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The role of temporary use in urban regeneration: ordinary and extraordinary approaches in Bristol and Liverpool

Planning Practice and Research

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Abstract

This paper attempts to extend research on the temporary reuse of brownfield land through an examination of its role in regeneration strategies. The analysis draws upon empirical experience in two case study areas: one, Bristol's Temple Quarter, where regeneration policy has tried purposely to promote temporary use, and the other, Liverpool's Creative Quarter, where policy has attempted retrospectively to capitalise upon 'meanwhile' development. Drawing on interviews with key regeneration and development actors, the paper demonstrates that regeneration strategies in different local economic contexts are poorly attuned to the needs of temporary users, who assume disproportionate levels of risk.

Introduction

There is a growing research literature documenting empirical experiences of the temporary reuse of urban spaces in multiple international contexts (see, for example, Andres, 2013; Andres and Chapain, 2013; Colomb, 2012, 2017; Haydn and Temel, 2006; Oswalt et al, 2013). Some of this research has focused on the prefigurative potential for temporary development to accommodate alternative or innovative uses which challenge existing developer orthodoxies or provide a voice to marginalised communities to influence the direction of future urban change (Andres, 2013; Finn, 2014). As part of this, there has been growing research interest in the possibilities of experimental forms of cultural-creative temporary uses within urban regeneration programmes in Britain and elsewhere (see, for instance, Armstrong and Mellick-Lopes, 2016; Bishop and Williams, 2012; Urban Catalyst, 2007).

Accompanying this interest have been critical accounts of temporary uses, emphasising their role in assisting efforts by policy elites to market their cities and extend place-based competitive advantage but in doing so helping to commodify urban space, reinforce gentrification and accentuate the displacement of non-conforming uses (Colomb, 2012, 2017). For Madanipour (2017: 2), the 'multivalent' character of temporary use means that its progressive purposes can sometimes be subverted in the context of wider development processes, reinforcing unequal power relations within and between cities while accentuating economic precarity for temporary users.

Against this backdrop of continuing debate about the value and meaning of temporary urbanism, this paper examines the reuse of space on a short-term or deliberately time-limited basis as part of urban regeneration programmes in two British cities. In doing so, it examines how the opportunities and risks associated with temporary use were experienced and negotiated by actors operating within regeneration programmes in two contrasting local economic contexts. The first is Bristol's Temple Quarter, where regeneration efforts have tried consciously to promote temporary use, employing it to stabilise local land markets and stimulate wider property-led revival. The second is Liverpool's Creative Quarter, where policy actors have tended to employ a more passive approach, attempting to capitalise upon organically rooted 'meanwhile' developments and retrospectively embed them as part of wider regeneration strategy.

Exploring what Healey (1991: 97) terms the 'development industry' in these two case study areas, the research involved 28 semi-structured interviews (14 in each city), undertaken in 2016 with key policy actors, community stakeholders, developers and land owners. Following Leffers and Wekerle (2019), the twin case study research design enabled exploration of the interplay between the different 'place-based actors' involved in the development of land. Interviews were structured around seven headings: the role of regeneration and planning in facilitating temporary uses; the role of temporary uses in the functionality of broader local land markets; the value (perceived/actual) of temporary projects to regeneration strategy; the nature of actors interrelationships and the form and extent of partnership working; practical complexities and barriers to development (including lease length, cost, risk,

ownership); the management of temporary uses post-development; and the legacy of temporary projects.

The analysis illustrates how temporary use can engender opportunity for creativity and innovation as part of the regeneration process. But it also demonstrates how what Peck (2012) calls 'risk-shifting rationalities' in the development industry can mean that economic, social and political costs accrue in particular to temporary users. The remainder of the paper documents experiences in the two case study cities in order to understand the ways in which different temporary uses of land have evolved and how they have been deployed as part of wider regeneration strategy. In doing so, we seek to add to the existing literature on the form, purpose and impact of temporary uses of land as part of urban regeneration. It is to this debate about how to understand temporary uses that the next section of the paper turns, before drawing upon interview data to explore some of the ways that regeneration efforts in two cities have attempted to deploy temporary development.

Temporary use and the regeneration process

Much of the literature on the reuse of brownfield sites on a temporary basis has focused on the catalytic regenerative potential of a host of innovative uses of urban space. From beach bars and open-air theatres to community gardens and sculpture parks, a number of studies have highlighted what Oswalt et al (2013) term the "power of temporary use" to transform urban areas blighted by vacancy and dereliction (Colomb, 2012; Haydn and Temel, 2006). Interest in what are held to be the transformative possibilities associated with temporary urban uses grew, in particular, in the context of weakened land and property markets following the global financial crises of 2007-08, and the associated desire to seek socially and environmentally sustainable alternatives to conventional models of land development (Moore-Cherry and McCarthy, 2016). At the same time, substantial reductions in regeneration funds, linked to governments' diminished capacity or readiness to maintain public expenditure, reduced the scope for more conventional redevelopment of surplus sites in urban areas affected by economic downturn. In this context of urban economic malaise and dwindling public expenditure on regeneration, encouraging temporary reuse of brownfield land therefore emerged from some policymaker perspectives as a viable alternative short-term means of addressing site vacancy and abandonment (Andres, 2013; Harris, 2015).

Alongside research documenting the emergence of new forms of interim use, critical accounts have attempted to interpret temporary use in the context of what Peck (2012) has termed 'austerity urbanism' (see, for example, Colomb, 2012, 2017; Ferreri, 2015; Harris, 2015; Madanipour, 2017; Tonkiss, 2014). Some accounts have presented policymaker attempts to devise strategies to promote improvised, temporary and creative reuse of derelict unused spaces – such as the *Broedplaatsenbeleid* policy in Amsterdam, the *Raumpioniere* strategy in Berlin or London's programme for Meanwhile Uses – as a means of obscuring the displacement of existing uses by facilitating speculative private investment in hitherto unattractive locations. In a study of an arts district in Beijing, for example, Zhang (2018) shows

how artists were encouraged to invest in the conversion of former industrial spaces on a temporary basis, but were ultimately displaced once the area's regeneration had enabled a newly branded cultural quarter to establish. Colomb (2012, 2017), likewise, highlights the consequences that can arise when stop-gap uses promoted by local policy actors begin to seek permanence and emerge as a perceived blockage to the longer-term interests of development capital (see also Madanipour, 2017). The argument here is that creative-cultural temporary uses have become more prominent because cities increasingly appropriate them as part of wider branding strategies linked to inter-urban competition goals (Mayer, 2013), but that ultimately they are viewed as dispensable: as an inexpensive short-term fix enabling local state actors to effect economic and physical transformation of what are deemed to be unproductive urban spaces.

Although the growing degree to which short-term uses are observable in many cities internationally has prompted critical interest in temporary development, research on how this has impacted upon the nature of regeneration policies and strategies remains in its infancy (see Madanipour, 2017; Moore-Cherry and McCarthy, 2016). While there has been mounting interest in the possibilities of experimental forms of cultural-creative interim uses (Haydn and Temel, 2006; Oswalt et al, 2013; SfS Berlin, 2007; Urban Catalyst, 2007), existing research has devoted less attention to "the potential contribution of temporary uses in a long-lasting process of urban regeneration" (Andres, 2013: 760). Understanding the role of temporary use as part of regeneration strategies, as Moore-Cherry and McCarthy (2016), Madanipour (2017) and Henneberry (2017) contend, requires greater appreciation of the roles played by the multitude of actors, from different sectors, involved in interim use. This means conceiving not just how temporary uses are derived and applied within regeneration initiatives, but exploring the role of different actors and their interrelationships in light of wider structural changes in governance and policy (Leffers and Wekerle, 2019).

The limited extent to which previous research has focused on the role of temporary use within regeneration initiatives is perhaps surprising given the longstanding nature of policymaker interest in how best to respond to the problem of residual land left behind by urban economic restructuring. The focus on derelict or vacant land in British urban policy is enduring. In the UK, it peaked with the Blair government's brownfield land agenda in England, as the Rogers report and subsequent Urban White Paper sought to address the continuing legacy of deindustrialisation by identifying and remediating stocks of vacant and derelict land, providing resources to encourage their development, and channelling new growth towards them (DETR, 2000; Urban Task Force, 1999). The years after the 2007-08 financial crises saw this model begin to erode, as the context for urban development altered, linked to weakening macro-economic circumstances and the series of institutional and policy reforms that accompanied austerity politics. The latter saw government regeneration resources diminish, many national programmes dismantled and central government begin to champion more localist approaches to urban governance in which responsibility for strategy guiding the reuse of urban land would be distributed across more diffuse actor networks straddling the private and voluntary as well as the public sector (see, for example, Bentley and Pugalís, 2013; Deas, 2013).

This paper attempts therefore, firstly, to contribute to this area of research by exploring the role of vacancy and temporary use within regeneration strategies. A second purpose is to attempt to advance understandings of the experiences of temporary users operating in regeneration areas. Although there is a rich seam of research chronicling the experiences of high profile, innovative or pioneering temporary reuse of surplus or abandoned land, there has been comparatively little interest in other forms of short-term development (Adams and Hardman, 2013; Deslandes, 2013). Everyday temporary developments such as advertisement hoardings (Adams et al, 2002; Reynolds, 2011), surface car parking (O'Callaghan and Lawton, 2015) or even public open space (CABE, 2008) have attracted less research attention, and to a large extent remain detached from critical debate about the short-term use of vacant land and property.

We attempt in this paper to rectify this omission by exploring the experiences of a range of forms of temporary use operating in regeneration areas. In light of the multidimensional character of temporary use, the research focused on what might be understood as 'extraordinary' as well as 'ordinary' forms of reuse. In this paper, extraordinary temporary uses refer to deliberately high-profile landmark and/or creative or innovative developments, including *inter alia* displays of artwork, music venues and performance spaces, cafés/bars and restaurants, street markets, developments using converted shipping containers, urban agriculture and urban beaches. 'Ordinary' temporary uses, by contrast, refer to interim developments which typically occupy redundant land for indeterminate periods pending site development on a more permanent basis. This includes advertisements/signage, surface car parking, open storage, site hoarding, scaffolding, shroud banners, construction compounds and telecommunications masts.

In seeking to explore these issues, the research considered the experience of temporary solutions as part of urban regeneration initiatives in British cities. Previous empirical research on temporary use in the UK has paid particular attention to London (see, for example, Bishop and Williams, 2012; Madanipour, 2017; Reynolds, 2011; Tonkiss, 2013). To extend this, the choice of case study areas was intended to allow exploration of experiences beyond London, and to consider how temporary use has featured as part of regeneration efforts in the principal urban areas of England. Of the eight second tier English cities that comprise the Core Cities group, only Bristol and Liverpool had specific policy provisions for temporary uses on vacant sites, Policy BCAP12 in Bristol (BCC, 2015) and Policy CC 13 in Liverpool (LCC, 2016). Alongside this, pronounced economic disparity between the two cities, with Bristol the "star performing city" of the eight core cities (Champion and Townsend, 2011: 1552) and Liverpool the weakest (Parkinson, 2016), allowed consideration of the ways in which temporary reuse of space has featured as part of regeneration initiatives in different local economic contexts.

Against this backdrop, the paper examines temporary use as part of two urban regeneration programmes: Bristol's Temple Quarter and Liverpool's Creative Quarter. Both areas have been the subject of long-term regeneration efforts: Bristol's Temple Quarter since 2011 and Liverpool's Creative

Quarter from the early 2000s (BCC, 2014; LCC, 2005, 2008). Alongside this, the two local initiatives represented contrasting approaches toward temporary development. In Bristol's Temple Quarter, regeneration efforts have tried purposely to encourage temporary use, using it to stabilise local land markets and actuate wider property-led revitalisation. By comparison, in Liverpool's Creative Quarter, policy has tended to be more passive and gradualist, aimed at harnessing existing temporary uses and linking them to wider regeneration efforts.

The subsequent sections examine how the potentials and constraints linked to both 'ordinary' and 'extraordinary' temporary uses were encountered and mediated by development and regeneration actors in Bristol's Temple Quarter and Liverpool's Creative Quarter. In doing so, the paper seeks to draw conclusions about the ways in which regeneration efforts have sought to accommodate short-term development, and about the experiences of temporary users themselves.

Bristol's Temple Quarter

Initial regeneration efforts in Bristol's Temple Quarter in the 1990s, based on the flagship development of Temple Quay, faltered because of conflict between the city's former Urban Development Corporation and the local authority (Oatley and May, 1999). By the mid-2000s, however, subsequent private sector investment in residential units, student accommodation, high profile office space, leisure and retail functions meant that the regeneration of Temple Quays had started to gather momentum. These initial waterfront developments attracted further developer interest and provided a favourable context for further rounds of regeneration (Boddy, 2007).

The potential associated with development of this type was something that local policy actors were keen to exploit. To that end, in 2011 an enlarged and rebadged Temple Quarter was designated an Enterprise Zone, offering more than 240,000m² of commercial, residential, retail and leisure space. The emphasis was on attracting investment linked to four key sectors: hi-tech, creative and digital, low carbon and professional services (BCC, 2014). In delivering this ambitious programme, a new strategic partnership was established, comprising the main landholder, the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), alongside Bristol City Council, Network Rail, and West of England Local Enterprise Partnership and its inward investment promotional body, Invest Bristol and Bath.

Deteriorating macro-economic circumstances presented an immediate challenge to the new partnership. Private sector demand for land slowed in the aftermath of the global financial crises of 2007-08 and the subsequent recessions, necessitating a rethink of the approach to regeneration, including how best to find effective short-term use for redundant land. The solution from 2012 was to try to promote 'innovative', 'creative' and high-profile temporary uses on vacant sites in order to improve the image of the Temple Quarter, raise awareness of its regeneration and thereby stimulate demand for long-term development. Although there were efforts to promote 'ordinary' functional, everyday uses such as surface car parking as a short-term solution, over time the emphasis on more ambitious 'extraordinary' temporary uses began to grow. These included the Severn Project (polytunnels on the site of a former

diesel depot), Grow Bristol (an urban farm accommodated in converted lorries), Box Works (office space in reused shipping containers), Creative Common (a space for arts and creative events) and Yurt Lush (a café and restaurant in a yurt) (Figures 1 and 2).

Part of the rationale for the shift in emphasis from ordinary to extraordinary temporary uses was a pragmatic desire to manage the surge of applications for car parks, control their overall impact on transport and traffic, and minimise what some argued was their unnecessary visual intrusion (Figure 2b) (BCC, 2015). But part of the changing perspective on temporary use was also attributable to a desire to aid broader efforts to implant a positive image of the area's regeneration potential in the minds of developers: 'it is about branding', as one interviewee commented (Interview A, local authority regeneration project manager).

INSERT FIGS 1 and 2 HERE

To encourage more high-profile and innovative temporary uses of brownfield land, the local planning and regeneration policy framework underwent amendment. A series of Local Development Orders was initiated from 2012 as a means of encouraging creative temporary uses on strategically important, publicly owned land (BCC, 2014, 2015, 2016). Alongside these, the HCA and Bristol City Council began formally to recognise the importance of innovative temporary developments via a central area planning policy (Policy BCAP 12: Vacant sites and temporary uses). The Bristol Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone Spatial Framework (BCC, 2016) was also important in recognising the catalytic potential for high-profile temporary use to impact on regeneration more broadly.

By 2016, however, the local planning authority stance on temporary use had changed again. Interview data suggest that policy actors had become more concerned about the escalating financial and administrative costs associated with intervention to promote innovative and high-profile temporary uses. These concerns were reinforced by ongoing reductions in central government funding of local authorities, with the effect that Bristol City Council had increasing political difficulty in justifying expenditure to enable high-profile development on sites for which viable alternative temporary uses (such as car parking) already existed. Moreover, the principal role of the Enterprise Zone was to deliver stable growth and long-term development, further undermining the case for spending scarce public resources to support developments which, while representing important and visible landmarks, were never intended to be anything other than short-lived. As one interviewee argued:

I don't think we have the time to protect [temporary user] interests beyond saying there's this site, it's yours for a period at a certain price.

(Interview D, national regeneration agency officer)

Ultimately, then, most public sector interviewees viewed temporary use as a means rather than an end: as a way of facilitating permanent strategic development. Yet while cost concerns led to more emphasis

on short-term development as merely a convenient stopgap response to localised land surpluses, some policy actors continued to view time-limited development in more strategic terms. Some advocated the establishment of a temporary use strategy (Interview C, local regeneration agency officer). Interview data suggest increasing alertness to the longer-term legacy of temporary development, especially some of the landmark projects that had emerged. Some public sector interviewees measured the success of temporary uses based narrowly on the permanent developments they might inspire in future (Interview C, local regeneration agency officer; Interview D, national regeneration agency officer). For others, however, appreciation of the impacts of short-term development meant that temporary uses might have to be relocated across the Temple Quarter. This was not only because of their popularity among users, but also because of what some saw as the effectiveness of temporary use as a regeneration tool: as 'a vehicle that you move around the Enterprise Zone' (Interview B, local authority officer). Indeed, the value of temporary use as a means of promoting wider regeneration was such that some interviewees were unperturbed by the costs incurred in relocation, whether in the form of £30,000 to fund the logistically challenging transfer of a soil membrane or the less demanding task of moving shipping containers (see Figures 1c and 1d).

In general, public policy actors viewed temporary use as a useful element of the Temple Quarter regeneration initiative, even if views were divided about the extent to which limited funds should be concentrated on high-profile flagship developments as an alternative to 'letting the market decide' and utilising everyday temporary uses such as car parking as a means of restoring market equilibrium. Views among private sector interviewees, by contrast, were more mixed. Although there was recognition of the value of a more proactive role by the public sector in respect of temporary use, there was nervousness among some long-established developers, some of whom recalled one of the earliest landmark temporary use projects in the area in 2012, a big top tent in Creative Common hosting the Invisible Circus group. While this was a highly visible temporary use, some developers complained during interviews that its impact was to tarnish the image of Temple Quarter as a potential destination for mainstream investment. Although some recent entrants to the local property market argued that 'mindsets have changed' and a more supportive stance regarding temporary uses like the big top tent was emerging, in general apprehension prevailed among longer-standing developers (Interview E, private developer).

These divided views among developers about the value of policy intervention in support of temporary use reflects the degree of difficulty faced in constructing viable public-private regeneration partnerships – an especially important issue in the context of continuing central government exhortations to establish cross-sector regeneration alliances as a more efficient and cost effective localist alternative to conventional, unaffordable state intervention. However, a particular problem faced by local policy actors in attempting to build such coalitions and engage the private sector has been the view among some developers that temporary uses have been 'downmarket', their presence 'cheapening' the aesthetic of the Temple Quarter (Interview E, private developer; Interview F, property agent). Allowing short-term users to occupy sites for too long, it was argued, risked undermining the wider image of the area and its

attractiveness to potential developers. Temporary uses, it was contended, could play a useful interim role, but ought not to endure because of the consequences for long-term land market functionality:

Commercial developers [...] don't want to tie the site up with a temporary use for two years. They are thinking, oh we could do a deal next year, next week, next month...

(Interview E, private developer).

Despite these reservations, some developers, nevertheless, saw value in temporary use as a 'fun risk' (Interview E, private developer). There was enthusiasm in particular for innovative or unusual temporary uses that would help raise the area's profile and enhance its attractiveness to developers. But many developers were frustrated by this approach. Restrictions on surface car parking, they argued, were undermining the area's appeal to developers and end-users. The apparent preoccupation of policy actors with faddish temporary uses was at the expense of the day-to-day functionality of the area, some interviewees argued. Public sector actors, it was claimed, were insufficiently appreciative of the risks involved in allowing temporary uses to develop. The rhetoric accompanying Temple Quarter stressed the importance of public-private partnership and emphasised the contribution of temporary use to the area's renewed dynamism. However, the more prosaic view among some of the developers canvassed was that while short-term use of space had a useful makeshift role to play, if not managed carefully it could frustrate the resumption of a fully operational land and property market. This, in turn, had implications for incipient forms of governance for regeneration in that developer unease about the value of at least some temporary uses meant private sector hesitation about whether, or how far, to engage with a local public sector lacking the resources available to it before the onset of austerity.

A third category of actor – temporary users – offered different perspectives again. Most recognised their role in the branding and marketing of the Temple Quarter, but also welcomed the opportunity the regeneration initiative afforded them to showcase their business. However, whereas both public policy actors and developers viewed them, for the most part, as transient entities, temporary users themselves sought a degree of permanence. Bristol City Council and the HCA, they complained, had failed to recognise each temporary user as a start-up business with aspirations to longevity. Temporary users were unanimous in their recognition of the support given by one or both the city council and HCA during the initial stages of their project, such as assisting with planning permission and groundwork costs. Nevertheless, this support was said to be short lived and once on site very little care or attention was provided. Some in retrospect felt they had been unfairly cajoled as part of regeneration schemes into high risk, complex temporary use projects that were unlikely to be anything other than transitory:

There's sometimes a real lack of common sense and reasonable behaviour. So [public sector regeneration actors] think they're being helpful [...] but in terms of support there's a sort of gap where they can't seem to think reasonably about what's actually going on.

(Interview G, temporary user).

Temporary users in essence sought security, whereas Bristol City Council and the HCA envisaged short-term uses as a flexible tool to help smooth fluctuations in the demand for land and thereby help to achieve wider regeneration goals more rapidly and coherently than if left to market forces. But as a disillusioned user noted in reference to her 15 to 20 employees, ‘if you go under, all of those people lose their jobs’ (Interview H, temporary user). The suggestion by policymakers that temporary users should be flexible and willing to relocate to occupy unused land was seen as hopelessly unrealistic given the likely impact on the commercial viability of new ventures. Yurt Lush, for example, moved between two plots of land but, according to interviewee testimony, compromised its profitability in doing so. Interview responses suggest that the perceived threat of relocation eventually led another temporary user, polytunnel grower the Severn Project, to relocate from Temple Quarter to secure a longer lease elsewhere, reportedly at significant financial cost. These examples are illustrative of the ways in which active and passive forms of regeneration management shifted risk onto temporary users. This provoked considerable tension between temporary users, private sector developers and policy actors, undermining the objective of promoting short-term development as an innovative way of fulfilling the wider regeneration of the Temple Quarter.

Liverpool’s Creative Quarter

Whereas the strategy for Temple Quay envisioned brash office and residential development on previously developed land, Liverpool’s RopeWalks regeneration unfolded in the very different context of an area of architectural quality and distinct character which required more careful stewardship (Couch and Dennemann, 2000). Its 29ha footprint included the Duke Street Conservation Area, the lower Duke Street and Henry Street Townscape Heritage Initiative as well as a portion of the Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2017; LCC, 2005, 2009). The goal for the area was to apply an approach to regeneration based on adaptation of heritage assets, working towards the creation of a cultural-creative quarter (LCC, 2005; Montgomery, 2003).

The Creative Quarter comprised two distinct areas, the RopeWalks and the Baltic Triangle. In the RopeWalks, development was delivered as part of what was intended to be a collaborative approach involving participants from different sectors, administrated by a new regeneration organisation, the RopeWalks Partnership. During its five-year tenure (1997-2002), the RopeWalks Partnership oversaw a £110m investment programme centred on existing business, cultural-creative industries and the night-time economy (Couch, 2008; Urban Splash, 2017). By the mid-2000s, the Partnership had made some gains in revitalising the area and had begun a strategy to brand the RopeWalks as a distinctive quarter of the city (Lee, 2009). Strategy began to focus increasingly on businesses drawn from the creative sector, in an attempt to help the area carve a role as a centre for the night-time economy (Academy of Urbanism, 2017; LCC, 2004). In 2005, a formal planning framework, the RopeWalks SPD, was created to try to ensure that future development would adhere to this projected new identity (LCC, 2005).

This was a vision that proved difficult to realise. The second half of the 2000s saw the regeneration of the RopeWalks begin to decelerate as policymaker attention turned to the completion of the nearby flagship central retail development, Liverpool One, and as preparations began for Liverpool's year as European Capital of Culture in 2008 (Daramola-Martin, 2009; Jones and Wilks-Heeg, 2004; O'Brien, 2011). Left behind, however, were a number of more intractable unused sites (LCC, 2016). But while temporary use became more central to Bristol's strategy for the Temple Quarter as the development climate worsened in the late 2000s, using land on a temporary basis initially featured much less prominently as a formal part of the RopeWalks regeneration agenda.

Situated 100m to the southwest of Liverpool's RopeWalks and separated by a former council estate is the Baltic Triangle, the other part of Liverpool's Creative Quarter. The challenge here was in some respects distinct. While the Baltic Triangle retained much of its maritime architecture, it lacked the historic character of the adjacent RopeWalks and continued to accommodate a significant volume of light industry and warehousing (LCC, 2008, 2016; Liverpool Vision, 2012). In contrast to the attempted rebranding of the RopeWalks as a cultural-creative quarter, the Baltic Triangle initially lacked a discrete identity. Instead, its reinvention coincided with the upsurge of developer interest in city centre housing. By 2004, as development pressures radiated outwards from the city centre, parts of the Baltic Triangle area faced increasing demand from developers wishing to build residential apartments (Couch et al, 2009; LCC, 2004).

The eventual result was that Liverpool's Unitary Development Plan in 2008 reclassified the Baltic Triangle as an area for mixed use rather than primarily industrial development. At the same time, the city council partnered with Liverpool Vision, the city's Urban Regeneration Company, to create a planning framework for the area (LCC, 2008). With the establishment of the Baltic Triangle Community Interest Company (CIC) in 2010, there was an attempt to promote the area's regeneration as Liverpool's putative digital tech and creative cluster (Baltic Creative, 2017). This digital-tech branding was formally endorsed by the city council's draft Local Plan, with the Baltic Triangle and the RopeWalks jointly defined as Liverpool's Creative Quarter (LCC, 2016).

In contrast to Bristol, temporary use did not feature as a formal part of any of the planning and regeneration policy frameworks or strategies launched for the RopeWalks or the Baltic Triangle over the period from 2008-16. Indeed, it was not until the advent of Policy CC13 (Vacant Sites and Temporary Uses) in 2016 that Liverpool City Council adopted a formal temporary use policy (LCC, 2016). Interviews with regeneration and planning policy actors in Liverpool suggest that the lack of emphasis on temporary use was partly a reflection of the absence of publicly owned land in the Creative Quarter. Unlike Bristol, the view was that this meant that active encouragement for temporary uses would have been contingent on the receptiveness of sometimes risk-averse landowners and developers. But interviewees also argued that the lack of any conscious effort to promote temporary use was simply a reflection of the approach to regeneration that predominated in the city at the time. The concept of temporary use, one interviewee attested, had 'only become more popular in recent times' (Interview I, local authority officer).

While the same interviewee commented that there was acceptance that ‘meanwhile uses are a good way of stimulating [...] regeneration activity’, regeneration policy actors at the time were content to continue with a passive strategy in which surface car parking would fill whatever interstices emerged during the development cycle.

This is in marked contrast to the position in Bristol. Leading regeneration policy actors in Liverpool eschewed the more directive approach to temporary use evident at times as part of the Temple Quarter strategy. Instead, the view was that while temporary use could fulfil an expedient role in times of land and property market flux, it was not something that should be pursued with any vigour. The notion of temporary use as a vital element of broadly-based regeneration did not feature, reflecting a more *laissez faire* approach that allowed development to be dictated by market pressures, but which was unconcerned about whether temporary uses materialised. This meant that in contrast to the Temple Quarter, developers in the Creative Quarter were under no pressure from policy actors to fashion striking or innovative temporary uses that could inspire broader regeneration. Where temporary uses did emerge, they tended to be situated mostly in small buildings or on constrained and difficult to develop sites. Whereas Bristol possessed large publicly owned land holdings suitable for landmark temporary development, Liverpool’s regeneration actors had to work in a context of fragmented landholdings and relatively high levels of dereliction, reflecting the area’s industrial past (Couch, 2008) (see Figures 1 and 3).

The combination of the indifference towards (or unawareness of) the concept of temporary use on the part of regeneration policymakers, and the challenging land ownership patterns arising from the area’s industrial legacy, meant that relatively few short-term uses emerged, other than car parking. But there were some notable exceptions, and their experiences reveal a more complex position regarding policy actors’ attempts to engage temporary users and embed them in broader regeneration efforts. The case of Kazimier Garden (Figures 3 and 4a) – a popular outdoor performance space – suggests that although the regeneration strategy for the Creative Quarter did not actively promote temporary use, there was nevertheless some degree of sensitivity to the needs of short-term users. When Kazimier Garden was served with an enforcement notice in 2012, the city council attempted to reassure the organisation that ‘we’re not there to quash it’, but were instead keen to ‘make the most out of it’ (Interview J, arts organisation). Council advice, the same interviewee explained, was that the organisation ‘cover the bases and put in a retrospective planning application’ to secure their status. When threatened again in 2016 by a proposed £43m redevelopment of the adjacent Wolstenholme Square (Figure 4b), the city council’s urban design officer requested clarification about how the development would benefit surrounding land uses, including Kazimier Garden (Gee, 2015).

INSERT FIG 3 HERE

This type of response was viewed from some interviewee perspectives as evidence of the attentiveness of regeneration actors to the needs of temporary users, but others argued that it stemmed more from

fears about the potential political repercussions of the city council siding with powerful developer interests. Whatever interpretation holds true, the result was that Kazimier Garden was able to maintain a presence in the area. Supported by business groups, resident groups and affiliate organisations, it came to be viewed as a 'real asset to the community' (Interview K, local community organisation), providing a model for similar organisations such as Constellations and the Botanical Garden (both located in the Baltic Triangle) (Figure 4c, 4d).

INSERT FIG 4 HERE

The experience of Kazimier Garden was highlighted by some interviewees as a reflection of a growing desire among regeneration policy actors and developers to be seen to offer visible support for temporary uses. For some private sector interviewees, temporary use was 'a good idea...It's good PR, isn't it?' (Interview L, local developer). For others, temporary use also brought with it tax advantages. One developer, discussing the experience of Kazimier Garden, professed to be 'genuinely saddened' by the prospect of losing an innovative short-term use, but saw temporary development as playing a continuing role in kick-starting future development activity (Interview M, local developer). Even where temporary use had been confined to car parking, developers argued that this was for reasons of convenience and that they would be amenable to more innovative short-term uses, should the demand arise.

What was striking about the Creative Quarter regeneration was that, unlike Temple Quarter, open hostility to what were deemed unacceptable temporary uses was rarely expressed. When developer aspirations for long-term uses appeared vulnerable to delay because of the presence of temporary uses, the developer strategy tended to be a pragmatic one of accommodation rather than antagonism. One example of this arrived in 2014 when the high-profile landmark temporary use, Kazimier Garden, was used by a developer, Hope Street Properties, as an anchor for its adjacent housing development. The developer's stance, interviewees argued, was that the popularity and profile of Kazimier Garden would help secure permission for the associated development of housing. In effect, this meant that the developer saw the relationship with the temporary user as one of necessary cooperation and/or co-optation rather than subjugation, as one developer explained:

If we'd have tried to come up with the redevelopment without Kazimier Gardens, I think there'd be burning torches and pitchforks on the streets after us.

(Interview M, local developer)

To some extent, the more pragmatic stance of developers towards temporary users was necessitated by the weakness of land and property market conditions. Whereas corporate land agents feared a successful temporary use blocking future development in the context of ongoing economic growth in Temple Quarter, in Liverpool, by contrast, developers could afford to be more relaxed about the continuing presence of temporary uses like Kazimier Garden. In a market context in which demand for development proved slow to surface, there was less commonly any need for developers to resist

temporary uses, and often an incentive to harness rather than impede them as a way of helping to inculcate wider interest in the area and its development opportunities.

Alongside the constraints imposed upon developers by relatively weak levels of demand for land, another factor limiting the extent and intensity of conflict between regeneration actors, mainstream developers and temporary users in the Creative Quarter was the brokerage role played by some organisations. Between 2000 and 2010, for example, The Art Organisation (TAO) developed an intermediary role in the RopeWalks, facilitating links between temporary users and the then dominant developer, Frenson Ltd. TAO's key contribution was as interlocutor, operating as a non-profit organisation with the aim of bridging the cultural and commercial divide between creative users and private sector owners and developers. By the end of its tenure in 2010, TAO had assumed formal responsibility for temporary use in Liverpool's RopeWalks, fulfilling a remit similar to that of London's Meanwhile Use CIC.

TAO's facilitative role was seen by some interviewees as helping to foster a productive and mutually beneficial relationship between developers and temporary users, in contrast to the parasitic one said to apply more commonly elsewhere. But a number of interviewees disputed this, arguing that apparently compliant interactions between development actors masked what were sometimes more ambiguous relationships. One landowner explained this by recalling his interaction with a temporary user:

[I said] 'look, you're getting this building for a peppercorn rent, £1 a year, you're taking full responsibility for the building, we're insuring the building for you to be in there... You have to leave basically when we say you're out...

(Interview O, local landowner).

This more critical perspective was reinforced by concern about the inequitable distribution of risk. Some interviewees contended that TAO's practice of negotiating with temporary users while promoting permanent development in the same spaces in effect transferred risk from developers and owners to short-term users. Developers could continue to pursue high yielding investments while temporary users ensured that sites remained occupied, visible and generating some form of immediate income. Ultimately, however, there was limited security available to temporary users, many of whom were said to feel a profound sense of vulnerability about the prospect of their displacement if and when permanent development materialised.

The experience of the Creative Quarter shows how perceptions of temporary use changed, in a context in which it did not feature initially but came to constitute a recognised element of the regeneration strategy. What is especially striking is that this turnaround was largely extemporaneous, evolving incrementally over time. The lack of a rigid development prospectus, a sometimes facilitative but largely hands-off public sector and a locally-based private sector more receptive to alternatives in the context of a weak local economy gave rise to a series of short-term projects that came to be seen as critical to

wider regeneration efforts. Yet even though there was widely shared recognition of the value of short-term use, there was a continuing undercurrent of concern about how passive approaches to limited-life development, and/or the emergent forms of active management of the kind embodied by TAO's facilitative role, serve ultimately to protect the position of landowners and developers while limiting the scope for temporary users to secure any longer-term benefits from regeneration.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to add to understanding of temporary use of space in two main ways. First, in response to the conclusions of, *inter alia*, Andres (2013), Henneberry (2017) and Moore-Cherry and McCarthy (2016), it has tried to extend existing research by documenting the ways in which temporary use has contributed to regeneration initiatives. Findings from the research in two cities demonstrate that although there is general support for the idea that temporary use can contribute to regeneration strategy, there is little agreement among interviewees about what that entails in practice or any clear understanding of the potentials and limitations it involves. In Bristol, for example, there was ambivalence among policy actors with regard to temporary use, at times championing landmark limited-life developments but on other occasions expressing misgivings about the obstructive impact on permanent development. In Liverpool, temporary uses generally emerged organically, and it was only later that policy actors attempted to incorporate them in their informal strategy for regeneration. Research findings show that in both cities, consensus around the value of temporary use and its contribution to regeneration was often superficial. In both case study areas, tensions emerged as some temporary users gained traction. Conflicts centred in particular upon the vulnerability of some high-profile temporary users confronted by mainstream developers in a context of improving economic circumstances and growing demand for land.

This demonstrates that while temporary uses have value within regeneration initiatives as pioneering developments operating in often unpropitious circumstances and with minimal public subsidy, ultimately their longer-term durability becomes questionable as policy actors begin to be pressured by mainstream developer interests. As a consequence, regenerators rarely had any certainty about the precise role of temporary development in the longer-term, and were often willing to sacrifice any strategic commitment to short-term use in the face of pressure from developers. In a competitive landscape, the private sector sparred with regeneration actors over the perceived threat some short-term uses posed to corporate development aspirations. This applied in particular to high-profile temporary developments, the purpose of which was to help raise awareness about the wider regeneration programme and thereby excite longer-term developer interest. Yet it was precisely those landmark or 'extraordinary' temporary uses that provoked the greatest unease among developers, creating in Bristol's case a tension from the outset of the regeneration programme that undermined subsequent attempts to build meaningful cross-sector partnership.

This experience encapsulates the constraints that apply to local regeneration actors armed with diminishing resources and lacking the longer-term funding to enable them to steer strategy in ways that

avoid small scale temporary users being subjugated by powerful developers (see also Harris, 2015; Ferreri, 2015). There is a delicate balancing act for regenerators to strike here, but their ability to reconcile the competing interests of temporary and mainstream developers is greatly restricted when regeneration resources are limited or absent. Given that public-private partnerships are an established feature of regeneration, tensions with developers are magnified because state actors lack the resources, and therefore part of their legitimacy, to gainsay mainstream developer interests. In this sense, the research findings reinforce the importance of considering local development milieux in a holistic way, in which actor behaviour is shaped in an increasingly marketized political and economic context that constrains public sector officials and privileges developers in the formulation and implementation of regeneration strategy (Coiacetto, 2006; Christophers, 2019).

The second main contribution of the paper is to add to understanding of the fortunes of temporary users, and in particular their experiences of risk in the context of regeneration initiatives. The research revealed the risks assumed by temporary users, even in cases where short-term use featured as a formal part of regeneration strategy. In Bristol, the role of short-term users was viewed by policy officers as one of helping to bolster the rebranding of the regeneration area, but this was an objective that blinded regeneration actors to the longer-term ambitions of temporary users. Policy actors' understanding of immediate risk and future prospects for temporary users was poorly developed. Expectations on the part of regeneration strategists about the commercial viability of temporary uses proved to be overly optimistic, particularly in the early years of the regeneration initiative. Even when temporary uses did achieve commercial viability in the short time available to them, they were regarded by regenerators in effect as mobile marketing instruments that could simply be relocated to make way for more lucrative development once their immediate function had been fulfilled. While some temporary users sought to resist this strategy, they ran up against a powerful market logic infusing regeneration efforts, which ultimately perceived them as a barrier to permanent development (see also Colomb, 2012, 2017).

In the case of Liverpool, regeneration policy actors were found to have rejected the more determined approach to temporary use evident as a (disputed) part of the strategy in Bristol. Instead, encouragement for temporary use had a more expedient rationale, intended mainly as a counter-cyclical measure to ameliorate land and property market instability. While the consensus was that this was an effective tactic that helped regeneration to continue, it also left some temporary users exposed to the vicissitudes of the market, protected only by rhetorical reassurances from policy actors.

A conclusion in this respect from both case studies is therefore that temporary users shoulder much of the risk associated with development, but often without commensurate reward. This may apply in particular in generally stronger urban economic contexts, like Bristol's, where the widely held perception among interviewees of all types was that developers are in a stronger position to override the wishes of other actors in the development process, and temporary users in particular (see also Madanipour, 2017). The uneven way in which risk is distributed suggests that existing accounts of the potential for meanwhile uses to contribute to regeneration strategy underestimate the degree to which powerful

actors are able to exert leverage over others. While there was empirical evidence from interview data in Bristol of temporary development being displaced in this way, even in the less fraught context of Liverpool there was a clear sense of vulnerability among temporary users and concern that they might at some point be uprooted should land and property market conditions improve. In this sense, the findings suggest that because vacant land is a feature intrinsic to the functioning of increasingly deregulated local land markets (Christophers, 2019), temporary users are likely to have a precarious existence (Ferrerri and Vasudevan, 2019).

While the research found some evidence of contrasting approaches to the management of temporary use as part of regeneration initiatives in the two cities, short-term users were ultimately left in an exposed position. In both cities, temporary use was valorised primarily from an economic perspective that viewed the role of policy intervention, including the selective use of temporary development, as a short-term one of restoring normal market functionality as rapidly as possible (see also Tonkiss, 2013). The evidence presented in this paper suggests that the deployment of mobile temporary use serves principally as a means to incentivise development by filling voids on difficult to develop land, rather than as a way of encouraging new innovative or progressive uses of space.

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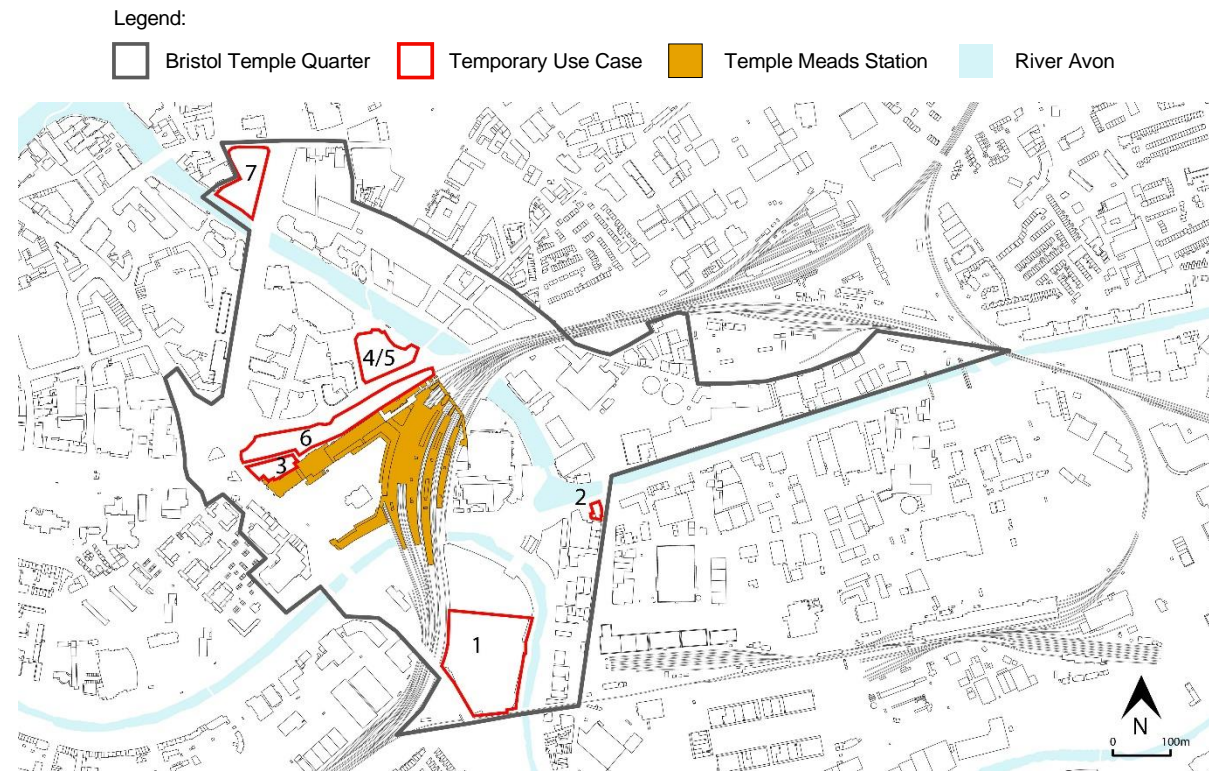
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Figure 1: Temple Quarter, Bristol: site boundaries of temporary use cases



'Extraordinary' temporary uses¹	Description	Profile of organisation³	Major/minor works⁴	Lease length/permission
1) Former diesel depot site: The Severn Project	Urban agriculture/growing in polytunnels for commercial sale (public land).	Start-up business (received support funding and enabling costs).	Major works.	5 year farm business tenancy (Local Development Order ⁵) reduced to 3 years.
2) Former pest control depot site: Grow Bristol	Urban farm in repurposed lorry bodies for commercial sale (public land).	Start-up business (received support funding).	Minor works.	2 year farm business tenancy.
3) Plot 6 Temple Quay: Box Works	Shipping container office development for profit (public land).	Variation of existing operation (received enabling costs).	Major works.	5 year lease (Local Development Order) reduced to 2.5 years.
4) Plot 3 Temple Quay: Creative Common/Yurt Lush	Café, bar and restaurant in a yurt for profit (public land).	Variation of existing operation (received enabling costs).	Major works.	5 year lease (Local Development Order) reduced to 2.5 years.
'Ordinary' temporary uses²				
5) Plot 3 Temple Quay	Surface car park (374 spaces) on site of former railway depot/goods yard (public land).	Public agency/owner.	Minor works.	3 year planning permission extended by 6 years.
6) Plot 6 Temple Quay	Surface car park (407 spaces) on site of former railway siding/engine shed (public land).	Public agency/owner.	Minor works.	2 year planning permission extended by 6 years.
7) Bank Place Temple Way	Surface car park (223 spaces) on site of former office block (private land).	Private developer.	N/A.	Application refused by local planning authority.

Notes:

- 'Extraordinary' temporary uses refer to deliberately high-profile landmark and/or creative or innovative developments.
- 'Ordinary' temporary uses refer to interim developments such as surface car parks, which typically occupy redundant land for indeterminate periods pending site development on a more permanent basis.
- Support funding refers to grants from public bodies, while enabling costs refers to public agencies facilitating groundworks costs and connections to mains electricity and water sources.
- Major/minor works refers to the average cost of installation, major denotes costs \geq £100,000 and minor costs $<$ £100,000.
- Local Development Orders give advanced planning permission for some types of agreed development (in this case temporary uses).

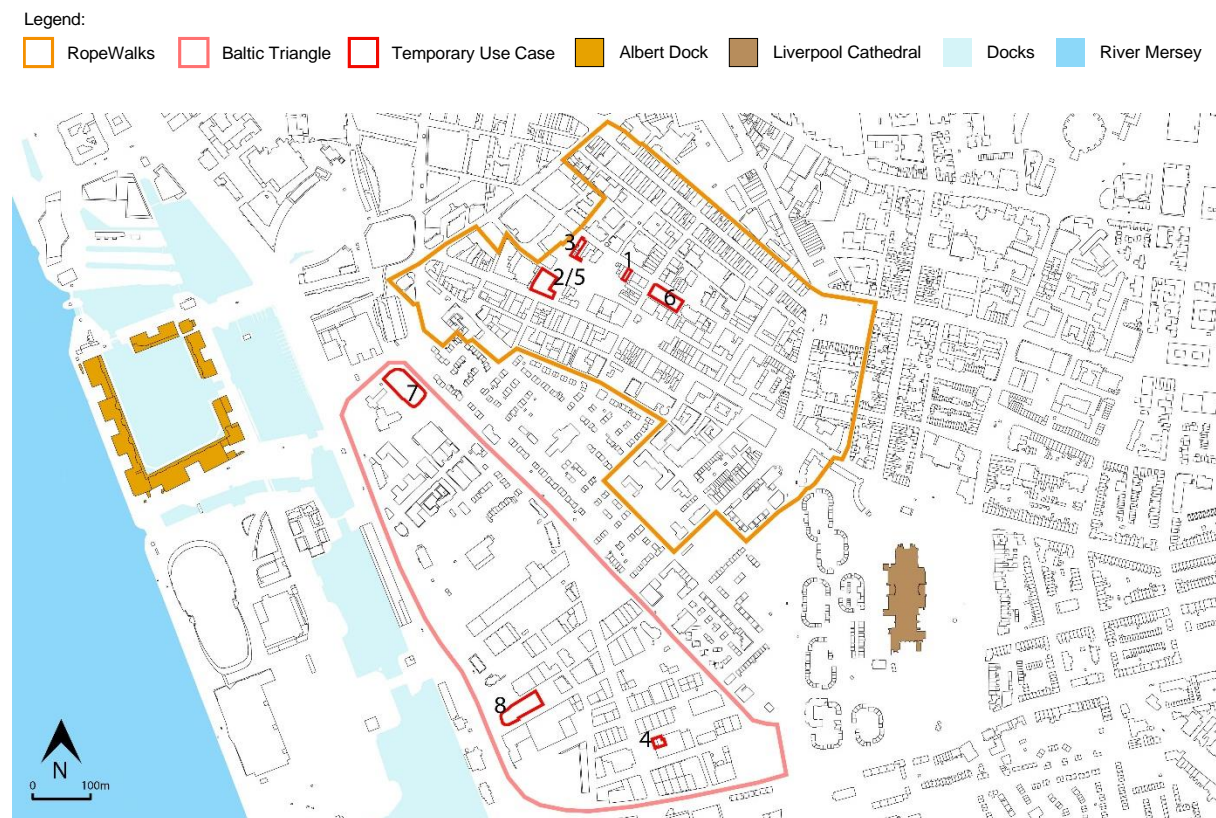
Source: authors

Figure 2: Temporary uses in Bristol's Temple Quarter

	
<p>2a: Yurt Lush within Creative Common, Plot 3 Temple Quay</p>	<p>2b: Surface Car Parking, Box Works and Yurt Lush, Plot 6 Temple Quay</p>
	
<p>2c: The Severn Project, Former Diesel Depot Site</p>	<p>2d: Box Works, Plot 6 Temple Quay</p>

Source: authors and Bristol City Council

Figure 3: Creative Quarter, Liverpool: site boundaries of temporary use cases in RopeWalks and Baltic Triangle







'Extraordinary' temporary uses ¹	Description	Profile of organisation	Major/minor works ²	Lease length/permission
1) 52 Seel Street: The Art Organisation	Painted artwork and installation on external façade (private building).	Start-up arts collective (conduit between artists and dominant landowner).	N/A. Peppercorn rent (typically £1 per annum per building).	Unspecified.
2) CCP Car Park: The Art Organisation	Artists workshops, studios and monthly art market (private building).	As above.	As above.	Unspecified.
3) 28 Seel Street: Kazimier Garden	Outdoor garden bar and restaurant including external performance space for profit (private land).	Variation of existing operation.	Minor works.	5 year lease extended by 10 years, 5 year planning permission reduced to 3 years.
4) New Bird Street: The Botanic Garden	Outdoor garden bar with external performance space for profit (private land).	Start-up business.	Minor works.	Unspecified.
'Ordinary' temporary uses¹				
5) CCP Car Park	Car park (43 spaces) within former warehouse (private building).	Private developer/owner.	Minor works.	2 year planning permission extended by 19 years.
6) 64-74 Seel Street	Surface car park (30 spaces) on site of former terraced street (private land).	Private developer/owner.	Minor works.	2 year planning permission extended by 7 years.
7) One Park Lane	Surface car park (73 spaces) on site of former office block (private land).	Private developer.	Minor works.	3 year planning permission.
8) 84-94 Norfolk Street	Surface car park (68 spaces) on site of former warehousing/light industry (public land).	City Council/owner.	Minor works.	3 year planning permission.

Notes:

- For definitions of 'extraordinary' and 'ordinary' temporary uses, see Figure 1.
- For definitions of major/minor works, see Figure 1.

Source: authors

Figure 4: Temporary uses in Liverpool's Creative Quarter

	
<p>4a: Kazimier Garden, RopeWalks</p>	<p>4b: Kazimier Garden in Context of Wolstenholme Square Development</p>
	
<p>4c: The Botanical Garden, Baltic Triangle</p>	<p>4d: Constellations, Baltic Triangle</p>

Source: authors