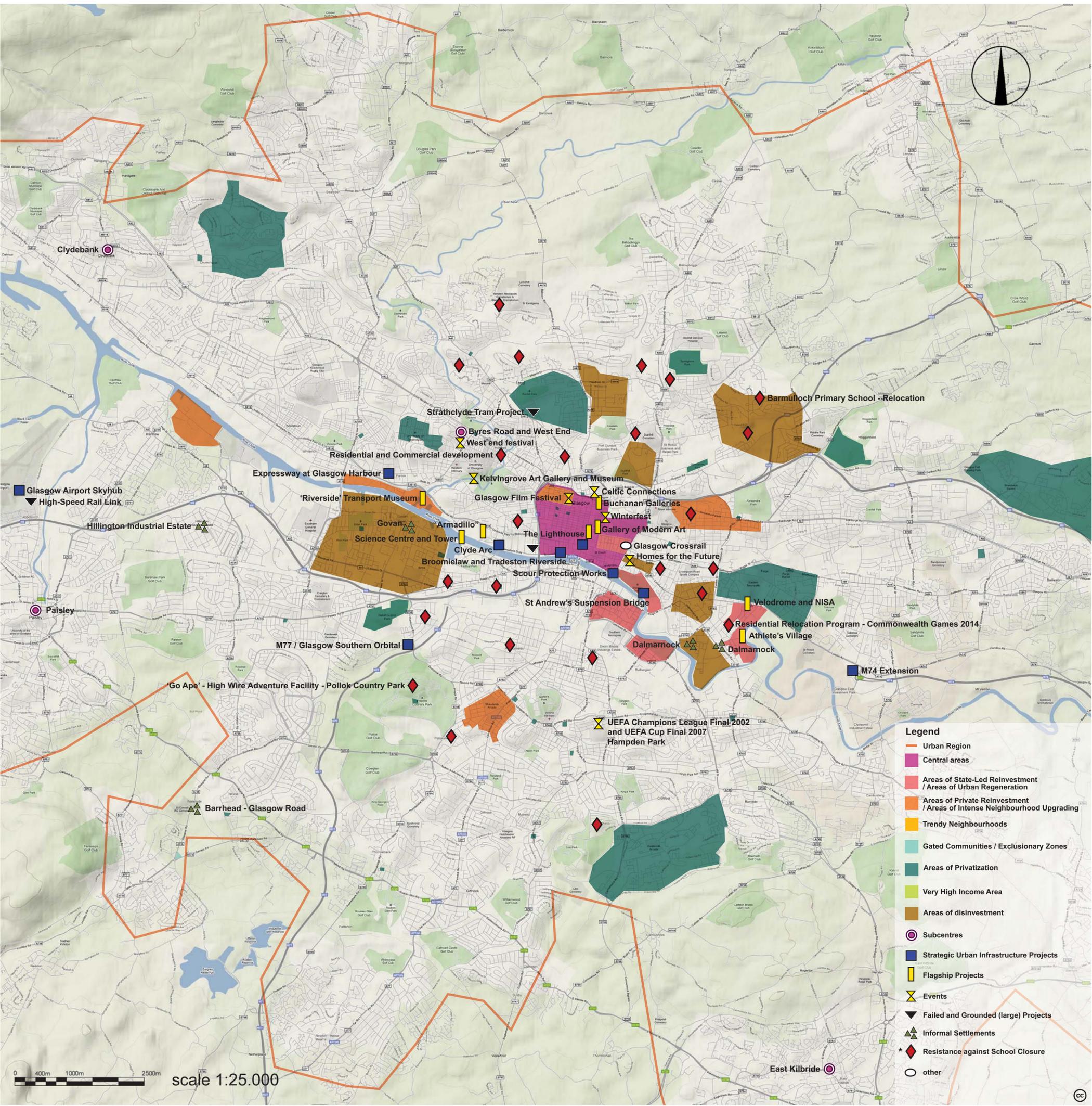
property and labour rights. This is the famous 'Red Clydeside' Glasgow became known for during the 19th and early 20th century, when political radicalism amongst the working classes was at its peak of organisation. Rent strikes, labour movements and anti-war activity characterised the political character and energy of the city at this time.

Glasgow is a very different city today. Deindustrialisation processes since the 1970s and the effects of neoliberal economic policies have torn the fabric of the city. As Scotland's largest city (home to 34% its population), and the fifth largest city in the UK, it is also one of Europe's most divided and unequal cities. The leafy neighbourhoods of the wealthy 'West End' contrast starkly with poverty, deprivation, inter-generational worklessness and low life expectancy in the east and north. Decades of 'urban renewal' and renaissance projects seem to have increased the effect of that divide and furthered the concentration of wealth and ownership. The city has been home to countless regeneration programmes, most famously the GEAR (Glasgow East Area Renewal) programme in the 1980s, only partially fulfilled. The city centre has been transformed into hubs of successful financial and

retail activity, built on speculative wealth and rapidly rising land prices. Buchanan Street is now one of Europe's more sought after shopping destinations. Glasgow is, according to the billboards, 'Scotland with Style'.

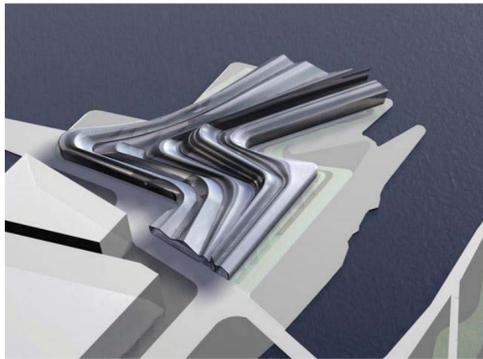
The city is now undergoing new modes of transformation. Intensive inner city redevelopment, particularly along the river Clyde with new apartments and high-end city spaces, occurs alongside the demolition of large swathes of public sector housing, particularly the infamous 'tower blocks' for which Glasgow's skyline is known. Alongside a series of flagship initiatives (new media and museum developments, the 2014 Commonwealth Games, and major new road infrastructure), these new modes are shaping the possibilities and spaces for urban action.

Scotland	78'782Km2	* Inhabitants	5'168'000
Urban Region	368Km2	* Inhabitants	1'750'500



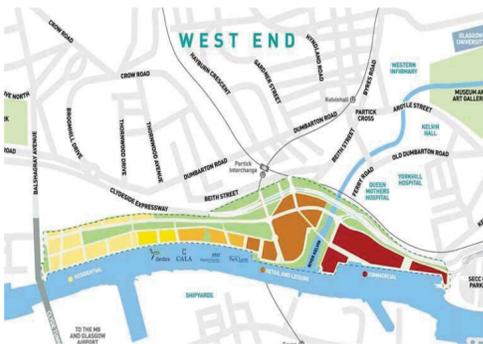
New Museum of Transport

Purpose	to build a new space for Glasgow's Transport Museum
Dimensions	1 hectare
Projets costs	£74 million
Investors	Glasgow City Council, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Riverside Museum Appeal
Architects	Zaha Hadid Architects



Description / Reason for this choice / Background / context

The Riverside Transport Museum is a purpose built facility that replaces the existing museum near Kelvingrove Museum. Some see it as a much needed dedicated modern museum space with more space and a high profile design. Others are bamboozled by the removal of a successful museum space from a logical space next to other similar spaces in the city. The new Museum is located where significant new development has taken place, on Glasgow Harbour. Much of this development has been private residential use – the museum forms part of a wider public strategy in the area.



Significance for New Metropolitan Mainstream

Is this another example of a big name architect designing a costly, iconic building to house a museum that was already very successful in its existing home? Is it another example of the desire to weave large cultural flagship development into the urban restructuring of postindustrial cities? The City Council hopes to draw attention to the city with the view to encourage increased tourism through its distinctive cultural 'offer'. But every other city is doing this, too, so it is difficult to see how such an investment can really be seen as 'distinctive'. Given its location, it certainly can be seen as another example of significant public investment and infrastructure creating the conditions for new capital accumulation in a disinvested part of the city.

Stakeholders and their interests

Glasgow City Council is the main investor and owns the museum assets (though Culture Sport Glasgow is the arms-length company that manages the collection). Glasgow Harbour Development have a keen interest, as the project restructures both the image and function of this part of the city. The project could be seen as a last ditch effort to bring public footfall to a residential development (at Glasgow Harbour) that has come under increasing scrutiny. Council and museum operators argue that it might increase visitor attraction and ensure the museum's financial stability. However, no evidence has been provided to suggest that the future of the museum in its original location was under threat or financially insecure.

Deals

The site for the museum was donated by the private company behind Glasgow Harbour Development. Glasgow City Council is footing most of the bill, but being aided by an appeal project to raise a further £5million. As the project has developed the cost has grown considerably over the initial £50m earmarked for it. Consequently the council has tried to cut costs through practical means such as using less expensive cladding materials.

Impacts

There is potential here to bring new life to the derelict remains of Glasgow's industrial past. However, one of the reasons why the Transport Museum has always been so popular was that it was across the road from another key museum, the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum on the fringes of Kelvingrove Park. There is potential, then, for a reduced interest in the long-term, and reduced accessibility, to the museum.

Demolishing housing tower blocks

Purpose	Regeneration of social housing stock
Dimensions	By 1979, Glasgow had over 300 tower blocks, the highest density in the UK. The Red Road Flats are the highest reinforced concrete structures in Europe. Disaggregated figures are not available. Indicative cost examples include: Crown Street Regeneration Project at £80 million; re-housing former residents of the Red Road Flats approx £60 million. Estimated additional £1.5bn will be spent on demolitions by 2022.
Projets costs	The UK Government, the Scottish Government, Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Housing Association, Glasgow Development Agency and, since the 1990s, various private sector partners
Investors	The best known architects of tower blocks included Basil Spence (1907-1976), Joseph Lea Gleave (1907-1965) and Sam Bunton (1908-1974).
Architects	



Description / Reason for this choice / Background / context

Rapid industrial and demographic expansion of the city in the 19th and early 20th centuries brought a desperate housing crisis in the 1950s. In response to this and severe overcrowding 29 "Comprehensive Redevelopment Areas" were identified and a series of peripheral social housing estates developed. 'The schemes', as they are known, remain some of the city's most deprived areas. Heavily influenced by Le Corbusier's ideas, Glasgow Corporation oversaw the construction of over 300 towers (between 10 and 31 storeys) by 1979. For a brief historical moment, tower blocks represented the triumph of technology and a utopian vision to alleviate social problems.

Yet tower blocks were vastly more expensive than anticipated, isolated, often lacking access to public transport and basic services. Construction was rushed and maintenance neglected. They were poorly designed, for example none of the elevators were large enough to carry a stretcher or coffin in a horizontal position. Existing communities were broken up, few jobs were available. Crime became common in the maze of internal corridors and ill-defined open spaces. By the 1980s, several towers including two of the Red Road blocks had been declared unfit for human occupation – many were declared "Slums in the Sky" (Hanley 2007).

The modernist agenda has given way to a renewed emphasis on traditional urban form, and "sustainable communities". Yet unlike London, Glasgow's tower blocks do not seem to lend themselves to reinvention as "brutalist chic". Instead, they are being demolished. Glasgow Housing Association, which now owns and manages all of Glasgow's social housing stock, has made demolition part of its long-term strategy. Since 2003, 15 towers have been "blown down" and it is expected that by 2010 only 120 towers will remain.

Significance for New Metropolitan Mainstream

Glasgow's residential townscape is highly instructive of changing planning and urban design ideologies over the last century, particularly in the UK. Comprehensive redevelopment in Glasgow occurred on a larger scale than in any other British city, making Glasgow the paradigmatic example of the changing discourses of urban policy in Britain. The story of Glasgow's tower blocks also highlights some interesting differences in attitudes to high rise living between the UK and other European and international cities; is this the result of the specific context and trajectory of urban policy in Britain, or a difference rooted in culture? The success or otherwise of the emerging generation of luxury high rise apartments in the city, such as the G1 building and the towers planned for Glasgow Harbour, is likely to be revealing in this respect.

Stakeholders and their interests

When Glasgow Housing Association assumed ownership and control of all social housing in the city, it inherited 238 high rise blocks, consisting of 22,467 flats. A number of Local Housing Associations, also private charitable companies, have taken over ownership of tower block properties following resident ballots. Many thousands of people have been affected by demolition, experiencing the emotional impact of seeing their homes destroyed and moving to other accommodation often in a different part of the city. Future social renters will be the main beneficiaries of regeneration.

Deals

Recent demolitions have been overseen by a consortium appointed by Glasgow Housing Association including demolition contractors Coleman and Company and Safedem and consultants DPSI. Of the towers not being demolished, 96 will be refurbished in the next 10 years, in a partnership between GHA, Wates and 3D Architects. This contract is worth £83 million.

Impacts

The re-housing of thousands of tower block residents in more enlightened residential developments must be a highly beneficial exercise in the long term. Indeed, the financial expenditure required is largely unavoidable given that many blocks were allowed to fall into physical dereliction. In most cases, demolitions have been popular and crowds of hundreds gather to watch the controlled explosions. However some long term residents remain enthusiastic about their tower block homes, and are unwilling to be moved away.

The technical challenge of demolishing such large complex structures, many surrounded by other housing and infrastructure, means that preparation for the explosions can take years. This inevitably creates a planning blight issue. Since 2000, the UK Government's Asylum Seeker Dispersal Policy has led to the use of tower blocks in some areas of the city to house around 4000 refugees and asylum seekers mostly from the Middle East and Africa. Many were placed in buildings already condemned to demolition, from which the original residents had been removed. Now, they are being required to disperse to unfamiliar areas of the city.

European City of Culture

Purpose	to publicise the wealth of cultural facilities Glasgow has to offer ranging from art galleries, concert halls to libraries.
Dimensions	held throughout 2009 complimented by over 3,400 community programmes to engage the public.
Projets costs	Over £30 million
Investors	Glasgow City Council and private funding.



Description / Reason for this choice / Background / context

Glasgow's desire to be only the sixth 'European City of Culture' since the programme began in 1985 can be seen as the city's response to the effects of industrial decline. Held in 1990, the event was seen as a wide-reaching programme that did not just look towards improving cultural facilities themselves but all facets of city living including enhancing existing businesses as well as encouraging future links with emphasis on tourism and retail.

Significance for New Metropolitan Mainstream

The event can be seen as another generic celebration event which passes from city to city, working as a catalyst for increasing global appeal as a tourist and business destination. Seen as part of the neoliberal urban order of the New Metropolitan Mainstream, programmes such as this can be analysed as new moments for capital accumulation in old industrial cities. For Glasgow it can most definitely be seen as a starting point – when it began to substantially shift the local economy from an industrial past to a postindustrial future. Significant investment occurred in key cultural assets and many argue this was very successful in furthering Glasgow's economic prospects. A significant aspect of the effects was a massive re-investment in the Merchant City neighbourhood and the gentrification of old industrial warehouses into chic urban living.



Stakeholders and their interests

Key stakeholders included Glasgow City Council who sought, through public and private investment, to make Glasgow a more lucrative opportunity for potential investors by successfully showcasing what the city offers. Many private companies contributed with funding including BP, Bank of Scotland and British Gas. Each of these provided over £100,000 in funding alongside many other larger firms who did the same as well as contributions from smaller companies. By helping provide funding towards the running of the event and having their brand associated with it, companies looked to gain valuable publicity via City of Culture publications, events and advertising to a global audience.

Deals

The money from both public and private bodies allowed work to be carried out on the McLellan Galleries, the Tramway and the building of the Royal Concert Hall to help provide signs of optimism of what lay ahead for Glasgow. This was in conjunction with allowing the city to attract big names including the Moscow State Orchestra and premiers of key works so giving people more reason to visit the city and take part. By building on this the city and the council looked to benefit in the long term by the buzz of activity this created both locally and globally.

Impacts

The effects of hosting such a large scale event throughout 1990 can be said to be visible in Glasgow's modern demeanour. Now known for its tourist attractions with its thriving retail sector typified by Buchanan Galleries, hotel accommodation such as the Radisson and Hilton hotels amongst the wealth of cultural facilities the city has always seemed to have present, Glasgow has become a contemporary European destination ('Scotland with Style'). However as a result of the city accommodating more global companies, smaller firms who invested in the City of Culture proceedings may find modern Glasgow a harder place for their small businesses to survive and therefore leave the city prone to becoming gentrified and dull despite the vibrancy of its cultural heritage.

2014 Commonwealth Games

Purpose	to host the 2014 Commonwealth Games
Dimensions	Athlete's Village – 35 hectares; NISA and Velodrome – 10.5 hectares
Projets costs	latest estimate £523m – 40% increase on original estimates
Investors	'City Legacy' Consortium comprising the following: Cruden, CCG Homes, MacTaggart and Mickel. Public funds from Glasgow City Council and Scottish Government.
Architects	RMJM



Description / Reason for this choice / Background / context

Hosting the 2014 Commonwealth Games has brought about large infrastructure and redevelopment projects in the city. These are concentrated in the very poorest neighbourhoods of the city, especially in the east end neighbourhood of Dalnarnock. Here, a new velodrome and major new sports arena, plus the 1500 home Athlete's Village are to be developed. Events will also be held at other locations through the city and the wider region. A company known as 'Glasgow 2014 Ltd' is responsible for delivering the 11 day event. Glasgow City Council, and the Scottish Government are the principal public funders of the Games. Legacy planning is being undertaken by both these public agencies.

Significance for New Metropolitan Mainstream

This is a 'flagship mega-event', of the kind that is important in neoliberal urban development. For Glasgow, the Games is just one more marker in the vigorous rebranding and restructuring of the city in the past 20 years. The interesting issues that this particular case raises for NMM are: the persistent and often pernicious discourse about 'improving' Glasgow and its people as a major justification for seeking to host the Games; the impact of the economic crisis on the public purse underwriting flagship events and projects; the extent of property deals underpinning urban development for the Games.



Stakeholders and their interests

The largest public provider of funds is the Scottish Government, funding 80% of the public investment in the event (originally at £298m, now increased by around 40%). Glasgow City Council foots 20% of the public bill. A large consortium of developer, architecture, surveying, planning, legal and construction firms, called 'City Legacy', won the contract to develop the Athlete's Village site – around 1500 houses overall, 300 of which (not guaranteed) will be available for social renting at lower cost. An urban regeneration company (publicly funded, but arms-length from government) called Clyde Gateway was set up for wider regeneration initiatives, and is also actively acquiring property in the area.

Deals

Developers have speculatively bought land in the area – one site was recently purchased by Council from a large private investment company for £5.4m. Across the road from that major land deal, Council have been unwilling to negotiate with small individual shop and home owners, who are now under Compulsory Purchase Order.

Impacts

Council and the Scottish Government argue that the Games will bring a 'legacy' of new housing and urban development, more jobs, and improved health in Dalnarnock and beyond. For a neighbourhood that is characterised by long-term unemployment at twice the rate of the city average, a 54-year life expectancy for men, and a high land vacancy rate, this would be welcome. Yet already there are signs of the importance of the 'legacy' withering away. There is no guarantee that the social rented housing will be available. Shops and community centres are being closed and people forced to relocate. Much like in London, what is counted as Games 'legacy' would probably have been built anyway. The new sports venues are high-end facilities that will be expensive to access – hardly the kinds of facilities that poorer local people will gain any benefit from. The focus on the Games has left ordinary small playing fields and sports clubs run-down and without further funding.

Synthesis over all four projects and outlook

Glasgow is a city that has layers of (post)industrial crisis and restructuring writ large in its urban form and social fabric. It is a city that remains starkly divided in both spatial and socio-economic terms. The derelict land, poor housing, loss of facilities, high unemployment and poor health in the East compares starkly with the wealth, privilege, high land values and leafy environs of the West. Successive waves of 'regeneration' appear to have failed to redress this division in any significant way. With their focus on comprehensive redevelopment, flagship projects and displacement as a means of capital accumulation, this is not surprising. The question we see for Glasgow is the extent to which the current moment of crisis in capital accumulation is seized as a moment of possibility. As the money runs out for large-scale regeneration programmes and services and common land holdings are slashed and sold in the face of burgeoning public deficit, people are

mobilising. Glasgow has a long tradition of social action. Urban struggles today are focused on the very significant restructuring of the social housing sector; the closure of local schools to sell public land for profit; the heavy impact of new road infrastructure on the poorest communities; and exposing other truths behind the city's desire for major events and flagship projects.

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Extra text to explain some of our symbols
These sites marked on our map are the sites of struggle by local residents over threatened school closures. Glasgow City Council sought to close dozens of primary schools across the city in the name of 'efficiency', but curiously the amount of money projected to be saved from the school closures was precisely the same as a new project to subsidise tax breaks for foreign investment in the city centre during the credit crisis.

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