Narrating Sunderland: Exploring the Complex Relationships between Authorized Heritage, Community Values, and the Evolving Nature of Heritage as a Social Construct

Gulnur Cengiz

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School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape

Supervisors

Prof John Pendlebury

Dr Loes Veldpaus

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Abstract

Situated within the historical tapestry of Sunderland, UK, this thesis embarks on a nuanced exploration of urban revitalization efforts and community narratives within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone (HAZ). Drawing from critical heritage discourse, the study unveils the intricate layers of significance embedded in the city's industrial remnants and contemporary initiatives aimed at conservation and renewal.

At its core, this study adopts a conceptual framework that views heritage as a socially constructed entity shaped by communities. As such, it emphasises the fluid nature of cultural and historical significance, by recognising the evolving nature of cultural and historical significance, continuously influenced by shifting demographics and contexts. Central to the inquiry is a deep-seated quest to understand the nuanced interplay between the values, experiences, and collective memories of Sunderland's communities and their perceptions of heritage. Utilizing qualitative methodologies such as in-depth interviews and narrative analysis, the study seeks to capture the attachments and emotions individuals and communities harbour towards heritage. By delving into these internalized views, the study aims to elucidate how communities engage with heritage and its implications for urban development and regeneration initiatives. Through qualitative inquiry, the research explores the driving forces behind heritage-led regeneration endeavours, the emotive bonds anchoring residents to their environment, and the hurdles hindering inclusive community engagement.

Throughout the research, a multifaceted theoretical framework informs the exploration of heritage conservation complexities. Drawing on seminal works in the field, including the concept of authorized heritage discourse and discourse on heritage (in)significance, the

study navigates the intricate terrain of heritage valorisation and conservation. These perspectives offer insightful lenses through which to examine the dynamic cultural landscape of Sunderland. This research goes beyond traditional conservation perspectives, shedding light on the complex relationships between authorized heritage, community values, and the evolving nature of social constructs.

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List of Abbreviations

AHD	Authorized Heritage Discourse
ANT	Actor-Network Theory
BPT	Building Preservation Trust
CCT	Churches and Conservation Trust
CAP	Conservation Area Partnership
CHS	Critical Heritage studies
EH	English Heritage
HAZ	Heritage Action Zone
HE	Historic England
HERS	Heritage Economic Regeneration Strategies
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
ICCROM	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage
NECT	North East Civic Trust
NEHA	North Eastern Housing Association
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value
TWBPT	Tyne and Wear Building Preservation Trust
TWDC	Tyne and Wear Development Corporation
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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Chapter 1: Introduction

"Everything belongs to some matrix of memory, even if it is a matrix which is remote from human concerns and interest." (Edward Casey, 1993)

1.1 From Stones to Stories: Rethinking Heritage

In the midst of exploring a renowned tourist destination in Turkey, I found myself engaged in conversations with locals residing in traditional stone houses, adorned with intricately carved motifs and crafted from locally sourced stones unique to the region. Their first inquiry was whether I like their city or not. In response, I extolled the architecture and culture of their abode. To my surprise, their perspectives on their city diverged significantly from my architect lens, which primarily appreciated materials, construction, and ornamental features. As our conversation deepened, the locals graciously shared their experiences of residing in the city, offering insights that extended far beyond the mere aesthetics of their surroundings. Their reflections went beyond just the physical aspects, touching upon the political, geographical, and social dimensions that shape their daily existence. Their narratives resonated with the notion that cities are not merely collections of buildings and landmarks but living, breathing organisms shaped by a myriad of forces (Florida, 2014; Jacobs, 2016).

Seated on the curbs of their homes, this group of women casually eating watermelon seeds, a practice unfamiliar to me until that moment, after the day's influx of tourists had departed or retreated to their accommodations, this intimate moment offered a stark contrast to the daytime spectacle of architectural marvels and cultural exhibitions, prompting me to set aside my expert glasses and ponder the question: What is heritage for a local resident? In the context of Edward Casey's quote, this scene served as a reminder that even seemingly mundane actions can hold profound significance within the matrix of memory. It prompts reflection on the ways in which cultural practices, no matter how small or seemingly

insignificant, contribute to the collective memory and identity of a community. Thus, witnessing the residents enjoying watermelon seeds for the first time becomes a meaningful encounter that deepens my understanding of the local culture and reinforces the interconnectedness between memory, experience, and the place.

This realization compelled me to reassess my understanding of a place beyond its physical attributes – to explore its intangible aspects. The dynamic relationship between heritage and local identity is a complex interplay that extends far beyond the surface-level appreciation of architectural features. As Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2004) notes, heritage transforms ordinary sites into exhibitions, rendering them not only culturally rich but potentially more profitable. This transformation, however, raises critical questions regarding the individuals and communities whose past is being repackaged for investors, or visitors. How do the residents of these places respond to this call to value their own present and past in the terms set by heritage? This introspective moment, coupled with insights gleaned from critical heritage discourse, compelled me to delve deeper into the fundamental questions surrounding heritage conservation, community identity, and urban development. How do we define heritage beyond its physical manifestations? What happens when we gaze through the lens of local residents? These inquiries lie at the heart of this research endeavour.

As I contemplated the dimensions of heritage beyond its physical manifestations, I was drawn to explore how these intangible elements intertwine with the narratives of industrial heritage sites. Just as traditional stone houses embody the collective memory and identity of communities, industrial sites bear witness to the transformative forces of labour, innovation, and societal change. Industrial heritage sites, much like their architectural counterparts, serve as portals to the past, offering glimpses into the lives and livelihoods of those who toiled within their walls. Yet, their significance extends beyond the tangible artifacts of industry. These sites harbor the echoes of labor struggles, technological advancements, and social upheavals that shaped the trajectory of entire regions. Moreover, industrial heritage sites offer a lens through which to examine the broader themes of community identity and regeneration.

This reflection also served as a guiding thread linking personal experiences with broader themes of heritage, conservation, community identity, and urban development, and the

impact of urban change on local identities, and vice versa. I found myself contemplating the role of communities in evolving contexts, such as those where heritage led urban regeneration processes are unfolding. This introspection led me to consider how these insights intersect with the goals and challenges of heritage-led regeneration initiatives. Heritage-led regeneration, much like other conservation projects, seeks to harness the power of cultural heritage to revitalize urban spaces and foster economic and community development. By leveraging residents' perspectives and experiences, heritage-led regeneration initiatives aim to not only conserve the tangible and intangible aspects of heritage but also empower local communities to actively shape the future of their neighborhoods (Gravagnuolo et.al, 2021). However, the literature suggests that the conventional approaches to heritage-led regeneration often fall short in addressing the multifaceted needs of communities inhabiting post-industrial landscapes. Labadi (2015) and Dreyfuss et al. (2013) highlight the tendency of such initiatives to prioritize aesthetic and commercial interests over the social and cultural values embedded within these spaces. This prioritization perpetuates the transformation of heritage sites into commodified spaces catering primarily to affluent consumers, consequently fueling processes of gentrification and displacing long-standing residents (Labadi, 2015). Moreover, the deficit of social cohesion inherent in derelict territories further complicates the efficacy of heritage-led regeneration efforts. This highlights the complexities faced in revitalizing such areas, as the absence of community unity hampers the successful implementation of projects aimed at leveraging their cultural heritage. Hall and Robertson (2001) emphasize that the decline of industrial areas exacerbates communal fragmentation, indicating a need for interventions that extend beyond the revitalization of physical infrastructure. They argue that addressing social inclusion and cohesion is equally crucial. This underscores the importance of holistic approaches that consider both the tangible and intangible aspects of community well-being in regeneration efforts.

In addressing these challenges, it becomes crucial to explore the potential social impacts of heritage-led regeneration initiatives. Literature by Landry et al. (1993), Dodd and Sandell (2011), and Murzyn-Kupisz and Dzialek (2013) emphasizes the transformative potential of such interventions in strengthening social capital, fostering trust among residents, and empowering communities to actively engage in civic life. Furthermore, Swale (1992)

problematizes that heritage-led regeneration has the capacity to cultivate a sense of community identity and belonging by reconnecting residents with their shared history and heritage.

As I turn the focus to the realm of heritage-led regeneration, I explore the intricate connections between residents' interactions, heritage conservation, and the implications of urban change for both heritage and community. This prompts me to critically examine existing theoretical frameworks, particularly those centred on community heritage, and their applicability to the practice of urban regeneration. While there is a wealth of theoretical work on community heritage, the gap lies in understanding how these theoretical constructs translate into practical strategies for revitalizing post-industrial landscapes. By interrogating the intersection of community heritage and urban regeneration, I aim to explore nuanced insights that can inform more inclusive and participatory approaches to heritage-led development.

This introductory chapter lays the groundwork for the exploration of heritage-led regeneration in the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone. I begin by introducing the theoretical framework and conceptual underpinnings that guide my analysis. Drawing from critical heritage discourse, I delve into diverse perspectives, such as the authorized heritage discourse, curated decay, and heritage assemblages, to provide a comprehensive understanding of heritage dynamics. I then outline the research aims and questions, focusing on understanding motivations for regeneration, exploring community perceptions of heritage, and addressing barriers to participation. To provide readers with a roadmap for the thesis ahead, the structure of the thesis is previewed, detailing the chapters that follow, including literature review, methodology, historical context, empirical analysis, and concluding reflections.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

Drawing from critical heritage discourse, this study incorporates diverse perspectives to unravel the complexities of heritage, community identity, and urban development. Building upon Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's (2004) critique of static notions of heritage, this research incorporates the insights of scholars such as Laurajane Smith, Caitlin DeSilvey, Rodney

Harrison, and Tracey Ireland to provide a comprehensive understanding of cultural heritage dynamics (Smith, 2006; DeSilvey, 2007; Harrison, 2013; Ireland, 2019).

Smith's (2006) concept of ’authorized heritage discourse’ (AHD) challenges the hegemonic narratives that often dominate heritage preservation efforts. The AHD emphasizes the role of power dynamics in shaping which heritage values and narratives are privileged, thereby highlighting the need for more inclusive and participatory approaches to heritage management (Smith, 2006). Building upon Smith's concept of AHD, the research dwells into multiple dynamics shaping heritage values and narratives, while DeSilvey’s notion of ‘curated decay’ challenges conventional preservation paradigms. Her concept expands upon this by exploring how processes of neglect and abandonment can also be meaningful aspects of heritage, challenging the conventional focus on conservation (DeSilvey, 2017).

Harrison's work on ‘heritage assemblages’ offers a theoretical framework for understanding heritage not as discrete objects but as complex constellations of material, social, and discursive elements. By examining the interconnectedness of these elements within specific contexts, Harrison highlights the dynamic and contingent nature of heritage formations, emphasizing the need for flexible and adaptive approaches to heritage conservation (Harrison, 2013).

In contrast, Ireland's examination of "emergent heritage" foregrounds the role of community agency in shaping heritage narratives and practices. Through bottom-up processes of identification and valorization, emergent heritage challenges top-down approaches to heritage management, empowering local communities to reclaim and redefine their cultural heritage (Ireland, 2019).

Ireland’s (2020) concept of (in)significance explores the ways in which places, objects, or practices hold meaning and value within a community or society. In the context of heritage and urban development, the concept of (in)significance challenges conventional notions of what is considered valuable or worthy of preservation. It recognizes that while some aspects of heritage may be deemed significant by external observers or authorities, others may hold greater significance to local communities due to their personal connections, memories, and cultural meanings. This research aligns with Griffiths' (2015) perspective on the significance of local experiences in regeneration, emphasizing the intangibility of what places mean to

residents, specifically high streets. By delving into the lived experiences of communities, this research aims to measure the significance of heritage from the perspective of those who experience it daily, contributing to a nuanced understanding of heritage perceptions and urban regeneration. Tim Edensor's work (2022) on the affective dimensions of heritage and urban space offers insights into the emotional dimensions of heritage and urban spaces, providing a perspective on their significance. He argues that efforts to preserve historic landmarks and neighbourhoods are not solely driven by nostalgia or aesthetic appreciation but are deeply rooted in the affective ties that individuals and communities have to their surroundings. In the context of the clash between conservation and regeneration, Edensor's perspective adds depth to our understanding of community resistance to top-down development schemes that prioritize economic interests over local heritage and cultural values.

Additionally, this study integrates discussions on heritage-led regeneration and community engagement. Heritage-led regeneration initiatives aim to revitalize urban areas by leveraging cultural heritage assets for economic, social, and environmental benefits. Several scholars, such as Edensor, Labadi, and Pendlebury, provide valuable insights into the processes and outcomes of heritage-led regeneration projects, highlighting the importance of community participation and collaboration in shaping sustainable and inclusive development strategies (Edensor, 2010; Labadi, 2011; Pendlebury, 2017).

Conservation efforts, rooted in the preservation of built heritage and cultural assets, are often perceived as essential for maintaining the historical fabric and identity of urban areas. However, the imperatives of regeneration, which prioritize economic growth and social renewal, can sometimes conflict with conservation objectives (Pendlebury, 2002). Pendlebury's work, particularly his study (2002) on ‘Conservation and Regeneration: Complementary or Conflicting Processes?’ provides valuable insights into the dynamics of this clash. He argues that while conservation and regeneration can be complementary in theory, in practice, they often come into conflict due to competing interests and priorities. Veldpaus et al. (2013) also acknowledge the complexities of balancing conservation goals with economic pressures, gentrification risks, and tourism impacts. Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that considers the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of heritage conservation, while also prioritizing equity, diversity,

and inclusion in urban planning processes. One of the key themes emphasized is the importance of community engagement in heritage-led urban development. Veldpaus et al. (2013) underscore the significance of involving local residents, businesses, and stakeholders in decision-making processes related to heritage conservation and regeneration initiatives. By fostering a sense of ownership and stewardship among communities, participatory planning approaches can enhance the success and sustainability of heritage projects, while also promoting social cohesion and inclusivity within neighbourhoods.

Heritage conservation is not merely a matter of conserving physical structures; it encompasses the safeguarding of collective memories, identities, and meanings attached to places (Jones, 2016). As Johnston (1994) asserts, the attachment of meanings and identities to specific localities is integral to the production of a 'sense of place', wherein locally constituted values and traditions intertwine with nationally recognized heritage. However, this intersection of identity, place, and heritage often gives rise to multiple claims to place, leading to potential tensions and conflicts (Waterton, 2005; Schofield, 2005; Avery, 2009; Opp, 2011). The complexity of heritage conservation thus extends beyond physical preservation to the negotiation of communal identities and the acknowledgment of diverse perspectives within communities.

The notion of 'community' within the field of heritage has long been subject to debate and contention, particularly concerning the recognition and misrecognition of diverse heritage expressions. Waterton and Smith (2009) critically examine the conceptual disjunctions that arise in defining and negotiating memory, place, identity, and cultural expression within the context of community heritage. Their analysis sheds light on the tensions between different groups and their aspirations, revealing how dominant political and academic discourses often perpetuate restrictive assumptions that hinder alternative understandings of heritage.

The recognition and misrecognition of community heritage, as explored by Waterton and Smith (2009), have profound implications for heritage conservation practices and social justice. Their critique highlights how institutionalized notions of 'community' can marginalize certain groups and perpetuate inequalities within the heritage sector. By privileging the cultural symbols and narratives of white middle/elite classes, for example, heritage management processes often reinforce dominant narratives of national identity while neglecting alternative histories and perspectives.

Furthermore, Waterton and Smith discuss the role of heritage experts and institutions in regulating and assessing the worth of different communities' heritage claims. This dynamic perpetuates a hierarchy of heritage, wherein certain communities are afforded greater legitimacy and authority over their own heritage than others. The term 'community' itself becomes a site of contestation, with authenticity judgments imposed by external standards rather than emerging from within the communities themselves.

In recent years, there has been a notable shift towards community-led initiatives in heritage conservation, reflecting a growing recognition of the importance of grassroots involvement in preserving locally significant heritage places (Jones, 2016). Projects such as Scotland's Rural Past (2006–2011) and Scotland's Urban Past (2015–2020) serve as exemplars of this evolving landscape, where community groups actively engage in identifying, documenting, and conserving heritage sites (Jones, 2016; RCAHMS, now part of HES). Through collaborative efforts with heritage organizations and governmental bodies, these initiatives empower communities to play a central role in the stewardship of their cultural heritage, fostering a sense of ownership and pride in local history and traditions.

What is more, Jones (2016) discusses initiatives like the Adopt-a-Monument Scheme, managed by Archaeology Scotland, which provides support and resources for community groups interested in undertaking sustainable conservation projects and assuming custodianship of heritage sites within their localities (Jones, 2016; Archaeology Scotland). By fostering partnerships between heritage professionals and community stakeholders, the scheme facilitates knowledge exchange and capacity building, enabling communities to develop innovative strategies for heritage preservation while fostering a sense of belonging and collective responsibility.

This rise of community-led approaches underscores the significance of qualitative social research in understanding the complexities of heritage conservation and community participation. While members of the public are often engaged in the research process, the design, analysis, and interpretation of such research typically remain in the hands of experts, highlighting a potential gap between community engagement and research governance (Jones, 2016). Nevertheless, there is a growing recognition of the need for more inclusive methodologies that empower communities and integrate their perspectives into heritage conservation practices.

In summary, this study explores the complex aspects of heritage conservation by combining theoretical insights and empirical research. It focuses on community engagement within the Sunderland HAZ, exploring the motivations behind heritage-led regeneration scheme, residents' perceptions of heritage, and the structural and social barriers to participation in conservation initiatives. By integrating a range of perspectives from academic literature, communities, and heritage practitioners, this study utilizes interdisciplinary research methodologies to delve into the complexities of heritage conservation, community identity, and urban development. Through the analysis of Sunderland case study and synthesis of empirical data, and theoretical frameworks, I aim to identify key themes and propose actionable recommendations for the community strand of heritage-led regeneration and urban revitalization.

1.3 Research Aims and Questions

The city of Sunderland, UK, boasts a rich industrial heritage, with its shipbuilding, coal mining, and glassmaking industries having played pivotal roles in shaping its identity. However, akin to many post-industrial cities, Sunderland has faced challenges stemming from economic decline and urban decay. In response, the Historic England Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) was established as part of a national initiative to revitalize historic areas through heritage-led regeneration efforts. The HAZ aims to celebrate and preserve Sunderland's cultural heritage while fostering economic growth and community development. Against this backdrop, this research investigates community engagement within the Sunderland HAZ, focusing on the motivations behind heritage-led regeneration, residents' perceptions of heritage, and barriers to community participation in heritage conservation.

This research aims to provide a nuanced understanding of how communities engage with heritage and its implications for urban development and regeneration initiatives. The overarching research aims of this study are:

- Understanding the motivations of heritage professionals driving heritage-led regeneration initiatives and the structural framework[1] within HAZ.

[1] Refers to the framework within which activities related to heritage preservation and community engagement are organized and managed.

- Investigating dynamics of engagement within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone.
- Exploring the emotional and experiential attachments that shape perceptions and definitions of heritage within particular communities.
- Conducting an examination of the barriers and complexities surrounding sense of ownership.
- Analysing their impact on community engagement and heritage conservation efforts.

Main Research Question:

MRQ: How are perceptions of heritage within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone influenced by the values, experiences, and collective memories of its communities, as well as their understanding of officially recognized discourses?

Subsidiary Research Questions

SRQ1: What are the motivations driving heritage-led regeneration initiatives in Sunderland, particularly within the context of the Heritage Action Zone?

This question seeks to elucidate the driving forces behind heritage-led regeneration efforts within the HAZ, exploring the rationales, objectives, and priorities of various partners involved in heritage preservation and urban revitalization.

SRQ2: What is the role of emotional and experiential attachments to heritage in fostering a sense of place and belonging within the Sunderland HAZ communities?

This question investigates the emotional dimensions of heritage and place attachment, exploring how personal connections, lived experiences, and nostalgic sentiments contribute to residents' sense of identity, attachment to place, and social cohesion within the Sunderland community.

SRQ3: Does the local community's understanding of formal heritage narratives contribute to feelings of exclusion within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone?

By focusing on community-driven initiatives and grassroots engagements within the HAZ, this question examines the role of participatory practices, cultural events, and collective

experiences in influencing residents' perceptions of heritage and fostering a sense of ownership and belonging.

These research aims and questions provide a comprehensive framework for investigating the complexities of community engagement with heritage and its implications for urban development and regeneration initiatives. They guide the exploration of how values, experiences, and collective memories shape perceptions of heritage and influence decision-making processes within local communities.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

In order to successfully answer the research questions, the research chapters are split accordingly:

In Chapter 2, I will conduct a comprehensive literature review, synthesizing existing scholarship on heritage, regeneration, community engagement, and sense of ownership. It establishes theoretical frameworks and conceptual underpinnings that inform the research approach and analysis by delving into the multifaceted landscape of heritage and conservation, drawing from critical heritage discourse and experimental preservation approaches. It traces the evolution of heritage conservation from traditional control-based methods to dynamic approaches driving urban regeneration and socio-economic development. Additionally, this chapter examines how urban development and architectural production discourses intersect with heritage conservation, providing insights into the challenges and opportunities in balancing preservation with contemporary demands.

In Chapter 3, I detail the methodology employed in the study, including research design, data collection methods, and analytical techniques. The focus shifts to the methodology employed in this research endeavour. It elucidates the research design, data collection methods, and analytical techniques utilized to explore the dynamics of heritage-led regeneration. By detailing the rationale behind the chosen methodology and discussing considerations for ensuring validity and reliability, this chapter provides a roadmap for navigating the complexities of investigating community engagement and heritage perception within Sunderland Heritage Action Zone.

Chapter 4 serves as an introductory exploration of Sunderland's history, setting the historical context for the subsequent analysis. This chapter provides an in-depth exploration of Sunderland's historical evolution, focusing on its industrial rise and subsequent decline, as well as efforts at reindustrialization and urban regeneration. It traces the development of key industries like shipbuilding and coal mining, highlighting their impact on Sunderland's economy and identity. The chapter discusses challenges faced during periods of economic decline, followed by attempts to attract new industries and revitalize the city's economy. It also examines slum clearances and urban redevelopment initiatives, analysing their effects on Sunderland's built environment and community. Furthermore, it explores regeneration schemes aimed at leveraging heritage assets for economic growth. Overall, Chapter 4 offers insights into Sunderland's complex history and sets the stage for further exploration of its regeneration journey.

Chapter 5 marks the beginning of the empirical investigation within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) by delving into empirical research conducted. It explores the motivations driving heritage-led regeneration initiatives and the dynamics of engagement within the community. Building upon the theoretical frameworks established in previous chapters, this empirical investigation aims to provide deeper insights into the relationship between conservation efforts and community involvement. Through a combination of empirical research and document analysis, this chapter addresses the research aim related to understanding the motivations of heritage-led regeneration initiatives (MRQ), by examining the motivations of heritage experts driving projects within the Sunderland HAZ and offers a detailed examination of the framework guiding heritage-led regeneration initiative and community engagement efforts and engagement dynamics within the Sunderland HAZ.

This chapter also serves to contextualize the research questions by providing a foundation for understanding the subsequent empirical exploration in Chapters 6 and 7 through examining the Sunderland HAZ from overarching initiatives like the Heritage Action Zones to conservation projects within the designated area. It outlines notable conservation efforts, such as those at 170-175 High Street, Hutchinson Building (Mackie's Corner), and Holy Trinity Church, reveals layers of significance and meaning embedded within these sites. Furthermore, Chapter 5 delves into community engagement within the Sunderland HAZ framework and explored initiatives designed to bridge the gap between heritage

professionals and the broader community, examining events such as Heritage Open Days and localized initiatives in the East End. Through nuanced exploration, it is sought to understand the complex relationship between preservation and progress, highlighting successes and challenges in community involvement. I endeavour to formulate a nuanced understanding of how engagement interventions shape the trajectory of activities within the Sunderland HAZ. Through this detailed exploration in Chapter 5, I aspire to contribute to a deeper understanding of the structural framework and engagement dynamics within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone, thereby enriching scholarly discourse and informing future practice in heritage conservation efforts.

Building upon the groundwork laid in Chapter 5, Chapter 6 looks into the specific events and observations within the community. In Chapter 6, the analysis centres on community activities within the Heritage Action Zone, offering insights into how emotional and experiential attachments shape perceptions of heritage. This exploration directly addresses SRQ2 by examining the ways in which these attachments influence how individuals and communities perceive and value heritage within the zone. Additionally, the chapter explores into the broader structural dynamics of engagement within the zone, providing context for understanding the mechanisms through which community involvement in heritage preservation efforts unfolds.

Through ethnographic studies, community testimonials, and engagement events, the chapter explores the deep emotional connections individuals forge with heritage sites, contributing to a rich tapestry of memories and meanings. It investigates the varied construction of historical narratives among different actors and discusses the perceived tension between preservation efforts and natural cultural evolution. Furthermore, the chapter highlights the importance of recognizing and integrating diverse perspectives in urban regeneration initiatives, aiming to develop plans that respect and align with the cultural fabric of Sunderland. Overall, Chapter 6 aims to provide insights into the role of emotional and experiential attachments in shaping heritage perceptions and identities within specific communities, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of Sunderland's heritage landscape.

In Chapter 7, I extend the analysis beyond the exploration conducted in Chapter 6. Leveraging insights gathered from community interactions, Chapter 7 explores the barriers

present within the context of heritage preservation and regeneration in Old Sunderland. By meticulously examining these barriers, the chapter aims to identify the factors that impede meaningful engagement and community ownership in heritage preservation efforts. This investigation directly addresses SRQ3, which seeks to understand how the local community's understanding of formal heritage narratives contributes to feelings of exclusion within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone (HAZ). By delving into community-driven initiatives and grassroots engagements within the HAZ, the chapter examines the role of participatory practices, cultural events, and collective experiences in shaping residents' perceptions of heritage. Additionally, the chapter investigates how these factors influence residents' sense of ownership and belonging within the HAZ. This investigation builds upon the groundwork laid by earlier chapters, which provided a comprehensive understanding of the broader heritage landscape and the significance attributed by locals to their surroundings.

I will embark on an in-depth exploration of the concept of 'sense of ownership' within the framework of heritage-led regeneration initiatives in Sunderland's Heritage Action Zone (HAZ). Central to this exploration is an examination of the various barriers that impede community ownership and meaningful engagement in heritage preservation efforts. By scrutinizing these barriers from multiple angles, the chapter aims to unravel the intricate complexities inherent in heritage preservation endeavours. It investigates factors such as physical divisions within the community, historical neglect of specific areas, digital exclusion, and the intricate dynamics of ownership. Through this examination, the chapter seeks to illuminate how these barriers hinder community involvement and collaboration, exacerbating feelings of marginalization and disempowerment among residents.

Moreover, Chapter 7 underscores the profound implications of ownership dynamics on heritage management strategies within the Sunderland HAZ. It elucidates how these dynamics not only influence the physical preservation of heritage assets but also shape the broader social and cultural landscape of the community. A primary objective of this chapter is to emphasize the interconnectedness between the built environment and the community. Drawing on insights from interviews, historical perspectives, and relevant literature, the chapter illustrates how regeneration programs impact both the physical and emotional aspects of the community's landscape. Additionally, it sheds light on the presence of

barriers that complicate community engagement and ownership dynamics, offering a nuanced understanding of heritage preservation challenges.

In Chapter 8, the concluding chapter, I draw upon the insights gleaned from the preceding chapters to offer a comprehensive overview of contemporary heritage engagement within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone (HAZ). Throughout this thesis, I will investigate the motivations driving heritage-led regeneration initiatives, investigated the community's understanding of formal heritage narratives, and assessed the role of emotional and experiential attachments to heritage in fostering a sense of place and belonging within Sunderland communities. Chapter 8 reviews the research objectives outlined in Chapters 1 and detailed in chapter 3, synthesizing the key findings per chapter (4, 5. 6. 7) and discussing them in relation to each other and their implications for literature and theory, as well as practice in the fields of heritage conservation, urban regeneration, and community development.

Furthermore, I offer recommendations for further research and action, identifying avenues for future exploration and highlighting the importance of adopting inclusive and participatory approaches to heritage management. This concluding chapter serves as a reflection on the insights gained throughout this research journey, aiming to contribute to ongoing dialogue and action aimed at fostering greater understanding, appreciation, and stewardship of heritage within communities.

This thesis aims to contribute to the growing body of literature on heritage, urban development, and community dynamics by offering theoretical insights and empirical analysis. Through a combination of qualitative interviews, archival research, and case studies, this study seeks to provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with leveraging cultural heritage for economic growth while preserving the identity and integrity of local communities. The intersection of personal inquiry and academic exploration leads us to a deeper understanding, highlighting the symbiotic relationship between individual experiences and scholarly investigation. This intersection offers a unique vantage point from which to dive into the dynamics shaping the regeneration of post-industrial sites and the pivotal role heritage plays in shaping the identity and trajectory of urban communities.

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Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter offers a thorough examination of the foundational theories and discourses surrounding the concepts of heritage and community, exploring their interconnections and the evolving understandings that shape the research. The chapter divided into two parts:

Part I focuses on heritage, exploring the theoretical frameworks and concepts relevant to the research.

Part II shifts to the concept of community, examining the evolving role of heritage in community contexts and its impact on shaping social identities.

PART I

2.1 Introduction

The rich tapestry of heritage, woven from the threads of collective human experiences, forms a mosaic that reflects the intricate layers of culture, memory, and identity. In this research, we embark on a journey that transcends the boundaries of traditional heritage discourse, unravelling the complexities inherent in the preservation, conservation, and adaptive reuse of diverse heritage sites. Beyond the confines of individual objects, we delve into the broader spectrum of cultural landscapes, built infrastructure, and the intangible nuances that shape the essence of heritage.

Heritage encompasses the tangible and intangible legacies passed down through generations (Smith, 2006). The traditional paradigm of heritage conservation, rooted in legal protection and preservation of objects, has metamorphosed into a dynamic force driving urban regeneration and socio-economic development (Ashworth, 1997; Howard, 1999). The transition from control-based approaches to the dynamic management of change has been a hallmark of this evolution, with heritage emerging as a catalyst for inclusive and vibrant cities (Fairclough and Rippon, 2002). The lens widens to view heritage not merely as isolated monuments but as integral components of cultural landscapes. This shift becomes particularly pronounced in the post-industrial era, where the conservation of industrial heritage assumes significance in the transition of cities to service-oriented economies (Roberts, 2000). The interplay between tangible elements such as buildings and

infrastructure and intangible factors like values and traditions becomes the focal point, urging a more integrated approach that aligns heritage with dynamic planning policies (Janssen et al., 2014).

This chapter sets the stage for an exploration that transcends disciplinary boundaries, acknowledging heritage as a dynamic force entwined with urban development, community identity, and the ever-evolving tapestry of human experiences. The subsequent chapters will critically engage with these concepts, employing a reflexive lens to unravel the complexities inherent in the conservation and transformation of diverse heritage sites, both industrial and beyond.

This chapter will begin with summarizing some of the key definitions of heritage and conservation found in the academic literature and trace the shifts in understanding, defining, and conserving heritage by drawing from critical heritage discourse and experimental preservation approaches and explain why these theories and discourses are being discussed and how they are used in my research. It also examines urban development and architectural production discourses as they often clash with heritage conservation. A discussion on the drivers of urban development, economic demands and reorganizing infrastructures, accommodating new demand while also conserving (an authentic part of the particular heritage), and how the principles come into play will be provided here. The section 2.1 introduces the importance of understanding heritage's evolving nature and sets the stage for exploring different perspectives on heritage.

2.2 Defining Heritage

2.2.1 What constitutes heritage

> Heritage is definitely a vehicle of communication, a means of transmission of ideas, values and knowledge that includes material, intangible and natural heritage. It is a product of the present yet drawing upon an assumed imaginary past and equally assumed imaginary future. Therefore, the definition and use of heritage change over time (Ashworth 2007).

This literature review provides a brief history of heritage conservation to discuss the evolving definitions and identifies the theories and concepts used in *literature* to explain

adaptive reuse, industrial landscapes, and intangible heritage. Furthermore, it analyses the critical and experimental approaches to heritage conservation.

A discussion on the definition of heritage is essential for the research to discover the shifts in notion of heritage and its impact on conservation approaches. In this chapter, I will be discussing the question of what heritage is and how it has been shifted and expanded.

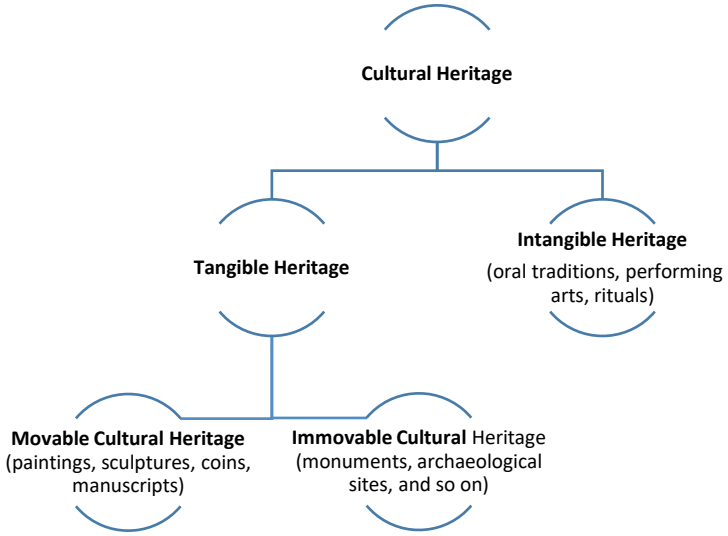

Table 2.1 Classification of Cultural Heritage by UNESCO. Table created by the author.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) divides cultural heritage into two categories: tangible and intangible heritage. Tangible cultural heritage is defined in Article 1 of the World Heritage Convention as (UNESCO 2014):

> ***Monuments**: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features which are of outstanding value from the point of view of history, art or science;*

Groups of buildings: *groups of separate or connected buildings, which because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding value from the point of view of history, art or science;*

Sites: *works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites, which are of outstanding value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.*

The range of what is considered heritage has broadened notably over the last 50 years (Veldpaus, 2013). The concept has been expanded from individual monuments and buildings such as places that were often regarded as standalone, with no particular relationship to their surrounding landscape to a general recognition that the whole environment has been affected by its interaction with humanity and is therefore capable of being recognized as heritage (UNESCO 2013, p.12). The international community has begun to appreciate the importance of conserving cultural heritage as places where social and cultural factors have been influential in shaping them, rather than as a series of monuments offering physical evidence of the past (UNESCO 2013, p.14). Heritage places cannot be protected in isolation or as museum pieces, dissociated from social changes that are occurring or separated from the concerns of the communities (UNESCO 2013, p.13). This widened concept of heritage and the increased importance is given to how heritage places relate to their surroundings mark an important shift in thinking and places heritage concerns in a broader framework (UNESCO 2013, p.13).

The framework was enhanced further with the recognition and safeguarding of intangible heritage. UNESCO began working to create a legal instrument for the protection of folklore in the 1980s. A new era began in the UNESCO approach to folklore from 1993. The 'Non-physical Heritage' section was renamed as the 'Intangible Heritage' section. This has introduced a new expression for defining traditional culture and folklore (Bortolotto, 2007). In 2003, UNESCO adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. This went into effect on 20 April 2006.

The definition of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) by UNESCO:

*The "intangible cultural heritage" means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation**, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment**, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. For the purposes of this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.*[2]

According to the Convention, ICH is manifested in the following domains:

- oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage;
- performing arts;
- social practices, rituals and festive events;
- knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe;
- traditional craftsmanship (UNESCO 2014)

***Recognizing** that communities, in particular indigenous communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals, play an important role in the production, safeguarding, maintenance and **re-creation of the intangible cultural heritage**, thus helping to enrich cultural diversity and human creativity,*

***Considering** the importance of the intangible cultural heritage as a mainspring of cultural diversity and a guarantee of sustainable development, as underscored in the UNESCO Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore of 1989, in the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity of 2001, and in the*

[2] The General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization hereinafter referred to as UNESCO, meeting in Paris, from 29 September to 17 October 2003, at its 32nd session.
UNESCO. "Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage." 2018.

Istanbul Declaration of 2002 adopted by the Third Round Table of Ministers of Culture,

Considering *the invaluable role of the* ***intangible cultural heritage as a factor in bringing human beings closer together*** *and ensuring exchange and understanding among them (UNESCO World Heritage Convention* 2003*).*

The definition of cultural heritage has broadened to include intangible elements, conservation practices shifted from a focus on physical preservation to encompassing the safeguarding of traditions, languages, and rituals. ICH has become widely recognized, and increasingly appearing in international and national policy documents, academic texts, and correspondence. UNESCO recognizes that ICH does not end at monuments and collections of objects *(UNESCO World Heritage Convention* 2003*).* Heritage has started to encompass the dynamic cultural practices and varied spatial settings of diverse communities with the 1992 recognition of cultural landscapes and the 2003 Convention. With the inclusion of 'cultural landscapes', living cultural traditions were introduced and traditional management mechanisms and the local communities' customary land tenure system[3] were recognized (UNESCO 1997). In addition, the organization stressed the importance of local participation and a bottom-up approach to heritage identification and safeguarding (Bortolotto, 2007). The convention suggested that countries and scholars should create lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) within their borders. They are encouraged to collaborate with the communities safeguarding this heritage to ensure its ongoing preservation. Additionally, the convention allows for the voluntary collection of funds from UNESCO members, which can then be allocated to support the upkeep of recognized ICH (Kurin, 2004).

UNESCO's classification and definition of heritage provides a foundational framework shaping the objectives of this research, particularly in the investigation of heritage-led regeneration in heritage sites and community dynamics within these places. As recognized by scholars such as Lowenthal (1998) and Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996), UNESCO's classification serves as a global standard for identifying and preserving cultural heritage of outstanding universal value. This framework guides the examination of conservation and adaptive reuse strategies within the context of UNESCO-designated heritage sites. The

[3] Land ownership and management based on customs.

research seeks to assess how these sites negotiate the intricate balance between conservation imperatives and the necessity for adaptation, thereby contributing insights into the implications for community dynamics and the sustainability of these historically significant spaces.

2.2.2 Other Definitions

According to International Cultural Tourism Charter of International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS):

> *Heritage is a broad concept and includes the natural as well as the cultural environment. It encompasses landscapes, historic places, sites and built environments, as well as bio-diversity, collections, past and continuing cultural practices, knowledge and living experiences. It records and expresses the long processes of historic development, forming the essence of diverse national, regional, indigenous and local identities and is an integral part of modern life. It is a social dynamic reference point and positive instrument for growth and change. The particular heritage and collective memory of each locality or community is irreplaceable and an important foundation for development, both now and into the future (ICOMOS 2002).*

English Heritage (EH), (renamed as Historic England in 2015) defines heritage as,

> *An aspect of the worth or importance attached by people to qualities of places, categorised as aesthetic, evidential, communal or historical value.*
>
> *Inherited assets which people identify and value as a reflection and expression of their evolving knowledge, beliefs and traditions, and of their understanding of the beliefs and traditions of others.* (English Heritage 2008)

EH also has a concise definition of heritage,

> All inherited resources which people value for reasons beyond mere utility. (English Heritage 2008)

According to Conservation Principles “sustainable management of a place begins with understanding and defining how, why, and to what extent it has cultural and natural

heritage values: in sum, its significance" (English Heritage 2008: 14). EH highlights the need for a broader assessment of significance beyond statutory criteria. English Heritage's Conservation Principles (2008) provide integrated frameworks that extend beyond designated sites, emphasizing the importance of understanding and defining the cultural and natural heritage values of a place. EH identifies four categories of value associated with heritage: Aesthetic, Evidential, Historical and Communal Value. Within the Communal Value category, EH includes importance of social value and recognizes that places of social value may not always have a direct connection to historic and aesthetic values or the physical fabric associated with them. This acknowledgment aligns with a more inclusive understanding of heritage, highlighting the importance of the intangible aspects that contribute to a place's significance (English Heritage 2008: 31).

Moreover, the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, also known as the Faro Convention of 2005, further amplifies the centrality of value in heritage policy. This convention has had a significant impact on professional debates and heritage initiatives. It emphasizes the importance of recognizing the "commonplace heritage of all people" and shifts the focus towards "ascribed values" rather than solely on the material or immaterial elements that constitute heritage.

This chapter has started with reviewing the shift in the notion of heritage, how it progressed from earlier ways of understanding cultural heritage in terms of monuments or traditions that have survived from the past, which carry intrinsic values that should be preserved for the benefit of generations to come.

Cornelius Holtorf (2020) explains what heritage has become with the following words,

> The most important question in studying cultural heritage is now not what it *is*, but what it *does*. In cultural heritage management and preservation, we no longer consider cultural heritage in terms of what it was, but rather of what it could become. Consequently, the focus of those who understand and develop cultural heritage has shifted somewhat, from highlighting issues of conservation to highlighting issues of change (Holtorf, 2020, p.309).

This rethinking and redefinition of heritage allows looking at heritage from different angles and revise our understanding of the materiality of heritage and the ephemerality of the material aspects. However, despite the growing efforts to recognize the living dimension of heritage sites and the incorporation of intangible and less tangible heritage elements, conservation is still mainly adhered to protecting of the material (Poulios, 2011). Moreover, in spite of the increasing emphasis on the effective involvement of local communities, there is still a concept of 'a faceless abstract public', defined and assessed by the heritage authorities (ibid.), and the concern for its involvement in site management remains to be an inclusive public debate, regulated by the heritage authorities (Schadla-Hall, 1999).

An examination of UNESCO's classification is vital, incorporating insights from scholars such as Smith (2006) and Benton (2010) to provide critical analysis. The static nature of classification poses challenges in adapting to evolving notions of cultural significance (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996). While UNESCO's system is indispensable for recognizing and safeguarding global cultural heritage, scholars have raised concerns about potential biases in the selection process, emphasizing a Eurocentric orientation in defining and valuing heritage. Critics also argue that the process can marginalize local communities, prompting the need for more inclusive decision-making processes (Waterton & Smith, 2009). This critical engagement informs the research by fostering a nuanced examination of how UNESCO's framework, though a powerful tool, may have inherent biases and limitations influencing the conservation and community dynamics of heritage sites. It encourages a reflexive stance towards the applicability of UNESCO's framework in diverse cultural and socio-economic contexts.

2.2.3 Reimagining Heritage: Critical Discourse and the Shifting Paradigms of Definition

UNESCO, through its World Heritage Convention, has played a major role in identifying, preserving, and promoting sites of outstanding universal value, both cultural and natural. Critical Heritage Studies (CHS), on the other hand, offers a critical perspective on heritage discourse, challenging traditional approaches and emphasizing the need for a more inclusive, dynamic understanding of heritage (Gentry, 2019). CHS critique the authorized nature of heritage discourses influenced by organizations like UNESCO, whose frameworks and charters have contributed to shaping authorized heritage discourse (AHD) globally, particularly through its influence on national heritage policies and practices (Smith, 2006).

The World Heritage List, for instance, reflects an authorized perspective by designating specific sites as globally significant based on established criteria. CHS represents a scholarly approach that engages with and attempt to correct or improve conservation practice. One of the key actors is Laurajane Smith whose work critically examines the discourse of ICOMOS and UNESCO Charters and Conventions and the practices influenced by these documents and challenges the idea of heritage as simply an 'object' or 'site', and she retheorizes heritage as a cultural process of meaning and memory making (Smith, 2006).

Critical Heritage discourse considers heritage as a process and inherently intangible. Smith's premise is that all heritage is intangible. Smith states, "If heritage is a mentality, a way of knowing and seeing, then all heritage becomes, in a sense, 'intangible'" (Smith, 2006). In her book, *Uses of Heritage*, she analyses a range of themes she drew on original research work in England, Australia, and the United States. Smith investigates the consequences of 'authorized' heritage, how authorized discourses of heritage influence expert and professional heritage practices, how such discourses guide the construction and expression of certain social and cultural identities. Although heritage is very difficult to define, being a very broad term that can contain anything valuable from people's past, heritage can be determined not simply as an artefact or site, but it as a process that uses objects and sites as vehicles for the transmission of ideas in order to satisfy various contemporary needs (ibid.).

The AHD discourse reflects the predominant Western perspective on heritage, playing a hegemonic role in preserving the status quo while marginalizing alternative views and experiences of heritage (Smith, 2004, 2006). According to Smith, the AHD prioritizes the protection and veneration of sites, places, and objects, shaping the perception of legitimate spokespersons based on the assumption that heritage possesses an inherent value, often disconnected from lived experiences and treated more as a commodity (Smith, 2006, p. 29).

Laurajane Smith's perspective on cultural heritage challenges traditional notions by emphasizing that it is not solely constituted by physical objects and that its value is immeasurable (Smith and Campbell, 2018). In her book "Uses of Heritage," she explores heritage as a dynamic process of engagement, communication, and meaning-making in the present. Contrary to a focus on grand and material aspects, Smith argues that people value a range of intangible associations—personal, familial, and geographical—using the past to

construct present identities immeasurable (Smith and Campbell, 2018). This challenges the notion of a necessary link between material persistence and memorial function.

Smith shares a fieldwork experience in far northern Queensland, observing senior Aboriginal women from the Waanyi community fishing on the banks of the Gregory River (Smith, 2016). She highlights how this seemingly everyday activity holds layers of significance—it is a leisure activity, a means of catching dinner, and a way for the women to savour the importance of the place. Smith realizes that this act of fishing is a form of "heritage work," involving being in a place, renewing memories, and sharing experiences to strengthen present and future social and familial relationships. For her, heritage is not confined to the past or material things; it is an ongoing process deeply embedded in present actions and interactions.

The narrative extends to the importance of storytelling within heritage. Smith reflects on her own family stories and how the meanings drawn from them are unique to each generation. These stories, whether attached to material objects or not, contribute to the cultural heritage but are not in themselves synonymous with heritage. This nuanced understanding challenges conventional views of heritage as static or object-oriented.

Rodney Harrison's perspective aligns with Smith's by suggesting that heritage should be viewed as a relational and emergent dialogue between people, objects, places, and practices not a set of tangible 'things' (Harrison , 2013). This viewpoint challenges the dichotomy between tangible and intangible heritage, emphasizing the interconnectedness and fluidity of heritage dynamics. Such a perspective has implications for how heritage is conceptualized and managed in the future, encouraging a more holistic and inclusive approach that considers the multifaceted nature of heritage experiences.

2.3 Embracing Intangible Aspects and Social Value

The concept of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) has long been central to UNESCO's heritage conservation efforts, guiding the selection and management of World Heritage sites. However, as global perspectives on heritage continue to evolve, questions arise about the adequacy of OUV criteria and their contribution to broader social value. The process of identifying Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) hinges on comparative analysis, with the criteria for what constitutes universal significance evolving alongside expanding guidelines

for inscription and rigorous scholarly research (Trelka, 2018). The Western system of heritage governance described by Smith (2006) as the AHD gives communities lesser powers as opposed to heritage workers, and this can be exemplified in the historical accounts of the WH Committee meetings, where there was almost no concept of discussing the role of communities in the World Heritage process.

This critical approach on OUV marks a significant departure from traditional views that solely emphasized aesthetic or historical aspects. Instead, there's a growing recognition of the broader social value inherent in historic environments. The work of Smith (2006) and Bennett (2005) highlights the need to consider the broader social impacts of heritage conservation efforts. They argue that heritage sites should not only be assessed based on their aesthetic or historical significance but also on their contributions to social cohesion, cultural identity, and community well-being. This shift lays the groundwork for a more comprehensive understanding of heritage, one that extends beyond mere physical preservation to embrace its dynamic and multifaceted contributions to society.

At the heart of this evolution is the notion of social value, which encompasses the collective attachment to a place, embodying its meanings and values important to communities. This includes aspects such as identity, distinctiveness, belonging, social interaction, memory, oral history, symbolism, spiritual association, and cultural practice (Johnston 1994: 10). For instance, the Amsterdam Charter of 1975 articulated a profound perspective on architectural heritage, considering it as "a capital of irreplaceable spiritual, cultural, social, and economic value." (Jones and Leech, 2015). This characterization elevates heritage beyond its physical attributes, emphasizing its intrinsic and multifaceted worth to society. The Council of Europe's *Faro Convention* also paid particular attention to the interactive nature of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, "recognising that it is defined and redefined by human actions and that it must not be perceived as Faro Convention places the concept of value even more squarely at the heart of heritage policy, influencing professional debates and heritage initiatives (Constructive Conservation in Practice, 2015).

In her exploration of heritage-making, Dicks (2000) delves into the complexities of human perception and societal value systems, emphasizing the constant negotiation between individual and collective judgments of worth. In her exploration, she challenges the notion of heritage as a static entity frozen in time, asserting instead that it is a dynamic process

shaped by present-day motivations and capacities. Akin to scholars in the CHS field, Dicks highlights the selective nature of heritage designation, how only specific elements of the past are chosen to be designated as heritage, and highlights the importance of investigating the processes of remembrance and forgetting. In recognizing heritage as a dynamic construct influenced by diverse social identities, Dicks acknowledges its potential to both engender conflict and foster unity within communities.

Contemporary social values and meanings are often intangible, or indirectly related to the physical fabric of historic places. Moreover, qualities such as a sense of place, identity and memory, are actively produced and negotiated within the historic environment through a range of social and cultural practices. Consequently, these aspects cannot simply be identified or measured by traditional means, which have tended to concentrate on the intrinsic qualities and integrity of historic objects and structures. A growing number of scholars have therefore adopted qualitative and participatory research methods, derived from sociology and anthropology, to investigate social value. These methods involve the use of participant observation and qualitative interviews in conjunction with other forms of evidence, such as oral history and archival documents, in order to reveal the deep meanings and attachments that underpin aspects of social value.

Research conducted at Cornish Mining World Heritage Sites offers valuable insights into the attachment of local residents to the landscape and their sense of place within the historic environment (Orange, 2011). Rather than solely relying on authorized historical narratives, residents expressed a deep sense of belonging rooted in the everyday aspects of life in the area, such as regular interactions with neighbors. Additionally, individuals, especially those native to Cornwall, emphasized the significance of personal biographies intertwined with the land, along with their associations with Cornish ethnic and national identities. This emphasis on personal connections and lived experiences highlights the multifaceted nature of social value associated with heritage sites. The biographies of monuments, as explored by scholars such as Hamilakis (1999), Hingley et al. (2012), Jones (2006), and Stephens (2013), play a pivotal role in shaping the meaning, identity, memory, and sense of place within communities. For example, Hingley et al. (2012) challenge the prevailing classification of Hadrian’s Wall as merely a "Roman" monument by delving into its complex biography, which reveals shifting meanings attributed to the structure over time. This approach

emphasizes the importance of considering the long and varied histories of monuments, beyond the intentions of their original builders. The entanglement of human biographies with the biographies of monuments underscores the intricate relationship between people and their surroundings in the production of social value. This interconnectedness reinforces the notion that heritage is not static but dynamically shaped by evolving narratives and personal experiences.

As considering the interplay between people, landscapes, and the significance of heritage sites, it is imperative to introduce a framework that guides our approach to conservation and management. The insights gleaned from research conducted at Cornish Mining World Heritage Sites shed light on the intricate relationships between individuals and their historical environments. These findings underscore the need for a structured approach to preserving cultural significance. In this regard, Article 2.2 of the Burra Charter emphasises that the aim of conservation is to retain the cultural significance of a place. Article 2.2 of the *Burra Charter* states that, “The aim of conservation is to retain the cultural significance of a place”. Understanding cultural significance is therefore an essential first step in managing and conserving a place (Article 6 and The Burra Charter Process). Only after gathering and recording information relating to cultural significance, assessing it and preparing a statement on it, can a conservation policy (or plan) be developed and the place conserved and managed.

> The spirit of place is constructed by various social actors, its architects and managers as well as its users, who all contribute actively and concurrently to giving it meaning. Considered as a relational concept, spirit of place takes on a plural and dynamic character, capable of possessing multiple meanings and singularities, of changing through time, and of belonging to different groups. (ICOMOS 2008, Preamble)

The quote from the ICOMOS further emphasizes that the spirit of place is not a static entity but rather a construct continually shaped and reshaped by various social actors. These actors include not only architects and managers but also the users of the place. Each group contributes actively to imbuing the space with meaning, reflecting their perspectives, experiences, and interactions within it. Furthermore, the concept of the spirit of place is inherently relational, meaning it exists in the interactions and relationships between people and their environment. This relational aspect highlights that the meaning of a place is not inherent or fixed but emerges from the connections forged between individuals,

communities, and the physical space itself. This exploration also recognizes that a place can hold significance for various communities, each with their own narratives, memories, and cultural associations tied to it.

This section explored implications of expanding the definition of heritage. The expansion of the heritage definition to incorporate intangible aspects has a profound impact on the understanding and assessment of social value within a cultural context. The emphasis on the physical and visible aspects of heritage has sometimes overshadowed the importance of intangible elements. The inclusion of intangible heritage acknowledges that the cultural value of a place is not solely determined by physical structures or artefacts but also by the living traditions, practices, and expressions of communities. These "heritage communities" extend beyond the realms of heritage specialists and are integral in defining and preserving the significance of heritage sites. This broader understanding of value emphasizes the inclusive and participatory nature of heritage conservation, recognizing the diverse perspectives and narratives that contribute to the richness of cultural heritage. Dicks also emphasises the significance of recognizing that present-day purposes operate within specific contexts that simultaneously include and exclude various social groups. This, in turn, perpetuates and reproduces existing power relations. Dicks asserts that heritage is not a static entity but rather a dynamic process unfolding over time. This challenges the notion of heritage as a temporally confined production. Moreover, Dicks posits that the production of heritage occurs within diverse and non-homogeneous social identities. Consequently, heritage is likely to reflect differentiated solidarities and may activate "dissonance." In light of this, she suggests that heritage can be conceptualized as a construct shaped by present-oriented, selective, power-inflected, and temporally evolving practices. This perspective acknowledges that heritage-making is as prone to generating conflict as it is to fostering unity.

2.4 Shift in Heritage Conservation

> Conservation today is a process to keep heritage assets in optimum use by managing change so the aspects that make them special to us are protected and enhanced. It is often as much about what the heritage can do for us in the future as it is about its past. Conservation, thus, has become a more nuanced, flexible process, open to debate and change over time. (Pendlebury and Brown, 2021)

The development of historic environment protection, with its focus on legally defined assets and areas, may be a necessary corrective measure to mitigate the negative impacts of unmediated change in the past. However, this approach also perpetuated a narrow understanding of heritage, emphasizing certain sites and assets while marginalizing others. As we delve deeper into the complexities of heritage, it becomes apparent that this traditional approach (in)advertently marginalize certain aspects of cultural inheritance. With this expanded definition of heritage, heritage conservation practices shifting towards more holistic and inclusive approaches are needed. Heritage conservation has relied on static definitions and exclusionary practices, often enforced through state regulations. Pendlebury and Brown (2021) argue that the traditional approach to heritage conservation, centred around legally defined assets and areas, is limiting. By delineating boundaries and designating certain sites as "special," this approach inherently devalues anything outside those boundaries. The authors advocate for a more inclusive approach that acknowledges the multiplicity of heritage experiences and identities. They stress the importance of embracing the everyday, (in)significant aspects of heritage that hold practical and emotional value in people's lives (Ireland, Brown and Schofield 2020).

More concerns have been raised about the 20th-century obsession with physical conservation. Critics argue that focusing solely on preserving material aspects has overshadowed attempts to understand the past for its intrinsic meaning (Fairclough, 2009). The preservation mentality has merged history into heritage, reducing the diverse ways society engages with the past to a mere act of preserving physical remnants. This perspective challenges the traditional approach of safeguarding tangible artefacts and structures and calls for a broader consideration of the cultural values and practices associated with them.

> Conservation decisions – whether they are concerned with giving a building ‘heritage’ status, deciding which building to invest in, planning for the future of a historic site, or applying a treatment to a monument—use an articulation of heritage values (often called ‘cultural significance’) as a reference point. Many national heritage policy frameworks around the world thus place significance at the heart of conservation. (Ireland, 2020).

Central to heritage conservation is the concept of cultural significance, which informs conservation decisions and policies worldwide. Ireland (2020) explores the creation and negotiation of value within heritage practices, aiming to understand the individuals and reasons behind the expression, formation, and rejection of values. She challenges the binary understanding of significance and insignificance, suggesting that there can be value in acknowledging the situational or relational nature of these terms (ibid. :14). By questioning why and when an item is deemed significant and who makes that determination, Ireland highlights the role of historical and cultural contingencies in shaping perceptions of significance. This nuanced perspective on (in)significance paves the way for heritage practices that embrace the complexities of memory, materiality, emotions, and the sensorial essence of places and objects.

Moreover, there is a growing body of research dedicated to exploring "unofficial" or "counter" heritage, which coalesces around undesignated and often overlooked monuments, buildings, and locales. Despite lacking official recognition and institutional support, these sites hold considerable social value. Harrison's (2004, 2010) work with the Muruwari community in New South Wales exemplifies this phenomenon, demonstrating how abandoned settlements on the Dennawan reserve evoke profound social memories and spiritual connections among community members (Harrison 2010: 255). Through oral histories, familial ties, and spiritual affiliations, these sites acquire a profound sense of place, despite their official neglect (ibid.: 258-9).

This phenomenon is not exclusive to indigenous or local communities; it extends to urban contexts as well. Consider the role of graffiti and "guerrilla art" in shaping urban landscapes and imbuing them with layers of meaning and a distinct sense of place (Avery 2009; Harris 2011). Similarly, Garrett's (2011, 2013) ethnographic research on urban exploration reveals how neglected, derelict buildings serve as canvases for the production of place-based narratives, allowing individuals to forge intimate connections with overlooked facets of the built environment. Jones' (2004) ethnographic study in the village of Hilton of Cadboll offers further insights into undesignated heritage's significance within local contexts, highlighting a plethora of sites—from historic wells to coastal caves—each bearing rich historical, social, and cultural significance to the community. By examining sites such as historic wells and coastal caves, Jones' research delves into how such locations are woven into the lived

experiences and storytelling traditions of the community, thereby revealing the intricate ways people engage with their heritage in everyday life.

The shifts in definitions of heritage have far-reaching practical implications across various facets of the heritage field. These changes are not merely semantic but fundamentally alter how heritage is perceived, managed, and integrated into broader planning and development initiatives. Conservation efforts often involve community engagement, participatory decision-making processes, and the integration of diverse perspectives and values. Rather than imposing top-down preservation measures, conservation practitioners are increasingly collaborating with local communities to identify, prioritize, and protect the elements of heritage that are meaningful to them. One of the significant shifts is observed in heritage planning, which has moved away from control-based approaches towards more dynamic management of change. Rather than focusing solely on preservation and protection, heritage planning now emphasizes flexibility and adaptability in response to evolving socio-economic and environmental conditions. Integrated and inclusive approaches that link heritage conservation with planning policy are advocated, recognizing the interconnectedness between heritage, urban development, and community well-being.

Moreover, the practice of heritage conservation has evolved beyond mere legal protection to encompass urban regeneration and socio-economic development. Built and landscape heritage are increasingly viewed as valuable assets that can contribute to the revitalization of post-industrial cities transitioning to service-oriented economies. By leveraging heritage assets, cities can attract investment, tourism, and cultural events, fostering economic growth and job creation while preserving local identity and heritage.

2.4.1 Conservation as a Fourth Dimension

Nuanced complexities of conserving heritage articulated by Laurajane Smith and James M. Fitch invite us to delve into what conservation does. Smith argues, “Nothing can be, nor should be, ‘conserved as found’ otherwise it ceases to be heritage and to have ongoing cultural meaning. Only those things can be used, and are subject to change, are heritage in any meaningful sense. The management and conservation practices that attempt to ‘preserve as found’ tangible items and places are in fact a cultural process that creates new meanings for the intangible heritage under its care” (Smith, 2006: 275).

Fitch's (1990) conceptualization of preservation as the fourth dimension further complicates this discussion, framing preservation[4] not as a passive act of maintenance but as an active force that shapes the relationship between architectural form and cultural significance. The concept of preservation as the fourth dimension, as articulated by James M. Fitch, can be understood as a paradigm shift in how we perceive the conservation of heritage. Traditionally, preservation has been seen as a passive endeavour, focused on maintaining the physical integrity of cultural artefacts and architectural structures. However, Fitch proposes a more dynamic interpretation wherein preservation becomes an active force that influences the relationship between the built environment and cultural significance.

One way to conceptualize preservation as the fourth dimension is to consider it as a layer of meaning and interpretation that transcends the physicality of heritage. Just as the three spatial dimensions (length, width, and height) define the physical characteristics of an object, preservation adds a fourth dimension that shapes its cultural context and significance over time. In this sense, preservation is not just about freezing a moment in time or maintaining things "as found," but rather about actively engaging with the past to create meaningful connections with the present and future. It involves not only the conservation of physical structures but also the interpretation and reinterpretation of their cultural significance.

Drawing on Fitch's perspective, we can view preservation as an "unnatural interface" that mediates our interaction with heritage. This interface disrupts the conventional relationship between observer and object, introducing a layer of intervention that influences how we perceive and engage with architectural heritage. Preservation practices shape the narrative surrounding cultural artefacts, guiding our understanding and appreciation of their historical and cultural significance.

Furthermore, by acknowledging preservation as the fourth dimension, we recognize that heritage conservation is a dynamic and evolving process. It involves not only the physical maintenance of buildings and artefacts but also the ongoing negotiation of their meaning

[4] In the United States, "preservation" is often associated with the protection and maintenance of historic buildings, sites, and landmarks and "conservation" typically refers to the protection, management, and sustainable use of natural resources, including land, water, forests, wildlife, and energy. In Europe, "conservation" encompasses a broader spectrum of efforts aimed at protecting both cultural heritage and natural resources.

within changing social, cultural, and environmental contexts. The concept of preservation as the fourth dimension invites us to think beyond the physicality of heritage and consider the ways in which conservation practices actively shape our understanding and experience of cultural artefacts and architectural structures.

The notion of an "unnatural interface," as introduced by Fitch and discussed by Jorge Otero-Pailos, fundamentally alters the relationship between the viewer and the viewed artefact or architectural structure. This interface creates a distinct separation between the observer and the object, disrupting the typical user-used or owner-owned dynamic. As a result, the experience of interacting with heritage becomes mediated by preservation practices, leading to a shift in perception and experience.

Preservation, in Fitch's view, becomes more than just a technical endeavour; it becomes a means of mediating our relationship with architectural heritage, shaping our understanding and experience of it over time. Fitch's idea challenges traditional notions of preservation by framing it as an active force that shapes the relationship between architectural form and cultural significance. This perspective resonates with Heidegger's notion of interpretation as an existential engagement with the world. Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology offers a philosophical framework for understanding human existence and experience within the context of time, history, and interpretation. Central to Heidegger's thought is the idea of "being-in-the-world," which emphasizes the interconnectedness between human beings and their environment. Within this framework, interpretation is not merely a cognitive process but an existential engagement with the world and its meanings.

When applied to heritage management, Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology provides a lens through which to explore the dynamic nature of cultural heritage over time. Rather than viewing heritage as static or fixed, this perspective acknowledges that cultural artefacts and landscapes are continuously evolving and being reinterpreted by successive generations. It recognizes the importance of historical context and the ongoing dialogue between past, present, and future perspectives.

Furthermore, Heidegger's framework allows for the consideration of non-human agency within the heritage landscape. In traditional approaches to heritage, the focus is often placed solely on human actors and their interactions with the built environment. However,

Heidegger's emphasis on "being-with" highlights the coexistence of human and non-human entities within the world. This perspective opens up possibilities for exploring the agency of material objects, natural elements, and other non-human entities in shaping cultural landscapes and narratives. For instance, we can consider a historic building that has undergone various renovations and adaptations over time. From a hermeneutic phenomenological perspective, each layer of modification represents a form of interpretation and interaction with the building's past. The building itself, as a material artefact, possesses a kind of agency in shaping how it is perceived and used by different communities over time. By considering the building's changing role and significance within its broader context, heritage professionals can gain a richer understanding of its cultural value and meaning.

An example from the Holy Trinity Church of Sunderland serves as a poignant illustration of the tensions inherent in preservation efforts. The conversion of the church into a community centre may have elicited resistance from some who wished to maintain its original purpose, it also underscores the potential for preservation to breathe new life into historic structures, making them relevant and accessible. This raises important questions about the balance between honouring the past and adapting to the present, as well as the role of local communities in shaping the future of their built environment. While conservation efforts may enhance appreciation and understanding among certain audiences, they may also contribute to the commodification and appropriation of cultural heritage, raising concerns about ownership and representation.

In light of these considerations, it becomes clear that conservation is not simply a matter of maintaining physical structures, but also entails navigating complex social, cultural, and ethical dynamics. Moving forward, it is imperative to engage in thoughtful dialogue and collaboration with diverse stakeholders, including local communities, historians, architects, and policymakers, to ensure that preservation practices are inclusive, sustainable, and respectful of the diverse cultural narratives embedded within our architectural heritage. Conservation can distance the viewer from the artefact or architectural site, as it is presented within a controlled environment or curated space, which can evoke a sense of detachment or detachment from the original context or purpose of the object, influencing how it is perceived and interpreted. The unnatural interface created by heritage practices

may transform the experience and perception of heritage, introducing new levels of complexity, risk, and interpretation.

2.4.2 Alternative Approaches

Graham Fairclough, an archaeologist, directs our focus towards the shortcomings of twentieth-century preservation ideals, highlighting:

> [t]he obsession with physical conservation became so embedded in twentieth century mentalities that it is no longer easy to separate an attempt to understand the past and its meaning from agonising about which bits of it to protect and keep. It is almost as if one is not allowed to be interested in the past without wanting to keep or restore... the remains of the past, which seem to exist only to be preserved. The wide range of how the past is used by society has been reduced to the literal act of preserving its fabric. In that sense, history has been subsumed into heritage, scarcely having any independent existence (Holtorf, 2018).

Cultural geography studies the cultural values, practices, discursive and material expressions and artefacts of people, how cultures are distributed over space, how places and identities are produced, how people make sense of places and build senses of place (Castree et.al., 2013). Catherine DeSilvey beautifully tackles in her book, *Curated Decay*, how people can and might engage with ephemeral companions such as landscapes, buildings, and objects. She also ask the questions: What happens if we choose not to intervene? Can we uncouple the work of memory from the burden of material stasis? What possibilities emerge when change is embraced rather than resisted? She also introduces Entropic Heritage Practice, a new term to discuss the possibilities. Rudolf Clausius coined the term “entropy”, in Greek entropein, means transformation, and change. As the constraints that inform a living organism dissolve, the entropy of the organism increases. Gavin Lucas argues that “entropy is a social as well as a natural phenomenon” and our managing of the material record that has continued from the past into the present is a negotiation of the “virtual extremes of total preservation and total erasure (DeSilvey, 2017).

DeSilvey’s research focuses on ruins and derelict sites where transformation has not taken place. She discusses the meanings in their neglected state. Letting some things be even in an utterly planned landscape. If we think of a landscape as an open system that can transform

over time, abandoned and derelict sites offer an interesting narrative on changing cultural interests. Furthermore, investigating what holds significance for individuals, what persists in the current context, and the reasons behind its enduring presence can aid in understanding what has been relinquished or abandoned. DeSilvey argues that, in heritage contexts, a conserved structure expresses a limited set of potential configurations; a structure that is caught up in active processes of decay and dereliction has many more possibilities (DeSilvey, 2017). She visits a number of places where original function has given way to postproduction recognition of historic value, and looks beyond the loss to conceive alternatives to material conservation. As it was discussed earlier in the paper, Smith retheorizes heritage as a process and inherently intangible and the physicality of place and object they are reassigned supporting roles in the process. DeSilvey, however, discusses the alternative in the dereliction, how material transience and change could generate new possibilities. She underlines that an attentive relation to material systems and their histories involves following trajectories of change and transformation rather than arresting them (ibid.).

DeSilvey suggests that any given system, whether it bebe a granite chimney stack or an artwork, has the potential to unfold along multiple trajectories; what may appear as erasure on one register might be a generative of new information on another. In other words, while in the conventional discourse losing the material would mean losing the heritage, this concept argues a dormant site could be more effective storyteller. Supporting this view, Jane Jacobs and Stephen Cairns draw attention, “Biological and ecological concepts of decay are full of activity, exchange, acquisition and redistribution. Decay is as life-giving as it is life-taking.” (DeSilvey, 2017). This might mean the dereliction might produce new meanings. Similarly, Sian Jones emphasises that it possible to produce meanings through engagement with the dynamic social and organic lives of monuments and artefacts.

2.4.3 Experimental Approaches

Heritage experts do not merely work on objects that were heritage before they lay their hands on them. The assumption is that heritage objects, which could be in any form, are out there and that experts come and treat them. However, the reality is that the preservationists have played a much more active role in choosing, even co-creating, heritage objects (Otero-Pailos, 2016). Heritage professionals inevitably develop their own

preferences and biases. This role has not been acknowledged, or sometimes even consciously concealed (Otero-Pailos, 2016). Recognizing this role and the powerful impact they have in the process has to be discussed when it comes to heritage sites. Being an expert does not necessarily mean to have an objective approach to a site. The background and experiences inform the decision making process.

> Historic environment professionals are required to use their experience to make interpretive evaluations over matters such as significance, and different conclusions might be reached depending on the context, whether due to geography, economic context, the material form of the heritage asset, or its associative connotations. This will often entail a difficult balancing act between different competing goals. However, we should also not forget that the historic environment has the rare distinction in planning policy of being something marked out to be enjoyed (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2019); it has the capacity to bring pleasure to many and we should take this responsibility seriously. (Pendlebury and Brown, 2021)

Experimental preservationists choose objects that are already there but for whatever reason have dropped out of contemporary culture. They are not deemed fit. They are stuck in the past. They don't circulate within everyday exchanges. They don't have currency in contemporary culture. Yet, experimental preservationists choose them because they recognize in them the potential to regain cultural currency, to gain value. Experimental preservationists see potentials and identify new latencies also within accepted and canonical objects. Their choices are expressed as hypotheses about the cultural currency and value of objects that can only be proved or disproved by an approving or disapproving public. Put differently, their choices are wagers that others will see reality as they do (Otero-Pailos, 2016).

Ioannis Poulios developed the living heritage approach that focuses on the cultural and community continuities of places, arguing for a heritage management of creative engagements with place, narratives, and materials (Ireland, 2017). Walter and Poulios argue that value based approach focuses on the material authenticity of fabric and dominance of professional expertise (Poulios 2010; Walter 2014). Walter suggests, narratives rather than values could provide an alternative way to generate accounts of material culture's linking of

past, present and future (Ireland, 2017). Drawing on Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology, Walter suggests that narratives framework could better incorporate concepts such as change over time and non-human agency than value-based frameworks. It echoes the ethos of experimental preservation, which is the reconfiguration of preservation as generative process and the creation of values rather than preserving them.

2.5 Conservation-Planning

In examining Pendlebury et.al.'s (2013, 2018) exploration of the concept of the conservation-planning assemblage, it becomes evident that this framework offers a valuable perspective for understanding the dynamics within heritage management. Pendlebury elucidates the multifaceted nature of conservation-planning, highlighting the interactions among diverse actors, institutions, and ideologies within this sphere. The concept emphasizes the presence of both horizontal power dynamics, evident in contestations over management approaches, and vertical influences, exemplified by the impact of Authorised Heritage Discourses (AHDs) on conservation practices.

I delved into Smith's (2006) concept of how specific values regulate heritage practice through discourse, utilizing Critical Discourse Analysis to introduce the concept of an AHD. This discourse controls the perception of why past material objects hold value, what should be conserved, and how conservation should be executed. Smith highlights the significance of embodied power relations within the AHD, which tends to suppress alternative heritages (Pendlebury et.al., 2018).

While the AHD sheds light on the establishment and regulation of heritage definitions and management, it tends to overlook external influences shaping conservation values, such as institutional structures or societal movements (Pendlebury et.al., 2018). Pendlebury et.al. argues the AHD, historically centred on 'conservation as preservation,' asserts elite cultural values over other forms of heritage, resisting capital-driven development. However, recent pressures for commodification challenge this paradigm. External influences, often overlooked by the AHD, shape conservation values. Heritage protection oscillates between cultural preservation and economic exploitation, with market demand increasingly influencing conservation efforts, particularly in urban areas impacted by cultural tourism. The AHD within conservation-planning is not solely internally generated but influenced by

external forces, including planning processes and political contexts (Pendlebury 2013; Pendlebury et.al., 2018).

Pendlebury's concept of the conservation-planning assemblage, inspired by DeLanda, depicts a dynamic social entity formed by historical processes and heterogeneous parts (Pendlebury, 2013; DeLanda, 2006). This assemblage encompasses institutional frameworks, normalized practices, and values shaping conservation-planning.

In the realm of heritage management, the concept of conservation-planning assemblage, as articulated by Pendlebury, provides a lens through which to comprehend the intricate social dynamics at play. His work shed light on the horizontal and vertical power dynamics that shape conservation discourse and practice.

This concept emphasizes the multifaceted nature of conservation-planning, highlighting the interplay of various actors, institutions, and ideologies within this sphere. Within this assemblage, power relations manifest both horizontally, in contestations over the management of places, and vertically, through the influence of Authorised Heritage Discourses (AHDs) (Pendlebury, 2013). These discourses, which regulate heritage practice and norms, are not static entities but are subject to negotiation and contestation. In the specific domain of conservation-planning, external forces exert significant influence, particularly economic discourses that compete with traditional conservation values (ibid.). This necessitates a strategic positioning of the AHD by conservation planners to maintain political legitimacy. Consequently, the AHD within conservation-planning may deviate from what would emerge organically, reflecting the influence of external pressures and interests. Despite governmental assertions of the importance of heritage, the conservation-planning sector continually finds itself in competition with other sectors, both within and beyond the state. This competitive landscape underscores the need for the sector to justify its relevance while navigating broader public policy objectives (ibid.). While conservation-planning narratives intersect with broader conservation and heritage discourses, they also exhibit distinct characteristics shaped by the specific context of conservation-planning assemblage. This broader context significantly influences the evolution of conservation-planning values, positioning the AHD as a dynamic entity engaged in ongoing negotiation and adaptation (ibid.).

The concept of conservation-planning assemblage offers a nuanced understanding of the social relationships and power dynamics within the realm of heritage management. By examining the interplay of actors, institutions, and ideologies, this framework provides valuable insights into the complexities of conservation-planning practice and the evolving nature of conservation values.

2.6 Adaptive Reuse

Adaptive reuse, the process of repurposing existing structures for new functions, stands as a pivotal component in contemporary urban redevelopment efforts. Rooted in historical precedent and shaped by evolving socio-economic dynamics, adaptive reuse embodies a multifaceted approach to urban revitalization. This subsection delves into the complexities inherent in adaptive reuse, exploring its historical foundations, conceptual frameworks, and practical implications within the urban landscape.

The practice of adaptive reuse finds its roots in centuries-old traditions of resourcefulness and pragmatism, where communities repurposed existing structures to meet evolving needs. However, it was not until recent decades that adaptive reuse emerged as a formalized approach to urban redevelopment, spurred by growing concerns over heritage preservation, sustainability, and economic efficiency. Many scholars have contributed to elucidating the historical and conceptual underpinnings of adaptive reuse. For instance, Liliane Wong's (2016) exploration of terminology, ranging from conservation to restoration, highlights the nuanced evolution of preservation practices and their intersection with adaptive reuse. She argues that the story of adaptive reuse is entwined with the history of ancient monuments and the development of policy for the preservation of heritage. The telling of this tale necessarily comprises terminology already embedded in this history — from conservation to restoration and from preservation to maintenance. These terms exist in multiplicity, with nuanced and, at times, disparate definitions and opinionated viewpoints for the same word, revealing the intricacies of terminology deeply rooted in conservation practices. Characterized by what Italian conservationist/architect Giovanni Carbonara calls “the historical fickleness of the very concept of conservation,” these terms, in and of themselves, convey a history not just of the many changes within the field but one that illuminates and explicates the roots of an emerging adaptive reuse practice.

People have reimagined and remade places, both as expressions of their identities and values, and sometimes as means of reasserting control, power, and profit (Abramson, 2016; Lynch & Pottie-Sherman, 2017). Therefore, it is crucial to consider how reuse may contribute to the punitive aspects of the community and neighbourhood change, including its role in deepening social and spatial inequalities, fostering new rounds of privatization and gentrification, and enhancing the peripheralization of neglected communities. The outmoded industrial settings function as “new temples of postmodern consumption” in a wider “cultural economy of reuse”, in which the transformed built environment “as object, as sign and as design” creates marketing and profits. (Stromberg, 2019: 27) In addition to the complex relationships between urban-economic change and the built landscape, the implications of remaking the obsolete across increasingly diverse cultural, economic, and spatial geographies must be addressed. Pre-modern reuse was primarily ad hoc, piecemeal and driven by changing local economies and needs. Mostly, the research concerning adaptive reuse stemmed from technical sciences such as engineering and architecture, the experts who concern themselves with issues of building and material efficiency, optimization, and performance. Recent studies have moved beyond discussion of the practical and technical aspects of the debate to further explore its complex and varied social, cultural, and spatial dynamics. (Lynch, 2022) For Goss (1988), any building is more than it seems. It is an object of material culture, a structure of purpose, and a physical expression of a way of life. Adaptive reuse is much more than a technical or practical application; it is a complex process that engages with and modifies the social, cultural, and spatial dynamics of cities and communities all over the world. These are places that no longer serve their original purposes; these are places that are remade, reimagined, and, above all, reused for other purposes, for other users, and for other communities. (Lynch 2022)

While much of the reuse literature and popular planning discourse still largely conceive of adaptive reuse in singular terms, from one application or typology to the next, there is growing acknowledgment of its hybridity, flexibility, and plurality. This wider lens explores a range of mixed (re)uses where different users and uses co-habit, co-manage, or even compete for space. Beyond a diversity of functional arrangements, there are varied examples also highlight the role of reuse in (re)negotiating established values, meanings,

and emotions of places (Davidson et al., 2016). In particular, the transformation of properties with particular social and historic significance are often complex sites of emotional encounter, convergence, and entanglement. Adaptive reuse is not merely a practical act but is also a deeply complex process that transforms the experience, meanings, and indeed 'poetics', of space and place. (Lynch, 2022)

Reuse has become a part of a systematic process of contemporary city building and a globalized practice of place-making (Mohamed et al., 2017). As Daniel M. Abramson (2016) explores in his book *Obsolescence,* adaptive reuse brought the past's castoffs into a present made more temporarily varied, rendering the past protean in the present. An aesthetic of adaptive reuse emerged. Abramson investigates this notion of architectural expendability and the logic by which buildings lose their value and utility. Architectural expendability is an important topic to discuss when it comes to adaptive reuse.

The allure of converting obsolete structures is often encapsulated in the statement, "Obsolete buildings are fun to convert" (Abramson, 2017). This sentiment explains the appeal of repurposing historic buildings, whose architectural design lends itself well to adaptive reuse such as the industrial sites. The spacious interiors of these structures offer versatile canvases for diverse functions. Yet, amidst the excitement of architectural transformation, a crucial aspect often overlooked is the preservation of place memories and the unique character of these spaces. Instead, narratives are sometimes tailored to cater to tourist sensibilities, detracting from the authenticity and heritage of the site.

The outmoded settings function as "new temples of postmodern consumption" in a wider "cultural economy of reuse", in which the transformed built environment "as object, as sign and as design" creates marketing and profits (Stromberg, 2019). As the past morph into "temples of postmodern consumption," the commodification of transformed environments highlights the intricate interplay between urban-economic shifts and cultural landscapes. A variety of strategies have been utilized historically to revitalize and renew the built environment. People have reimagined and remade places, both as expressions of their identities and values, and sometimes as means of reasserting control, power, and profit (Abramson, 2016; Lynch & Pottie-Sherman, 2017). It is crucial to critically examine how adaptive reuse contributes to broader patterns of community and neighbourhood change. Abramson (2016) and Lynch & Pottie-Sherman (2017) caution against overlooking the

punitive aspects of reuse, which can deepen social and spatial inequalities, fuel privatization and gentrification, and marginalize neglected communities.

If we consider obsolescence as a cultural lens through which architecture and landscape are perceived, rather than a consequence of technological advancement (Abramson, 2017), it raises important considerations for neglected sites. In the case of neglected sites and overlooked spaces, the concept of obsolescence takes on multifaceted dimensions. Rather than being solely attributed to technological progress, obsolescence in neglected sites reflects a cultural mode of perceiving architecture shaped by historical, economic, and social factors. These neglected sites bear the marks of neglect and abandonment, with remnants of buildings, infrastructure, and urban spaces dotting the landscape. Once vibrant and integral to their communities, these sites have fallen into disrepair due to shifts in societal needs, economic decline, or changing urban development trends.

Obsolescence in neglected sites thus manifests as a cultural narrative intertwined with notions of loss, decay, and unrealized potential. The gradual decline of neglected sites mirrors broader socio-economic disparities and urban regeneration challenges. Certain areas with neglected sites, for instance in post-industrial sites, experience higher rates of obsolescence due to disinvestment, demographic shifts, or environmental degradation. Addressing obsolescence in neglected sites necessitates holistic approaches that consider heritage conservation, community revitalization, and sustainable urban development.

Moreover, neglected sites present unique opportunities for heritage regeneration and community engagement. The adaptive reuse of these spaces, while preserving their historical significance, can breathe new life into neglected areas, fostering a sense of place and belonging. However, it is essential to approach regeneration efforts with sensitivity, ensuring that narratives honour the heritage of the site while addressing the needs and aspirations of local communities. In confronting obsolescence in neglected sites, communities must reimagine these spaces as catalysts for positive change and inclusive urban development. By recognizing and revitalizing neglected sites, communities can reclaim their heritage, celebrate their history, and shape a more vibrant and resilient future.

2.6.1 Harnessing Affordances: Exploring the Dynamics of Adaptive Reuse

Human actions are intricately entwined with the built environment, which offers a spectrum of possibilities that influence decision-making processes. This interplay between human perception and environmental cues is central to psychologist J.J. Gibson's theory of affordances (Gibson, 1979/1986), wherein environmental stimuli serve as triggers for action. When applied to the context of adaptive reuse, this concept presents new dimensions in understanding the dynamics of repurposed spaces.

The theory of affordances, as articulated by Gibson, posits that the environment presents opportunities for action based on individuals' perceptual capabilities and contextual factors. Building upon Gibson's framework, Eric and Ronald Rietveld (2017) propose a new approach to adaptive reuse, contending that the affordances of a space are contingent upon the ecological niche in which it exists. In the context of human environments, shaped by diverse social practices, Rietveld emphasizes the role of sociocultural dynamics in shaping affordances. This perspective challenges traditional conservation frameworks and offers a fresh lens through which to perceive adaptively reused spaces. Projects like those undertaken by Hardcore Heritage (Rietveld and Rietveld, 2017) exemplify this unconventional approach, providing affordances that spark imaginative engagement with the environment. While their methods may diverge from conventional conservation norms, they prompt critical reflection on the evolving nature of heritage preservation and spatial experiences. By reconceptualising affordances within the context of adaptive reuse, we can elucidate the transformative potential of repurposed buildings in shaping their surroundings. The adaptive reuse of a single structure can catalyse broader changes, unlocking new opportunities and influencing the evolving landscape. This ripple effect underscores the interconnectedness of heritage conservation with contemporary social, political, economic, and environmental issues.

In forging interdisciplinary connections between heritage studies and pressing global concerns, a critical lens is essential for democratizing heritage practices and fostering productive engagement with the built environment. By embracing the affordances inherent in adaptively reused spaces, we can cultivate inclusive, sustainable, and culturally enriching urban landscapes that resonate with diverse communities and narratives.

2.7 Heritage-Led Regeneration

Over the past three decades, there has been a noticeable shift in conservation practices as discussed previously, moving away from a focus solely on preservation towards a broader emphasis on urban regeneration and economic development (Delafons, 1997). This transition has historical roots dating back to the 1970s when conservation began to emerge as a legitimate planning objective, but it gained momentum during the 1980s and 1990s with the rise of a neoliberal planning agenda (DoE, 1987; DoE, 1994).

The conceptual framework often revolves around the integration of conservation practices with sustainable development principles. Heritage-led regeneration involves the strategic revitalization of urban or rural areas by leveraging cultural, historical, and architectural assets. This approach seeks to balance the preservation of heritage with development to enhance economic, social, and cultural aspects of a community (English Heritage, 2012).

The evolution of heritage-led regeneration globally has been influenced by shifting paradigms in urban and rural planning. In the latter half of the 20th century, there was a noticeable transition from strict preservationist approaches to recognizing the economic potential of heritage assets (Smith, 2018). This shift laid the foundation for the incorporation of heritage considerations into broader urban planning strategies. Investments in preserving and promoting heritage assets are argued to stimulate tourism, create employment opportunities, and contribute to the overall economic vibrancy of a region (O'Rourke, 2015). However, in practice, conservation-led regeneration has been most visible in city centres, often focusing on revitalizing retail cores (Strange and Whitney, 2010). Scholars have raised concerns about the equitable distribution of economic gains and the risk of fostering gentrification (Smithson, 2019).

Conservation efforts increasingly aimed to leverage the economic potential of historic buildings, particularly in urban centres, as key assets for regeneration initiatives (Strange and Whitney, 2010). However, while there has been a practical shift towards utilizing historic assets for economic purposes, there has been a lack of strategic thinking and policy integration in conservation practices. Instead, conservation has often relied on opportunistic and pragmatic approaches, fostering informal relationships between local authorities and other stakeholders (Healey et al., 2002; Pendlebury, 2002). Despite the

recognition of the need for more holistic approaches that link heritage regeneration with various sectoral policies such as residential and commercial development, tourism, and cultural activities, actual policy integration has been inconsistent (Gwilliam, 1998; English Heritage, 2000; DCMS, 2001; Pickard, 2001).

Conservation Area Partnerships (CAPs) have been instrumental in raising the profile of conservation by demonstrating its potential for sustainable regeneration and redevelopment (English Heritage, 1998). These partnerships have facilitated dialogue with stakeholders and attracted investment, thereby increasing the credibility of conservation as a regeneration tool. Moreover, CAPs have not only contributed to economic development but have also played a role in social inclusion and community cohesion (Strange and Whitney, 2010). However, the shift towards Heritage Economic Regeneration Strategies (HERS) suggests a further emphasis on economically focused regeneration objectives, raising questions about whether this new approach will maintain the social and community benefits previously associated with conservation efforts (English Heritage, 1998).

The social impact theories associated with heritage-led regeneration emphasized its role in fostering community pride, sense of place, and social cohesion (Roberts, 2017). The effects on local communities, especially concerning identity and well-being, constitute a critical aspect of assessing the success of heritage-led initiatives. Culturally, heritage-led regeneration aimed to preserve and promote diverse cultural traditions, contributing to the richness of local and national identity (Graham, 2016). Nevertheless, challenges arose in reconciling the conservation of heritage with the evolving nature of culture in contemporary society.

Heritage-Led Regeneration in the UK

While heritage-led regeneration is a global phenomenon, its manifestation in the United Kingdom is shaped by the nation's unique historical, cultural, and institutional context. The UK has a rich tapestry of heritage assets, ranging from historic buildings to archaeological sites, and policies have been crafted to harness these assets for both preservation and development (DCMS, 2020).

The UK's journey into heritage-led regeneration can be traced back to the latter part of the 20th century. Policies and initiatives began to emerge that acknowledged the economic

potential of heritage assets while recognizing the need for their preservation (English Heritage, 2012). This period saw the establishment of key institutions and funding mechanisms, such as the National Lottery Heritage Fund, that played pivotal roles in shaping the landscape of heritage-led initiatives in the UK. Heritage-led regeneration is a challenging task. The juxtaposition of conservation and development goals often leads to debates about the adaptive reuse of historic structures and the impact on surrounding communities (Smithson, 2019). Balancing economic gains with social and cultural considerations poses challenges, but it also provides opportunities for innovative approaches to sustainable development.

Heritage-led regeneration initiatives, while holding promise for community revitalization, have also been subject to critical examination due to the complexities inherent in their implementation. This section delves into the scholarly discourse surrounding some of the key issues that emerge within the realm of heritage-led regeneration efforts, shedding light on the multifaceted nature of these initiatives and the challenges they entail.

Gentrification and Social Equity

Scholars have raised concerns regarding the phenomenon of gentrification as a potential consequence of heritage-led regeneration projects. Central to this discourse is the risk of displacement faced by existing communities, coupled with the exacerbation of social inequalities within regenerated areas (Smithson, 2019). Literature emphasizes the imperative of developing strategies and policies aimed at mitigating these adverse effects, with a particular emphasis on equitable distribution of economic gains and the implementation of inclusive zoning practices to safeguard the interests of marginalized populations.

Community Engagement and Empowerment

The importance of fostering meaningful community engagement within heritage-led regeneration initiatives has been widely acknowledged in academic literature. Roberts (2017) underscores the significance of empowering local residents to actively participate in decision-making processes, thereby cultivating a sense of ownership and belonging within the community. Scholars advocate for the adoption of participatory planning techniques

and capacity-building initiatives as mechanisms to facilitate inclusive and collaborative approaches to regeneration (Healey, 2006; Roberts, 2017).

2.8 Industrial Heritage

The concept of heritage transcends mere preservation; it encapsulates a complex interplay of identity, memory, and socio-economic development. Over the decades, heritage conservation has evolved from the legal protection of objects to a pivotal force in urban regeneration. The shift towards holistic urban planning, particularly in Western European countries, reflects a recognition of heritage as a catalyst for socio-economic growth. Scholars emphasize the need for an integrated and inclusive approach that dynamically links heritage conservation with broader planning policies (Pendlebury et.al, 2004). Within this context, industrial heritage offers a unique lens to examine these evolving priorities and practices.

2.8.1 Industrial Culture

Byrne (2002) used 'industrial culture' to represent the entirety of classes connected to industrialism from '*the aristocracy of manual labour, the very important employed industrial middle class, and industrial capitalists*' (2002, p. 281). He defined industrial culture as a way of life and a class-consciousness that persists as a residual culture coexisting with a dominant post-industrial culture. The term industrial culture, in contemporary research, is given different names and meanings. In studies on industrial cities and regions, one finds similar terms referring to it: regional (Grillitsch & Asheim, 2018), entrepreneurial (Spigel, 2013) or manufacturing culture (Gertler, 2004).

Byrne offers empirical evidence from the former coal-mining areas in Northeast England, where mining influenced the 'industrial structure of feeling'; '*the way people live, the way they do things, the sense of personal and collective identity*' (2002, p. 287). In contrast to post-industrial cultures, industrial culture is very place-specific and simultaneously admired and despised. Economic geographers are interested in how residual industrial culture can power future development. For instance, how former coal-mining areas link the 'industrial structure of feeling' with ecology to form potential future class actions, such as eco-movements. Huggins et al. (2021) attempt to bring Bourdieu's cultural perspective to

economic geography by highlighting the cultural factors of the working class as causal elements that hinder or promote economic performance and development.

The authors constructed a statistical model of community culture practices (education, social cohesion, caring activities, adherence to social norms, and collective action), with industrialisation as the primary variable affecting them. They establish that industrialisation has a positive effect on collective action (the role of unions), social cohesion (the feeling of 'togetherness'), and a negative effect expressed through low educational aspirations and resistance to social rules. They link these findings to evolutionary economic geography, particularly the way organisational routines in large-scale industries shape specific regional cultures and cognitive lock-ins.

Yeung (2019) argues that economic geographers struggle to address the intangible aspects of culture and its impact on the economy and development. This can be partly attributed to the cultural turn, which has shifted attention from a critical appraisal of causal mechanisms to a more discursive understanding of society and space (Yeung, 2019). Third, economic geographers have problems with abstract phenomena, such as culture, and how to translate them into tools for empirical research **(**Rodríguez-Pose, 2013).

Studies on working-class culture became particularly popular in Britain, where a fascination with class division and structures arose in the 1980s with the erosion of the traditional industrial base. Studies have mainly focused on the erosion of working-class culture, including identity, attitude, and morals (Kirk, 2007). Such culture was operationalised in different ways, either as a distinct way of cultural preferences and attitudes in social and family life, home, and food preferences (Deeming, 2014), or as mundane elements of everyday culture such as solidarity, trust, and equality transmitted from mines or factories to everyday life (Ivinson, 2014). The transmission of working-class cultural codes is intergenerational; they are passed on within the family, educational institutions, or work (Pleasant, 2019; Simpson & Simmons, 2019).

The creative and cultural economy sees industrial heritage buildings and sites as a branding tool (Pratt, 2011) or as tourist attractions contributing to cultural consumption (Mathews & Picton, 2014).

2.8.2 From Industrial Heritage Concepts to Measurable Observations

Tangible industrial culture encompasses industrial landscapes and buildings comprising the industrial heritage of a certain area and is often the focus of preservation activities. Intangible industrial culture includes expertise, attitudes, values, traditions, and interlinked social factors beyond the factory (Harfst et al., 2018).

Bole's (2021) proposed five dimensions of industrial culture research provide a structured framework for understanding the tangible and intangible facets of industrial heritage. From material aspects such as townscapes and reused industrial buildings to intangible elements like values, social identities, and the emotional resonance of industrial structures, this framework offers a nuanced lens for unravelling the layers of industrial heritage. The discussion extends to the transformation of abstract concepts into measurable observations, emphasizing the importance of both tangible industrial landscapes and intangible cultural factors in preservation efforts.

Material aspects of industrial heritage are buildings, infrastructure, and specific types of an industrial landscape. This aspect is prominent in the cultural-creative strand of urban economic geography, where heritage is seen as an instrument of branding and revitalization.

- Townscape/cityscape - mapping of industrial buildings and landscape
- Reused industrial buildings, museums, exhibitions
- Industrial semiotics - monuments, street names, emblems, symbols

Values, **preferences**, **and identities** are connected with the social classes involved in industrial production (Bourdieusian view). They are linked to everyday experiences where workers share a way of life that extends beyond mines or factories to families and organizations that form a collective industrial identity. Traditional values originating from organizational routines in factories, including solidarity, egalitarianism, and patriarchy, are ideals derived from organizational routines in workplaces that can endure even after the closure of industries (residual culture).

- Specific lifestyle (leisure, culinary, family)

- Values of specific social groups
- External and internal identity – portrayal of industry to outsiders and insiders
- Industrial structure of feeling – attitudes towards industry, sense of belonging

Tacit knowledge and skills as non-codified knowledge are shared and passed on informally within workers' collectives as a socio-cultural dynamic. This may be craft or manufacturing knowledge, vernacular creativity, or a way of thinking, that is, resourcefulness, innovativeness, openness, reticence to ideas and experimentations, and adaptability.

Norms, rules, and habits created due to past industrial activity transcending institutions that affect industrial communities' present social and economic behaviour (institutional view). This aspect is vital because it reinforces the idea that 'everyday' norms and habits in time become institutionally embedded and resistant to change.

Experiences and stories recognize the temporal dimension of industrial culture from an evolutionary perspective. The proposition is that older shared experiences and memories of industrial activities influence actors differently and can affect them positively and/or negatively when considering future choices and forming new development paths.

Within the broader scope of heritage, industrial culture emerges as a distinctive realm, encapsulating both tangible and intangible dimensions. Bole's proposed aspects of industrial culture research provide a scaffold to examine the nuanced facets, from material elements like buildings and infrastructure to the intangible realms of values, social identities, and the institutionalized routines embedded in industrial production (Bole, 2021; Görmar & Harfst, 2019). This exploration traverses the townscapes, specific lifestyles, and the structural foundations of industrial communities, offering a comprehensive view beyond the physical structures.

As discussed in this section, industrial culture represents a complex phenomenon intertwining tangible and intangible facets. This discussion delves into the multifaceted landscape of industrialism, exploring its expressions, intricacies, and contemporary

implications. The dichotomy between tangible and intangible elements of industrial heritage emerges prominently. Scholars such as Bole (2021) and Harfst et al. (2018) accentuate the importance of both material artefacts—industrial infrastructure—and intangible components like values and traditions. This dual perspective underscores the intricate interplay between physical landscapes and socio-cultural dynamics within industrial communities.

2.8.3 Deindustrialization

As we delve deeper into the dynamics of industrial culture, it becomes increasingly evident that our exploration cannot be divorced from the broader context of deindustrialization. Deindustrialization, characterized by the decline of traditional manufacturing industries, represents a pivotal juncture in the evolution of industrial societies.

> ***Industrial heritage*** consists of the remains of industrial culture, which are of historical, technological, social, architectural, or scientific value. These remains consist of buildings and machinery, workshops, mills and factories, mines and sites for processing and refining, warehouses and stores, places where energy is generated, transmitted and used, transport and all its infrastructure, as well as places used for social activities related to industry such as housing, religious worship or education. (The Nizhny Tagil Charter for the Industrial Heritage, 2003)

Deindustrialization, a global phenomenon with profound socio-economic implications, is intricately linked to the concept of industrial heritage and its preservation. As regions transition from economies centred on manufacturing to post-industrial landscapes, the fate of industrial sites becomes a focal point for discussions on identity, memory, and heritage. At the heart of this discourse is the notion of industrial heritage as a tangible and intangible testament to the past. Material remnants such as factories, machinery, and industrial infrastructure stand as physical markers of bygone eras, while the stories of workers and communities evoke the intangible aspects of industrial life. However, the significance of industrial heritage extends beyond mere historical artefacts; it is deeply intertwined with notions of identity and belonging.

The contested nature of industrial heritage is further compounded by the subjective nature of heritage values. As Feilden and Jokilehto (1998) notes, the assessment of heritage values

is inherently subjective and influenced by a myriad of contextual factors. Social forces, political ideologies, economic opportunities, and cultural trends all play a role in shaping how industrial heritage is perceived and valued within a given society (Mason, 2002). Stefan Berger's observations underscore the divergent responses of regions to their industrial legacies.

Berger underlines that the over recent decades, industrial heritage has become an important image in public representations of place identity. He argues that while some deindustrializing regions have enjoyed a highly developed ‘‘heritagization”, some do not want to recognize, preserve, and represent their industrial past. Considering this, industrial heritage remains very much contested from a global perspective. Various places have very different kinds of deindustrialization processes and public memories of the past. Berger notes that some cities and regions, such as the German Ruhr, have appropriated their industrial heritage as the fundamental feature of their identity, whereas others have worked hard to erase their industrial past (Berger and Wicke, 2017).

> Although it is very difficult to define heritage, as it is very subjective and varies accordingly with the needs of individuals and communities, one certainty is that heritage as a discourse has always been the product of people who have generated, constructed, and reconstructed with the requirements of people (Apaydin, 2018).

Communities ascribe different meanings and values to their heritage and use it for diverse purposes, also perceives and evaluates past from a different perspectives. Over recent decades, industrial heritage has assumed a significant role in shaping public representations of place identity. While some regions have undergone a process of 'heritagization,' wherein industrial heritage is preserved, celebrated, and integrated into the fabric of regional identity, others have chosen to downplay or even eradicate their industrial past. This divergence reflects the varied ways in which communities ascribe meaning and value to their heritage, influenced by different factors. Stefan Berger's insights provide a nuanced understanding of how regions grapple with their industrial legacies in the face of deindustrialization. His observations highlight the divergent responses of communities to their industrial pasts, ranging from embracing industrial heritage as a fundamental aspect of identity to actively seeking its erasure.

The contested nature of industrial heritage emphasize the complex interplay between memory, identity, and cultural values. Communities may perceive their industrial pasts through different lenses, viewing them as sources of pride, shame, or indifference. Moreover, the process of heritage preservation itself is subject to interpretation and negotiation, as stakeholders with diverse interests and agendas vie for influence over the narrative of industrial heritage. Berger lists the various actors have been engaged in the deindustrialization process such as intellectuals, artists, and academics who became activists emerged in bottom-up processes, sometimes forming social movements fighting for the preservation of industrial heritage sites, and through their work managed to make an important contribution to the 'heritagization' of regional identities (Berger and Wicke, 2017). Photographers recording industrial remains and lives of the workers; historians writing about the industrial past and the communities that past had, for better or worse, sustained; sociologists, city planners, and geographers thinking about how urban and regional space had to be reassigned amid processes of deindustrialization; artists, producing art about communities undergoing deindustrialization (ibid.: 17). The success depends largely on how other actors reacted to their initiatives.

One of the key questions raised by Berger's analysis is how deindustrialization processes impact the conception of culture in affected regions. Deindustrialization entails not only economic restructuring but also profound social and cultural transformations. Industrial heritage, historical culture, and regional identity are deeply interconnected, shaping and reshaping one another in the transition from industrial past to post-industrial future. The significance of industrial heritage extends beyond its material manifestations to encompass intangible aspects such as memories, customs, and traditions. These intangible records of industry are embedded in the collective consciousness of communities, informing their sense of identity and belonging. As such, industrial heritage plays a crucial role in processes of reinventing cities and regions once closely identified with industry, providing a link between past, present, and future.

> Historical culture and regional identity are deeply interconnected in all regions undergoing structural transformation from an industrial past to a post-industrial future (Berger, 2019).

2.8.4 Transforming Industrial Heritage Sites

From the late 1970s onwards, the practice of heritage conservation has shifted from the legal protection of objects to become part of a broader movement for urban regeneration and socio-economic development in most western European countries (Ashworth 1997, Ashworth and Howard 1999). There is a growing interest in using built and landscape heritage as a tool for urban regeneration as industrial cities transition to service-oriented economies (Roberts 2000).

In the post-industrial city and/or region, the presence of heritage can undoubtedly present prospects for socio-economic development, including the growth of tourism, recreation, leisure, and other types of cultural activities. The awareness of the regeneration potential of historic environments to create socially inclusive and economically vibrant cities and landscapes has expanded in recent years because of a worldwide growing concern for sustainable development. Thus, heritage has emerged as a crucial tool for use in regeneration and redevelopment plans (Janssen *et al.*, 2014). Those concerned with safeguarding historic buildings or archaeological sites endeavour to exclude them from the dynamics of social development. Legislative protection is by definition defensive, based on the idea of a limited number of heritage resources that are always threatened by spatial dynamics and gradually decreasing in number and quality (Janssen *et al.*, 2014). The historic environment, therefore, is not recognized as an integral part of the planning system. It is set apart by listing and designation, and is subject to certain conservation regimes. In light of this, academics and professionals in the heritage field have urged for a more integrated and inclusive approach that links heritage conservation more dynamically with planning policy (Hamer 2000, Turnpenny 2004, Heathcott 2006, Loulanski 2006).

Heritage planning has shifted from control-based approaches to conservation towards those based on dynamic management of change (Fairclough and Rippon 2002). Several governments developed public policies and national strategies for a revised approach to heritage conservation with the aim of reforming the planning and management of the historic environment accordingly. England the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (2001) and English Heritage (2000), for instance, assessed all policies on the historic environment as part of a process that led to ‘an entirely new, integrated approach to managing our historical surroundings for the next century' (Cossons 2000). English Heritage

emphasized the necessity for this integration within the planning framework in order to use heritage more proactively as a resource for rural and urban development. Future opportunities for holistic approaches to conservation planning would be strengthened by expanding the perspective from specific areas to broader landscapes (Janssen *et al.*, 2014). In Germany, the so-called *Denkmalpflegediskussion* focused on how state-led heritage policy should be more dynamic and decentralized, allowing the local public and other (private) stakeholders to engage with heritage (Holtorf 2007).

2.8.5 Heritage-Led Regeneration in Post-Industrial Towns in the UK

Post-industrial towns in the United Kingdom often face economic decline and social challenges due to the decline of traditional industries. Heritage-led regeneration emerges as a strategic approach to breathe new life into these communities by repurposing historic assets while addressing socio-economic issues (Roberts & Smith, 2020).

The narrative of heritage-led regeneration in post-industrial towns intertwines with the broader story of industrial decline in the UK. Towns that once thrived on industries like coal, steel, and textiles have witnessed economic downturns, leaving behind vacant factories, and neglected infrastructure (Evans, 2017). The shift towards heritage-led strategies gained momentum in the late 20th century, recognizing the potential of these historic sites for regeneration (ibid). Post-industrial towns pose distinct challenges and opportunities for heritage-led regeneration. Challenges include the adaptive reuse of large industrial structures, environmental remediation, and addressing the social impacts of economic decline. Opportunities lie in leveraging the unique character of industrial heritage to attract investment, tourism, and cultural activities (Smithson, 2019).

The exploration of industrial heritage within the context of urban regeneration and socio-economic development reveals its multifaceted significance in shaping identity, memory, and community dynamics. From the evolution of heritage conservation as a pivotal force in urban planning to the tangible and intangible dimensions of industrial culture, this section has highlighted the complex interplay between heritage preservation and broader socio-economic policies.

Industrial heritage serves as a bridge between past and present, embodying the legacy of industrialization while offering opportunities for renewal and reinvention. The shift towards

holistic urban planning acknowledges the dynamic role of heritage in shaping the physical and social fabric of communities undergoing transition. By integrating heritage conservation with planning policies, stakeholders can harness the potential of industrial heritage to create inclusive and vibrant urban environments.

However, the contested nature of industrial heritage underscores the diverse perspectives and interests at play in preservation efforts. Communities ascribe different meanings and values to their heritage, influencing the interpretation and conservation of industrial sites. Moreover, the challenges of translating abstract concepts into measurable observations pose additional hurdles in preservation efforts. Industrial heritage embodies the legacy of past industrialization while offering possibilities for future transformation.

2.9 Summary

The literature reviewed in this chapter illuminates the dynamic nature of heritage preservation and conservation, transcending traditional boundaries to embrace a holistic view of cultural legacies. Heritage is not confined to static objects but encompasses the intangible fabric of societies, intricately interwoven with the built environment and evolving social dynamics. Navigating through diverse disciplinary perspectives, it becomes evident that heritage conservation has evolved from a static preservation paradigm to a dynamic force driving urban regeneration and socio-economic development.

The transition from control-based approaches to adaptive management strategies underscores the transformative power of heritage in shaping inclusive and vibrant cities. Industrial heritage, once neglected, now emerges as a crucial element in the revitalization of post-industrial landscapes, highlighting the interconnectedness of tangible structures with intangible values and traditions. As this journey unfolds, embracing an integrated approach that harmonizes heritage conservation with dynamic urban planning policies becomes imperative.

By critically engaging with these concepts, this chapter lays the groundwork for a reflexive exploration of the complexities inherent in the preservation and transformation of diverse heritage sites. It sets the stage for subsequent chapters to delve deeper into the multifaceted interplay between heritage, urban development, community identity, and the ever-evolving human experience. As the exploration navigates through shifting definitions

and evolving discourses, one is reminded of the intricate tapestry of heritage, woven from the threads of collective memory and identity, awaiting stewardship in an ever-changing world.

PART II

2.10 Defining Community

Smith's (2017, 2019) research brings to light the complexity of defining "community" within the context of heritage sites and highlights the importance of recognizing that the term "community" can have different meanings for different people at the same heritage site. This is because people's understanding of the concept of community is shaped by their pre-existing values, politics, and experiences (Berger, 2019). This underscores the importance of recognizing that heritage is not a fixed, objective reality but rather a socially constructed and interpreted phenomenon that is constantly evolving and changing. Smith's research suggests that a sense of community and place is deeply connected to people's understanding of the past. It is also important to recognize that the meanings attributed to heritage are not fixed or uncontested, and can be the subject of ongoing debate and negotiation.

Conservation practices often involve curated presentations and interpretations of heritage, potentially influencing how visitors perceive and interpret the past. While these efforts aim to preserve and protect cultural heritage, they also risk imposing certain narratives or interpretations that may not align with the diverse perspectives and experiences of communities.

Furthermore, the meanings attributed to heritage are subject to ongoing debate and negotiation, highlighting the dynamic nature of cultural interpretation. Heritage-makers cannot fully control the meanings visitors decode (Dicks, 2017), as individuals bring their own backgrounds, beliefs, and understandings to their interactions with heritage sites.

The Slate Wiped Clean chapter in *Uses of Heritage* (Smith, 2006) probes how a community in Northern England is consciously using cultural heritage to bring about a sense of place. The case study starts with examining the ways in which heritage is understood and actively used in Castleford to reconsider community identity and cohesion. The widely accepted ideas about the heritage values of 'authentic material culture' and the 'built environment' are being revisited and reconceptualized within a cultural process that privileges the performativity of 'doing' and 'being'. She points out that this does not mean that the physicality of place and object are rejected, but rather they are given supporting roles in the

process. She underlines that this process is not based on nostalgia or a unified or consensual view of the past, it is rather about utilizing collective remembering to foster community cultural and economic growth and to recognize and celebrate diversity and change which would lead to the recreation and legitimization of social and cultural bonds and identity in the present**.** Smith argues that the authenticity of heritage lies in the meanings people construct for it in their daily lives (ibid.:247).

In the case study conducted interviews reveal how heritage is defined and what is valued in Castleford. The responses show Castleford as the community attempts to overcome the social and economic trauma of the miners' strike and its aftermath (ibid. :238). Smith notes that the responses of the interviewees concerned about bolstering and asserting the existent social and cultural vitality and legitimacy of the sense of community that both in the past and present defined 'Castleford' to its residents. Smith also highlights that there was a startling lack of reactionary nostalgia or sentimentality in this cultural process. The 'better back then' ethos was almost entirely missing, and there was no attempt to romanticize the brutalities of the mining and other industrial pasts. In identifying the significance of cultural issues in the regeneration process, the interviewees were not concerned about creating so much a new image of Castleford, but rather both bolstering and asserting the extant social and cultural vitality and legitimacy of the sense of community that both in the past and present defined 'Castleford' to its residents. This is, in particular, important in Castleford as the community is making an active attempt to overcome the social and economic trauma of the miners' strike and its aftermath (Smith, 2016). Local residents in Castleford are well aware of the negative image of their town and see this as an impediment to economic investment. The empirical data also revealed that the participants not only regarded the physical regeneration of the town as vital, but also clearly identified this as interlinked with redefining the town's cultural image (ibid.).

This case study is important to understand how heritage is defined and perceived in various ways in a specific context. Smith asserts that heritage in Castleford is about *doing* and not *having.* The Castleford community, interestingly, do not romanticize the industrial past, and much more concerned about cultural interaction between people, place and memory that centres on the maintenance and creation of community identity and cohesion (ibid.). This

fieldwork offers valuable insights into the complex interplay between heritage, community, and identity.

Cultural heritage managers face the challenge of recognizing and preserving heritage assets in contemporary environments where the historical significance may not be immediately apparent. By privileging certain aspects for conservation, community may inadvertently marginalize or erase alternative interpretations of the past. This underscores the need for approaches that go beyond traditional methods of identifying individual objects and instead consider the complex interplay between physical landscapes, human relationships, and cultural practices. There are methods developed by cultural heritage managers for identifying valuable heritage assets in culturally historic landscapes yet often feel underprepared to identify heritage assets in modern everyday surroundings. Although a relatively high awareness of heritage features as individual objects exists, recognizing complex cultural and historical environments is much more challenging (Swensen *et al.*, 2012). Scholars argue that there is a dialectic relationship between physical and experienced landscapes. Individual landscape experiences do not arise independently of those related to physical landscapes, but are influenced by them (Ingold 1992; Setten 1999; Jacobs 2002). Stephenson (2008) has developed what she calls a 'cultural values model', which considers multiple ways in which landscapes are valued. By cultural values, she means 'those values that are shared with a group or community or are given legitimacy through a socially accepted way of assigning value' (Stephenson 2008, 129). This model makes multiple ways of valuing landscapes possible. Stephenson's cultural values model includes three components – forms (physical and/or tangible), relationships (human relationships with landscape), and practices (past and present actions, traditions, and events) – which interact with one another, and are both temporal and dynamic. She sees a present landscape as a continuum of forms, relationships, and practices of the past that influence those of the present and contribute to shaping perceptions of present landscapes. She argues that this perspective offers a basis for an integrated understanding of the landscape and its values.

2.11 Community Engagement

This section delves into the nuanced significance of community involvement in heritage projects, underscoring the importance of participatory methodologies, dialogue facilitation, and collaborative partnerships.

Within public and professional discourses, heritage managers and planners are expected to map and appreciate heritage objects from an expert point of view, using a set of formal standards of valuation (Graham et al. 2000; Smith 2006; Smith & Waterton 2009). The cultural heritage management landscape often operates within frameworks that prioritize predefined values and static assessments, rather than engaging in ongoing investigations and dialogue about the dynamic nature of heritage. As Hygen (1996) suggests, values in cultural heritage management are typically postulated in advance as part of a set procedure, often viewed as objective and intrinsic dimensions. This approach can limit the inclusivity and responsiveness of heritage management practices, failing to capture the diverse perspectives and evolving meanings associated with cultural heritage. For instance, the Norwegian Cultural Heritage Act of 1978 (Government no. 1978)[5] defines tangible heritage broadly as "traces of human activities in the physical environment linked to historical events, beliefs, and traditions." While this definition acknowledges the breadth of heritage, its application in practice often emphasizes legalistic interpretations, focusing on formal listing and protections. Such framing reflects a common challenge in cultural heritage management: the reliance on static, institutional definitions that may undervalue the evolving meanings and diverse perspectives of communities. This tendency aligns with what Smith (2006) terms *the* Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD), a set of practices and texts privileging expert-driven understandings of heritage. This mode of orientation is seen as 'a set of texts and practices that dictate the ways in which heritage is defined and employed within any contemporary Western society' (Benton 2010, 3). Layman and experts may have conflicting interests even when their objective is to combine them in a common planning or preservation strategy (Howard 2004; Jones et al. 2007). Regarding conflicts in urban planning, Lefebvre (1991) has pointed out that experts' mapping and strategies tend to take place within a language of abstraction, whereas laypersons' perspectives operate at a descriptive level, connected to symbols of identification, belonging, and memory. When viewed through this lens, the Norwegian Act typifies a Western heritage management model that, while robust in legal protections, risks marginalizing community voices in favour of top-down determinations.

[5] The Cultural Heritage Act of 1978 is a Norwegian law that protects heritage sites and cultural environments.

It is important to broaden the definition of heritage to enhance engagement and fostering more inclusive heritage practices. The ontology of connectivity encourages us to expand our understanding of heritage beyond conventional categories of tangible assets to encompass intangible aspects, such as cultural practices, oral traditions, and collective memories. By acknowledging the diverse ways in which communities interact with their cultural environments, this approach enriches heritage narratives and fosters a deeper sense of ownership and belonging among stakeholders. However, in cultural heritage management, there is often a tension between expert-driven assessments and laypersons' perspectives. Formal standards of valuation often dominate professional discourse, leading to conflicts between experts and community members. The concept of authorized heritage discourse (AHD) shapes official heritage understanding and often overlook diverse cultural values.

An ontology of connectivity presents an alternative approach to conceptualizing heritage, which can be utilized in practice. It goes beyond traditional views of heritage as static objects and instead focuses on the dynamic interplay between various elements within a wider socio-cultural and environmental context. Drawing on Harrison's (2012) interpretation of Actor-Network Theory (ANT)[6], this perspective emphasizes the relational nature of heritage, where human and non-human actors interact within interconnected networks. Rooted in ANT, the ontology of connectivity views heritage as a network of heterogeneous actors, both human and non-human, whose interactions shape its meaning and significance. ANT emphasizes the agency of all actors within these networks, highlighting how they influence and are influenced by one another. By applying ANT principles to heritage studies, scholars can the intricate connections and power dynamics that underpin heritage preservation, conservation, and interpretation.

At its core, the ontology of connectivity redefines heritage as a relational concept, where the significance of cultural artefacts, sites, and landscapes is not intrinsic but emerges from their interactions with people, communities, and environments over time (Harrison, 2012). This perspective challenges the notion of heritage as fixed and immutable, instead recognizing its fluid and evolving nature shaped by ongoing dialogues and interactions. As a

[6] Actor-Network Theory (ANT) was developed by sociologists Bruno Latour and Michel Callon, along with other scholars associated with the field of Science and Technology Studies (STS). ANT seeks to understand how various actors, both human and non-human, come together to form networks and enact change. Harrison has contributed to the application or interpretation of ANT in the context of heritage studies.

methodological approach, the ontology of connectivity offers a lens through which researchers can analyse and interpret heritage landscapes, tracing the various actors, their associations, and the processes of negotiation and contestation that shape heritage discourse. Moreover, as an ontological framework, it challenges essentialist views of heritage, highlighting its contingent nature while foregrounding the relationality and complexity inherent in heritage phenomena. The regeneration of historic buildings in Sunderland, for instance, can be analysed through the lens of ANT, which highlights the agency of diverse actors, including local communities, urban planners, developers, and historical artefacts themselves. By tracing the connections and interactions between these actors, researchers can gain insights into the complex processes of negotiation, contestation, and meaning-making that underpin heritage preservation and interpretation in Sunderland.

A paradigm shift towards dialogue with heritage seeks to dismantle hierarchical approaches and foster inclusive decision-making processes. This dialogical model recognizes the interconnectedness of diverse stakeholders and promotes hybrid forums for collective decision-making. By acknowledging the dynamic nature of heritage and its continual shaping by past and present interactions, this model encourages ongoing conversations and critical reflection.

The inhabitants of towns interact with their environment daily through their subjective appreciation of objects and places and through practical and sensory experiences that draw on personal and collective memories play a part (Spence, 2020). For most, everyday landscapes are local, often without any significant features or pretensions and lacking formal designation or protection value (Aasbø 1999). However, it is asserted that there is no such thing as a dull landscape that all human landscapes have cultural meaning, and that ordinary landscapes are important repositories of social experience and cultural meaning (Jackson 1984; Groth & Bressi 1997). Unlike iconic or protected landscapes, everyday landscapes encompass the mundane, ordinary spaces where people live, work, and interact on a daily basis. While these landscapes may lack formal designation or protection, they hold immense cultural, social, and environmental value for local communities.

Scholars argue that everyday landscapes are important repositories of social experience and cultural meaning, reflecting the lived realities and collective memories of individuals and

communities. By acknowledging the cultural significance of everyday landscapes, the ELC[7] expands the scope of landscape conservation beyond traditional notions of beauty or rarity to encompass the diverse array of landscapes that shape people's everyday lives.

2.12 Participatory Process

A dialogical model of heritage based on an ontology of connectivity not only flattens the hierarchies of relationships involved amongst the various heterogeneous actors, human and non-human, that bind time and place to keep the past alive in the present, but also suggests important dialogical models of heritage decision-making in hybrid forums, which break down the conventional barriers between experts, politicians, bureaucrats and interested laypersons or stakeholders. Dialogical models of heritage provide an important basis for thinking productively and actively about heritage in the future (Harrison, 2013). Buchecker et al. (2003) highlights the crucial role of community involvement in sustainable development, emphasizing that it goes beyond mere safeguarding of landscapes. They highlight the importance of understanding and addressing the factors that may hinder residents from actively participating in the processes that shape their landscapes.

There are various stakeholders involved in the conservation decision-making process including residents, local authorities, and investors. (Özçakır, 2022 #182) The main decision-makers, however, are those who hold the power in local or central government, whose motivations and priorities become the main determinants of new interventions, which are thus taken in a top-down manner. (Özçakır, 2022 #182). The European Landscape Convention's call for public participation aligns with the imperative to involve local voices in cultural heritage management. The concept of everyday landscapes challenges traditional notions, recognizing the cultural meaning embedded in ordinary surroundings. Within the everyday landscapes, the dichotomy between physical and experienced landscapes takes centre stage, shaping cultural values, relationships, and practices (Ingold, 1992; Stephenson, 2008). The participatory processes unfold, emphasizing the importance of locals' voices in

[7] The European Landscape Convention (ELC) is the first international treaty to be exclusively devoted to all aspects of the European landscape and came into effect in 2004. It requires signatories to set up public participation systems and consider diverse landscape values (Council of Europe 2000).

redefining cultural heritage and fostering a sense of responsibility for the landscapes they inhabit (Stenseke, 2001).

The field of interdisciplinary heritage studies has a clear role to play in commenting critically on new developments in heritage and being more actively engaged with the production of policy and the critical discussion of function in society. Perhaps more importantly, an interdisciplinary heritage studies has a role to play in the liberation of laypersons who have become increasingly marginalized in the heritage decision-making processes. It is crucial to involve the voices of locals in cultural heritage management in order to gain a better understanding of what people regard as their significant cultural environments (Stenseke 2001; 2009). These perspectives can help redefine what cultural heritage is and give sense of responsibility for preserving valued environments. Therefore, local participation and effective dialogue between local communities and heritage management authorities is important for the sustainability and viability of a project. The dialogical model of heritage decision-making promotes productive thinking by encouraging engagement, dialogue, and reflection. This concept transcends traditional barriers and acknowledges the interconnectedness of time and place, enabling a more holistic understanding. Through binding time and place, the model highlights the importance of understanding the historical, cultural, and environmental contexts in which heritage is situated.

2.12.1 Ownership

Ownership, both legal and psychological, plays a pivotal role in shaping human behaviour, relationships, and interactions with tangible and intangible assets. Psychological ownership theory offers a lens through which to examine the multifaceted nature of ownership beyond legal frameworks, encompassing cognitive, affective, and behavioural dimensions (Pierce et al., 2003; Avey et al., 2009; Z. Lin et al., 2022). This section explores the various dimensions of ownership, drawing from relevant literature to elucidate its complexities.

2.12.2 Psychological Ownership

Psychological ownership manifests as an extension of self-identity through the perception of possession over tangible and intangible targets (Z. Lin et al., 2022). Pierce et al. (2003) highlight the cognitive and affective processes involved, emphasizing the pleasure and

esteem derived from ownership. This sense of ownership extends beyond legal regulations, reflecting an individual's possessive feelings towards a target (Pierce et al., 2003).

Avey et al. (2009) identify several manifestations of psychological ownership, including having a place, self-efficacy, self-identity, responsibility, and territoriality. Having a place satisfies the innate need for belonging and security (Pierce et al., 2003), while self-efficacy underscores personal competence and control over owned targets (Z. Lin et al., 2022). Self-identity contributes to individuals' definition of themselves and their identities (Li et al., 2021), whereas responsibility entails proactive protection of the possessed target (Avey et al., 2009). Territoriality reflects defensive efforts to secure one's territories (Avey et al., 2009).

Pierce et al. (2003) propose three routes for developing psychological ownership: exercise of control, intimate knowing, and investment of the self. The exercise of control pertains to the degree of control individuals can exert over owned targets, while intimate knowing involves prolonged experiences with the targets. Investment of the self-entails continued investment of personal resources in the target, reinforcing the sense of ownership over time (Pierce et al., 2003).

2.12.3 Heritage Ownership: Cultural and Historical Context

Heritage ownership intersects with cultural and historical narratives, contributing to individuals' sense of belonging and identity within communities (Smith, 2006). Cultural significance and familial ties to heritage sites influence perceptions of ownership and stewardship (Meskell, 2002).

Pantazatos' views (2015) offer valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of heritage ownership, particularly when examined through the lens of stewardship. His work emphasizes the interconnectedness of personal responsibility, community engagement, and broader societal dynamics in shaping attitudes towards heritage management. Stewardship, often viewed as the responsibility of archaeologists to act as custodians of the past for the public. From his perspective, stewardship extends beyond mere custodianship to encompass a sense of personal responsibility and care for cultural heritage. He recognizes the diverse range of perspectives held by individuals intimately connected to heritage sites, ranging from a deep-seated sense of obligation to demands for a more active role in

decision-making processes. Ownership typically refers to the legal rights, personal connections, and sense of entitlement that individuals or groups may have towards heritage assets (ibid.)

Ownership of heritage sites extends beyond individual experiences to encompass collective ownership within communities (Waterton & Smith, 2010). Community engagement and participation in heritage preservation efforts foster a sense of shared ownership and stewardship over cultural assets (Waterton & Smith, 2010). Analysing community dynamics can elucidate perceptions of ownership and responsibility towards heritage sites (Meskell, 2002). Ownership of heritage sites can be contested due to conflicting interests among stakeholders, highlighting power dynamics and issues of equity and justice (Smith, 2006). Conflicts may arise between governments, local communities, and private entities regarding ownership rights and management responsibilities (Meskell, 2002). Understanding these tensions is crucial for developing inclusive and sustainable heritage management strategies (Waterton & Smith, 2010).

The discourse surrounding the ownership of heritage, as depicted in Herzfeld's study (1991), illustrates the complex interplay between personal, collective, and institutional interests in shaping the preservation and management of cultural heritage. The phrase "My house or our national monument?" (Herzfeld 1991, 12) encapsulates the tension between individual property rights and the broader societal value placed on historic buildings in Rethymno, Greece.

Who has the right to decide the fate of historic buildings, and whose interests should be prioritized in heritage preservation efforts? Property owners may view their buildings primarily as personal assets, with the freedom to modify or dispose of them as they see fit. However, heritage advocates argue that these buildings hold significance beyond individual ownership, representing shared cultural heritage that belongs to the entire community.

In his research, the tension between individual property rights and collective heritage values has manifested in various conflicts and negotiations in Rethymno. Discussions over the allocation of public funds for restoration projects, for example, highlight divergent opinions on the responsibility for preserving heritage assets. Similarly, debates over zoning laws and

development regulations underscore the challenge of balancing property rights with the need to safeguard cultural heritage.

Building on Herzfeld's insights, Smith (2017) highlights the multifaceted nature of heritage ownership, emphasizing the role of personal and collective memories in shaping individuals' attachment to heritage sites. Smith's research stresses the need to acknowledge emotional and cultural dimensions of ownership, which extend beyond legal property rights to encompass a sense of belonging and identity within communities.

Defamiliarizing heritage, as proposed by scholars like Herzfeld, involves challenging conventional understandings of heritage ownership and fostering a broader sense of shared responsibility for cultural heritage. By defamiliarizing heritage, individuals and communities can reexamine their relationship to heritage sites, recognizing the diverse perspectives and experiences that shape their significance. This approach encourages dialogue, reflection, and collaboration in heritage preservation efforts, ultimately enriching our understanding of the past and its relevance to the present and future.

2.13 Summary

Community involvement, as emphasized by Buchecker et al. (2003), is crucial for sustainable development. However, participation extends beyond safeguarding landscapes to exploring the cultural, historical, and social dimensions that shape them. This requires understanding the barriers preventing residents from actively engaging in the processes shaping their environments.

The notion of "community" is multi-layered and varies based on historical, cultural, and social contexts. Community is not a static or homogenous entity but is shaped by historical processes such as waves of migration, industrial shifts, and social transformation, this will be outlined in the history chapter (Chapter 4). Each layer has left its mark on the landscape, creating a mosaic of cultural identities and shared memories. This conceptualization aligns with scholarly discussions emphasizing that communities are dynamic, context-dependent constructs, reflecting diverse experiences, relationships, and values (Smith, 2006; Waterton & Smith, 2010). Recognizing these complexities important for participatory heritage processes, which must engage with the multiplicity of perspectives that define what "community" means in any given context.

This layered understanding of community highlights the need to move beyond generalizations. To engage communities meaningfully in participatory heritage processes, it is essential to delve into these distinct histories and explore how each group identifies with and values its environment.

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Chapter 3: Research Approach and Methodology

This chapter discusses the fieldwork methodology employed in the research, covering aspects such as research design, data collection, and analysis techniques.

3.1 Research Aims, Questions and Objectives

This chapter outlines the research framework adopted to explore the complex dynamics of heritage-led regeneration in Sunderland, focusing on the interplay between community perspectives, collective memory, and institutional heritage frameworks. The chapter presents the study's aims, guiding questions, and objectives, highlighting how these elements underpin the methodological approach and contribute to understanding regeneration's social, cultural, and spatial implications. The research explores multifaceted aspects of heritage-led regeneration, by investigating the context in which historic buildings are repurposed to meet contemporary needs. Exploring how heritage-led regeneration processes within the Sunderland HAZ navigate the balance between conserving historical integrity, fostering meaningful community engagement, and addressing local perceptions of heritage. To do this, the study aims to understand the formal heritage governance framework and the dynamics of community engagement within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone. In other words, the overarching aim is to critically examine contemporary community involvement within the HAZ, with particular focus on the emotional and experiential dimensions that shape local perceptions of heritage and inform their participation in regeneration processes.

The primary objective of this research is to comprehensively examine the impact of heritage-led regeneration initiatives on the Sunderland communities. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Investigate how historic buildings are repurposed to meet contemporary needs while retaining their historical integrity.

2. Understand the structural framework[8] and dynamics of engagement within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone.
3. Explore the emotional and experiential attachments that shape perceptions and definitions of heritage within particular communities.
4. Assess the broader impacts of heritage-led regeneration beyond economic development.

To frame these objectives, a central research question emerges:

MRQ: How are perceptions of heritage within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone influenced by the values, experiences, and collective memories of its communities, as well as their understanding of officially recognized discourses?

This central research question serves as the foundation for investigating the relationship between community perspectives and official heritage frameworks within the HAZ. By delving into the subjective experiences and collective memories of local residents, the study aims to identify the underlying factors shaping heritage perceptions and their intersections with institutionalized heritage narratives.

Subsidiary Research Questions

SRQ1: What are the motivations driving heritage-led regeneration initiatives in Sunderland, particularly within the context of the Heritage Action Zone?

This question seeks to elucidate the driving forces behind heritage-led regeneration efforts within the HAZ, exploring the rationales, objectives, and priorities of various partners involved in heritage conservation and urban revitalization.

SRQ2: What is the role of emotional and experiential attachments to heritage in fostering a sense of place and belonging within the Sunderland HAZ communities?

This question investigates the emotional dimensions of heritage and place attachment, exploring how personal connections, lived experiences, and nostalgic sentiments contribute

[8] In the context of the Sunderland HAZ, structural framework encompasses the administrative structure, decision-making processes, roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, as well as any policies or guidelines that guide heritage-led regeneration initiatives and community engagement efforts. Briefly, it refers to the framework within which activities related to heritage preservation and community engagement are organized and managed within the Sunderland HAZ.

to residents' sense of identity, attachment to place, and social cohesion within the Sunderland community.

SRQ3: Does the local community's understanding of formal heritage narratives contribute to feelings of exclusion within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone?

By focusing on community-driven initiatives and grassroots engagements within the HAZ, this question examines the role of participatory practices, cultural events, and collective experiences in influencing residents' perceptions of heritage and fostering a sense of ownership and belonging.

Before delving into the methodology, it is essential to contextualize the research within existing literature as highlighted in the literature review. Previous studies have highlighted the importance of community engagement in heritage-led regeneration processes (Waterton & Watson, 2013; Howard et al., 2014). Additionally, research on place attachment and perceptions of heritage provides valuable insights into the emotional and experiential dimensions that shape community perceptions. Moreover, critical heritage studies offer theoretical frameworks for understanding the dynamics of heritage perception and preservation (Holtorf & Fairclough, 2015; Smith, 2016). Case studies on heritage-led regeneration initiatives, such as those conducted by Historic England and the National Trust, provide practical examples of community involvement and the broader impacts of regeneration efforts.

By drawing upon these diverse sources, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of heritage-led regeneration in the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone, enriching the analysis with insights from existing literature and empirical observations. Through a comprehensive review of relevant studies and collaborative fieldwork, this study seeks to provide valuable insights into the complex dynamics shaping perceptions of heritage within local communities.

Research Methods

The research employed a mix of research methods to investigate conflicts and narrative construction. This includes interviews with stakeholders, content analysis of public

discourse, ethnographic research within communities, and archival research to trace the historical context.

Research Questions	**Objectives**	**Research Methods (data collection + data analysis)**
How do community values influence perceptions of heritage?	Investigate the core values held by diverse community groups and how they shape their perceptions of heritage Investigate the impact of heritage-led regeneration initiatives on communities	Interviews with local community, volunteers and heritage professionals Observation of community engagement events
In what ways do community perceptions intersect with or diverge from official heritage discourse?	Explore the relationship between community perspectives and the formal recognition of heritage by authoritative bodies	Interviews with heritage professionals and local community Policy / document analysis
How do emotional and experiential dimensions shape	Explore the structural framework and dynamics of community involvement in heritage-led regeneration	Interviews with local community Observation of community engagement events Grey Literature

perceptions of heritage within communities?	Explore the emotional and experiential attachments that shape perceptions and definitions of heritage within particular communities	
MQ and SRQ1	Investigate how historic buildings are repurposed to meet contemporary needs while retaining their historical integrity Understand the context of heritage-led regeneration initiatives in Sunderland and their impact on the present-day environment.	Archival Research
MQ and SRQ2	Understand the dynamics of engagement within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone	Policy Analysis

Table 3.1 Research Methods, Objectives and Questions

Policy and Decision-Making

The research explores how heritage policies and decisions are made and investigates the role of government agencies, heritage organizations, and community engagement processes in shaping heritage preservation strategies, and assesses how these decisions impact the construction of heritage narratives. The examination incorporates a review of grey literature and interviews with heritage professionals to enrich the depth and insight of this research segment.

Identifying actors

Various stakeholder groups involved in heritage-led regeneration scheme identified. These groups include government bodies, non-profit organizations, and local communities. Each group has distinct perspectives on what heritage means and how it should be managed, which is analysed in later chapters. The research begun with investigating the roles of these various actors in heritage preservation. This included community efforts to protect and celebrate their heritage, governmental policies and regulations, or the actions of organizations dedicated to preserving heritage sites and artefacts.

Narrative Construction

The research recognizes that conflicts and contestations often arise around heritage. Investigating conflicts and competing interpretations surrounding heritage preservation and presentation is crucial for understanding how heritage narratives are constructed and how social values are assigned to heritage. The research examines how different stakeholder groups construct their narratives about heritage. This includes the stories they tell, the symbols they use, and the ways in which they frame heritage sites and practices and investigates how these narratives reflect the values, identities, and interests of each group. The research also analyses the public discourse surrounding the conflicts. This involves examining media coverage on Sunderland Echo, local newspaper, and social media discussions, Facebook, related to heritage preservation. These discussions shed light on how heritage issues are framed and contested in the wider society.

3.2 Conceptual Framework and Qualitative Rationale

In the context of my study on heritage-led regeneration within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone, the research framework draw upon various disciplines such as urban planning, cultural heritage management, and ethnography. Key concepts and theories related to heritage conservation, community development, urban regeneration, stakeholder engagement, and place attachment informed my research framework. For instance, I drew upon theories of place attachment to understand how emotional and experiential connections shape residents' perceptions of heritage within the Sunderland community. Additionally, concepts from urban planning and community development literature informed my understanding of the structural frameworks and dynamics of engagement within the Heritage Action Zone.

My epistemological assumptions are assumed to filter throughout the research, feeding into the ways research questions are asked and how the research itself is carried out (Bryman, 2016). As Mason argues, “people’s knowledge, views, understandings, interpretations, experiences, and interactions are meaningful properties of the social reality which your research questions are designed to explore” (2002, p.63). As a result, the research adheres to a social constructivist paradigm, which posits that realities are multiple, intangible constructions in which social actors are continually altering and creating social phenomena and their meanings through social interaction (Bryman, 2016; Guba and Lincoln, 1994). These realities are local and specific in nature and are dependent for their form and content on the individual persons holding the constructions (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). In reaction to this, the researcher should investigate the ways social reality is being constructed by the relevant social actors, instead of assuming that it is something that is externally constraining them (Bryman, 2016).

At the core of this study is a conceptual framework emphasizing the fluid nature of cultural and historical significance. The research adopts a conceptual framework that positions heritage as a socially constructed entity actively shaped by communities (Smith, 2006). This research fits within recognizes that social realities between cultures, communities, and places change over time, and so does the construction of heritage and its social value and investigates how shifting demographics and context impact what is considered valuable heritage and how it is presented (Harrison, 2012). This emphasizes the fluid nature of

cultural and historical significance, which necessitated methodological flexibility to adequately capture and understand these complexities. To address this need for flexibility, the research employed qualitative methods, which facilitated deep engagement with communities and allowed for nuanced exploration of their perspectives on heritage. The study required active involvement with diverse stakeholders and prioritization of community engagement throughout the research process.

Examining the interplay between authorized heritage and community values, the research explores how governmental and authoritative bodies intersect or diverge with community-held values, contributing to community identity. It is important to clarify, the working assumption is not necessarily that authorized heritage and community values are inherently in contrast with each other. Instead, the research framework recognizes that heritage is multifaceted and subject to various interpretations and negotiations. While there may be authorized definitions or representations of heritage, individuals and communities may also hold diverse perspectives and understandings. When engaging with heritage, people may have preconceived notions based on their cultural backgrounds, personal experiences, and interactions with authoritative bodies. The interrelationships between people and places can take multiple forms, experienced in widely varying ways by different social groups—indicating the complexity and diversity of people-place relations (Lin and Lockwood 2014; Counted 2016; Erfani 2020, 2021). Mason (2002) points out that people's knowledge and experiences are integral properties of the social reality under exploration. By delving into the lived experiences and perceptions of social actors, this research aspires to contribute a nuanced understanding of heritage. This research explores the interplay between authorized heritage and community values, unravelling how governmental bodies intersect or diverge with values held by communities. The study goes beyond traditional conservation perspectives, shedding light on the intricate relationships between authorized heritage, community values, and the evolving nature of social constructs. Utilizing qualitative methodologies such as in-depth interviews and narrative analysis, the study seeks to capture the attachments and emotions individuals and communities harbour towards heritage. To understand heritage and historic places through the eyes of those who value them demands methodologies that are developed to document the attachments and emotions people have towards these places (Jeyaraj and Sundaram, 2021). It is difficult to

measure or pinpoint the specific factors that contribute to people's emotional attachment to certain places or objects. The connection people have with a place goes beyond physical attributes; it is about the values, emotions, and meanings associated with that place (Lewicka, 2011). This argument highlights suitability of qualitative methods for unravelling the dynamic layers of meaning attached to heritage. The qualitative approach contributes to heritage conservation by broadening the scope of understanding beyond tangible elements, informing a more inclusive, and sustainable conservation strategy. The chosen methodologies align with the research objective of comprehensively exploring the interplay between community values and authorized heritage within the context of cultural and historical identity. This approach aims to complement existing material conservation practices by providing insights into the subjective, experiential dimensions of heritage.

The research questions and objectives outlined in this study emphasize the utilization of a qualitative research methodology. This approach delves into understanding "how the complexities of the sociocultural world are experienced, interpreted, and understood in a particular context and at a particular point in time." (Bloomberg and Volpe 2012, p.118). This qualitative method is instrumental in revealing hidden meanings associated with social practices and interpreting specific social phenomena (Wellington and Szczerbinski, 2007; Bryman, 1993).

A case study approach is employed in this research, which typically involves an intensive examination of a specific location, community, or organization, thereby acting more as a strategy than a method (Seale, 2012; Stake, 1994).

In this thesis, I employ a single case study approach for an in-depth analysis to gain nuanced, context-specific insights. Focusing on particular cases that can reveal unexpected dynamics, challenge prevailing assumptions, and might offer new understandings. This is especially relevant when investigating the complex interactions between communities and official heritage frameworks, where local factors may give rise to unique patterns and tensions. Narrative inquiry, as Flyvbjerg (2006) notes, does not begin with rigid theoretical assumptions but instead starts with an interest in a phenomenon best understood narratively. By developing descriptions and interpretations from the perspectives of participants, researchers, and others, narrative-driven case studies provide a platform for envisioning alternative futures and addressing complex challenges (Mattingly, 1991). The

single case study approach in this research thus provides a methodologically robust means of generating rich, narrative-based insights into the lived experiences of communities and their interactions with heritage management systems.

The case study for this research is centred on Sunderland Heritage Action Zone. The choice of Sunderland Heritage Action Zone as the case study location is strategic, aligning with the research questions that aim to explore the notion of heritage, its definition, and the conservation practices associated with it. While the HAZ provides a structured framework for heritage management and urban regeneration, it operates within the broader historical, social, and economic context of Sunderland itself. Therefore, Sunderland as a city serves as a backdrop, while the HAZ offers a focused lens through which to explore the community's interaction with heritage frameworks.

Sunderland offers a rich tapestry of historical, cultural, and social contexts that make it an ideal setting for exploring these themes in depth. From a historical perspective, Sunderland boasts a diverse array of heritage sites and landmarks, ranging from industrial landmarks to maritime history and cultural traditions. These sites provide a ground for examining the multifaceted nature of heritage and the various meanings and values attached to it by different community members. Furthermore, Sunderland's ongoing efforts in heritage conservation and community engagement initiatives present valuable opportunities for studying conservation practices in action. By grounding the research in the specific context of Sunderland HAZ, I aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of heritage, conservation practices, and community engagement within this localized setting. In the subsequent chapters, I will delve deeper into the case of Sunderland, exploring its historical context, the evolution of heritage conservation efforts, and the various community engagement initiatives that shape the local landscape. Sunderland HAZ serves as a critical case for examining how smaller urban centres engage with heritage, particularly in terms of how official initiatives like the HAZ resonate—or fail to resonate—with local communities. This focus also contributes to broader debates on heritage governance and community participation in urban transformations, especially in cities that are less prominent than their metropolitan counterparts but are undergoing important transitions.

While the research focuses on the HAZ of Sunderland as the primary case study, it is important to recognize that this case is not singular in the traditional sense. Instead, it

encompasses a network of interconnected elements, events, sites, and community involvement initiatives that collectively contribute to the broader regeneration project.

To illustrate this complexity, the case study is envisioned as a mosaic, comprised of various smaller moments, events, and sites that together form a cohesive whole. Each of these elements represents a unique facet of the HAZ area and its community involvement strand, contributing to the overarching narrative of heritage preservation and regeneration. By synthesizing data from different events, sites, and community interactions, I seek to construct a comprehensive understanding of the regeneration project and its community involvement strand.

The utilization of the case study approach offers a unique opportunity to illuminate the nuanced role of heritage within the context of Sunderland. It provides a platform to delve into the intricate interplay between the conceptualization and implementation of heritage-related initiatives, thereby highlighting any disparities that may exist. By focusing on Sunderland as a case study location, I can explore heritage beyond its mere materiality, fostering a dialogue on the profound connection between the tangible aspects of heritage and their broader impact on individuals and communities.

3.3 Data Collection Process

The research paradigm employed in this study is grounded in interpretation of empirical data gathered through qualitative methods. The case study was informed by multiple sources of evidence, including semi-structured interviews with heritage professionals, local authority, volunteers, and residents. Formal and informal observations were conducted, and documentary reviews were carried out to develop a thorough understanding of the site and on-going projects. In total, 29 interviews were conducted, distributed among the different stakeholder groups as follows: heritage professionals (10), volunteers (8), artists (2), and residents (9). (See Table 3.2 for details) Formal and informal observations were conducted onsite to compliment the interview data. A total of 12 observations were carried out. Documentary reviews were undertaken to develop detailed understanding of the site and ongoing projects. (See Table 3.3 for details) A total of 15 documents were reviewed, including project reports and relevant literature pertaining to the heritage sites and associated initiatives.

Empirical data collection involved various methods, including semi-structured formal interviews, observations, and documentary reviews.

3.3.1 Interviews

As Whyte (1991) suggests, the 'interview' approach can take many forms, including questionnaires in writing, oral interviews restricted to predetermined questions on the interview schedule, semi-structured interviews that can be more freely structured, and unstructured interviews. However, in qualitative data collection, structured instruments may limit the answer (Bryman, 2016). The unstructured method offered the ability to manipulate the interview process using loose or focused questions based on an interviewer's personal knowledge of the subject, in order to facilitate the research process (Burgess, 1991). Therefore, the qualitative nature approach of interviewing provided me with the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of a specific issues and experiences (Silverman 2017). Due to the flexibility of the semi-structured interview approach, the conversations may deviate from the line of questioning; some questions may be more relevant than others; or that the order in which those questions are asked may vary from interview to interview. However, this method allowed for both general and specific questions, tailored to each interviewee. It is this flexibility that a semi-structured interview provides, as it is what the interviewee perceives that is important. As Bryman (2016, p.468) underlines, "The emphasis must be on how the interviewee frames and understands issues and events that is, what the interviewee views as important in explaining and understanding events, patterns, and forms of behaviour."

The table 3.2 below presents interview data, including information on the organization affiliation of respondents, whether they are a professional, volunteer, or local resident. In addition to one-to-one interviews, two walking and two joint interviews were conducted (L4, C3 and C4). The methodology incorporated diverse interview formats, such as one-to-one interviews and joint interviews involving family members and colleagues. These formats offered opportunity to capture individual perspectives as well as group dynamics and interactions. For example, joint interviews provided insights into shared experiences and collective interpretations of heritage. In conducting walking interviews (L1 and L2), the participants were given the autonomy to choose the route empowering them to share aspects of their environment that they consider most relevant or significant to the research

topic. This led to more meaningful discussions as participants guide the conversation based on their own experiences and perspectives.

The interviews were conducted with attention to methodological nuances, including trust-building strategies. Participants initially viewed me through the lens of their past interactions with heritage professionals or academic researchers. This perception influenced their level of trust and openness during the initial stages of engagement. My efforts demonstrating my genuine interest in understanding their perspectives and experiences played a crucial role in overcoming these preconceptions. My identity as a researcher not directly affiliated with local authorities or heritage organizations worked to my advantage in building trust. Participants perceived me as a neutral party with a genuine interest in their community and heritage, rather than someone representing institutional interests.

	Organization	Role	Intv	Interview Type
Heritage Action Zone(HAZ)	Tyne&Wear BPT	Heritage Professional	S1	Online | 1-on-1
	Historic England	Heritage Professional	C2	Online | 1-on-1
	Sunderland City Council	Heritage Professional	C3	Online | 1-on-1
		Heritage Professional	C4	Online | Group (C3)
	Historic England	Heritage Professional	S5	Online | 1-on-1
	ERS	Heritage Professional	T1	Online | 1-on-1
	Sunderland City Council	Heritage Professional	C5	Online | 1-on-1
		Heritage Professional	S2	Online | 1-on-1
	The Churches Conservation Trust (TCCT)	Heritage Professional	S3	Online | 1-on-1
		Volunteer	V2	Online | 1-on-1
		Volunteer	V1	In-person | 1-on-1
		Volunteer	N2	In-person | 1-on-1
	Donnison School	Volunteer	V3	In-person | 1-on-1
		Volunteer	V4	In-person | 1-on-1
	Sunderland Culture	Professional	S4	Online |1-on-1

Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage Scheme (BTHS)	Sunderland City Council	Heritage Professional	C1	Online | 1-on-1
Local Communities	Sunderland Civic Society	Volunteer	L1	Walking | 1-on-1
		Volunteer	L2	Walking | 1-on-1
		Resident	L3	Online | 1-on-1
		Resident	L4	Online | Group
		Resident	L4	Online | Group
		Resident	Q1	Online | 1-on-1
		Resident	L6	In-person | 1-on-1
		Resident	L7	In-person | 1-on-1
		Resident	L8	In-person | 1-on-1
		Resident	L9	In-person | 1-on-1
		Resident	F1	In-person | 1-on-1
Back on the Map		Volunteer	N1	In-person | 1-on-1
		Artist	H1	Online | 1-on-1

Table 3.2 Details of Interviewees

To capture a spectrum of perspectives, interviews were conducted with heritage professionals, volunteers, locals involved in the HAZ, and residents of the East End area. This approach aimed to explore variations in views and perceptions of the East End among those with direct connections to the area. Through these interviews, the role and authority of local communities in identifying, interpreting, and managing their heritage were scrutinized. These interpretations of what constitutes heritage is likely to vary based on factors like professional expertise, cultural background, personal experiences, and societal influences. First the interview questions semi-structured around the key themes of the research questions including:

- What is being conserved and the selection criteria?[9]
- Who is involved in the process

[9] HAZ Delivery Plan and interviews with the officials responded.

- Community engagement projects

However, as the interviews progressed and insights gathered from the people living in the area, the scope of the questions expanded to explore intellectual, conceptual, or spiritual meaning and interests which communities or individuals attach to a specific place (Boyd 2012, 175). It became clear that a sense of ownership and connection to a site is developed when people are able to associate it with a particular physical, social, and political context.

To gain a comprehensive understanding of this process, it became essential to map out the individual interests, landscapes, and relationships between different stakeholders involved. Therefore, the following questions were considered crucial:

- How do the participants perceive heritage and their sense of place?
- What factors contribute to their sense of place and the attachment they feel towards it?

By exploring these questions, a more holistic understanding of the cultural significance and value attached to the site under study can be achieved.

Three inquiry strands each oriented to heritage in different ways:

- tracing (using on-going projects to trace decision making)
- experimenting (through the projects at the Seventeen Nineteen)
- interrogating (investigating the local's perception of 'heritage' in Sunderland)

Sampling Strategy

The sampling strategy for interviews involved relevant agents from three main groups: local authorities and heritage managers; representatives of relevant NGOs (historical societies, neighbourhood associations, voluntary museum supporter groups); and local communities.

The key participants were as follows:

- Government officials
- Partner organizations
- Local heritage groups
- Local residential and business community

Different forms of interviews were carried out during the qualitative data-gathering process; online semi-structured interviews with individuals and a group interview were held. The

interviews with stakeholders took place as semi-structured conversations between two professionals and lasted around one hour. Interviews were conducted with key figures in the Heritage Action Zone project with the objective of obtaining insight into planning processes related to cultural heritage on different levels and the role public participation has played in these processes. The interview guide consisted of a series of questions structured around various themes, such as personal views on Sunderland heritage, the HAZ delivery plan and the processes behind it, and degree of public participation. The interviews with experts focused on gaining information about ongoing heritage-led regeneration projects, approaches to the understanding heritage, and community involvement. It was also important to pay attention to the overall tone of the interviewee's language.

In order to cover the locals and volunteer, several interview methods were tested. Some important qualitative data were collected by the walking interviews, which gave insight into the subjective attachment local inhabitants had to a specific place or heritage and asked what dimensions influenced their views of heritage. Other interviews were conducted using a combination of online and in-person methods, depending on the availability of the interviewee, in order to accommodate different constraints. The interviews with the local community focused on their notions of heritage, their interactions with the project sites and whether they engaged with the on-going activities.

Informal interviews were captured during certain events with participants who had not given prior consent, but the researcher reflected on them in the field notes. The unplanned addition of informal conversations offered the opportunity of gathering data that was not initially anticipated, proved to be very useful for the researcher.

3.3.2 Observations

Observation is a method of social investigation most commonly employed in ethnographic field research. Several techniques can be utilized in order to both observe and participate in the field such as ‘observation by conversations, informal/unstructured interviews, formal interviews, surveys, and collecting personal documents (written, oral and photographic evidence)’ (Burgess, 1991, p.2). The participant observation position, according to Gans (1991), is based on the researcher taking a formal participating role in the social community being researched without emotional involvement. My approach to participant observation

in this research involved actively engaging in community events and workshops while maintaining a balance between immersion and detachment. While Gans (1991) emphasizes the importance of adopting a formal participating role without emotional involvement, I recognized that the reality of fieldwork often involves navigating a complex interplay of emotions, personal biases, and professional obligations. In practice, I aimed to strike a balance between involvement and detachment, recognizing the need to remain open and receptive to the experiences unfolding within the community while also maintaining a critical and reflective stance. This involved acknowledging my own subjectivity and biases, actively listening to the voices of community members, and continuously questioning and challenging my own assumptions throughout the research process. Rather than adhering strictly to one prescribed methodological approach, I sought to embrace the inherent complexities and nuances of participant observation in community research. By drawing on a combination of personal experiences, scholarly literature, and ongoing reflection, I iteratively refined my approach to participant observation in response to the evolving dynamics of the field.

Qualitative researchers often assume different roles when employing observational methods, depending on the research objectives and the level of integration of observation into their study (Adler and Adler, 1987). These roles can range from peripheral to fully integrated involvement.

The research design adopted for this study is mentioned earlier as qualitative in nature, aiming to delve deeply into the intricacies of community engagement practices. A participatory approach was embraced, allowing for direct interaction with community members and organizers during fieldwork activities. Events were selected based on their potential to provide valuable insights into community engagement practices. Criteria for selection included relevance to the research topic, diversity in organizers and participants, and the opportunity for direct observation and engagement. By attending a range of events (see Table 3.3), from heritage walks to volunteer open days, a comprehensive understanding of different engagement strategies was sought. Data collection involved a combination of active participation and observational techniques. I immersed myself in the activities, engaging with participants and organizers while also maintaining a critical observational stance. Detailed field notes were taken to capture observations, interactions,

and any emergent themes. Additionally, informal conversations and interviews with participants and organizers provided further insights into their experiences and perspectives on heritage and community engagement.

As the researcher, I actively participated in the activities being observed while also taking on the role of an observer. My presence as a participant at the workshops and events provided me with the opportunities to observe other participants engaging with the sites, including their interactions with organizers and each other. I could simply ask questions while participating and observing, which benefited my research by offering more details and contextualized insights. This approach helped me understand not only what participants did but also why they did it and how they felt about it. Observations of people at community engagement events and workshops, Heritage Open Days, Summer Fair, engagement events, and formal observations of the Heritage Partnership meetings organized by the Council, attended in the capacity of an observer-as-participant, were part of the fieldwork. During the fieldwork in Sunderland, both formal and informal observations were conducted. By actively attending the event, even in the role of a bystander, the researcher assumes a participatory stance, actively engaging with the social dynamics of the setting (Jorgensen, 1989). This approach contributed to this research by providing the researcher with first hand exposure to the context, interactions, and nuances of the event, facilitating a deeper understanding of the phenomena under investigation.

Over the course of one year, from July 2021 to July 2022, I attended a total of 12 different engagement events, each offering unique insights into heritage, conservation, and community involvement. The Sunderland HAZ Relaunch at the 3L Blocks marked the initiation of this immersive research journey. It served as my inaugural introduction to the community and their engagement with heritage professionals and events.

Events such as the Fish Wives Tea offered a glimpse into local traditions and culture through the medium of afternoon tea. Similarly, the Walking Tour of Historic Sunderland and the Memory Tour of Old Sunderland and the East End led by guides and volunteers, introduced history of the area and HAZ project. During these tours, participants not only learned about the historical significance of the visited places but also had the opportunity to share their own memories and personal connections to the area.

Volunteer Open Day (Objects Workshop) offered valuable insights into more informal and interactive approaches to community engagement. The event departed from traditional formats, fostering a sense of inclusivity and creativity among participants.

By attending and actively participating in these events while maintaining a critical observational stance, I was able to capture a multifaceted view of community engagement practices in Sunderland. The data collected from these experiences provided a rich foundation for analysis, allowing for a nuanced exploration of the effectiveness and impact of different engagement strategies on community involvement.

Through informal observation and informal conversations at various events and workshops in Sunderland, I was able to deepen my understanding of different manifestations of the meanings of local heritage and the ways they are communicated through everyday life. Thus, informal observations were applied to corroborate responses from the qualitative research (Kvale 2007, 45). People develop profound attachment to places through the use of those places (Brown et.al, 2012). The observations were intended to explain in what ways the meanings of heritage are articulated and through which medium, as suggested by the work of Harvey (2001). Both were used to identify a diversity of underlying cultural meanings that people attached to place, and that therefore influenced their sense of belonging and relationship with the place and its other residents.

I took advantage of being immersed in the local community and benefited from ongoing informal encounters during the entire period of the fieldwork. I would always reveal my research role whenever feasible, especially in the context of personal encounters (Babbie 2001). As a first step to establishing communication with people visiting the sites within HAZ, I would introduce myself to the visitors and have a small conversation about their motivations to visit and their connection to the site.

The observer role placed me close to real data or sources of real data allowing for the discovery of new facts and the creation of new ideas through observation and engagement with people being observed (Gans 1991). However, there was a paradox in that observation causing problems when attempting to comprehend the required level of commitment when working in the field. However, maintaining a balanced level of engagement was crucial to prevent excessive personal involvement and sympathetic bias towards the observed group.

To provide a clearer understanding of the observed events and their contexts, the following table (Table 3.3) outlines key activities, including their organizers and corresponding dates. These observations were pivotal in gathering real-time data and insights through direct engagement, contributing to the analysis of the interactions and dynamics within the community.

Observed Events	Event Name	Organized by	Date
citizen songwriters Sunderland City Council stories of sanctuary SUNDERLAND	Stories of Sanctuary	Sunderland City Council	July 2021
	Sunderland HAZ Relaunch at the 3L Blocks	Historic England ERS	July 2021
 Exploring Sunderland's Heritage Action Zone – the Historic High Street Sat, 18 Sept, 14:00 Free	The Historic High Street Walk	Seventeen Nineteen as part of Heritage Open Days Led by heritage professionals	Sept 2021

 Fish Wives Tea	Fish Wives Tea	Seventeen Nineteen as part of Heritage Open Days Led by heritage professionals	Sept 2021
OCT 10 	Walking Tour: Historic Sunderland	Seventeen Nineteen Led by volunteers	Oct 2021
 Sales Ended RECORDING: Conservation challenges in historic Sunderland From £5.00	Sunderland Walk	Save Britain Led by an academic who is from Sunderland	Oct 2021

	Caring for Holy Trinity- Conservation Day	Seventeen Nineteen Led by an expert	Nov 2021
	Memory Tour of Old Sunderland and the East End (Digital Tour)	Seventeen Nineteen Led by volunteers	Jan 2022
	Sunderland Maritime Heritage Visit	Sunderland Maritime Heritage Led by volunteers	Jan 2022

	Volunteer Open Day (referred as Objects Workshop in my discussion on this event)	Seventeen Nineteen Led by an artist	Feb 2022
	Songs of the Streets	We Make Culture Performed by singers	June 2022
 Celebrating Sunderland's Heritage Action Zone- Custodian tour Sat, 23 Jul, 14:00 Check ticket price on event	Custodian Tour	Seventeen Nineteen Led by the former caretaker of the	July 2022

		former Holy Trinity Church	

Table 3.3 Details of Observed Workshops

3.3.2.1 Ethnographic Approach and Material Culture Analysis

The ethnographic methods are used in this research with a focus on observing how people interact with objects. Thinking with, and through, the material as a means to understand cultural practices is crucial for ethno-archaeological explorations of what people might have done with things in particular contexts (Harrison, 2011). In the realm of material culture studies, anthropology has extensively employed participant observation as an ethnographic method to explore how objects 'frame' everyday life (Miller, 1987). Sociological research has also embraced this method as means to shift the focus from objects as passive entities to also becoming an empirical 'process of engagement' (Michael, 2012: 167). Although ethnographic approaches are often not explicitly categorized as 'mixed methods,' they offer diverse perspectives to comprehend material phenomena. One such method is object elicitation which facilitates the exploration of people's narratives and memories (Hoskins, 1998). Understanding how people talk about things, articulate their relationship to things, develop meaningful relationships with them, these could be anything they choose, is crucial for critically examining the multiple meanings people attribute to objects or places. For instance, one of the interviewees (L7) was a former fisherman and upholsterer. He had transformed his past into an object using his skillset and locally sourced materials. An acquaintance of his had provided large scallop seashells, about 10cm in width, which he used as a stand. He had filled the inner surface of the scallop with white spray foam to create a water feature, splashed it with blue paint, placed a clipper ship or a fishing boat sailing out on the ocean to catch some fish, and had added cardboard sharks prowling in the ocean. A person's possessions can reveal one's character, interests, and quality of life if they are interpreted carefully (Grassby, 2005). The making of the ship models had been his way to materialize his memories and personal history. By exploring how the interviewee transformed his memories and personal history into material objects, the research

illustrated the intricate relationship between individuals and the material world. This approach allowed for a deeper understanding of how people attribute meaning to objects and how those objects become intertwined with personal identity and lived experiences.

Arts-Led Methodologies for Accessing Tacit Knowledge

As part of traditional methods, this research incorporates arts-led methodologies to access "tacit" information. According to Tsoukas (2002), opens up 'undiscovered avenues of understanding' (Estrella and Forinash, 2007: 381). This has the power to reveal the unseen and bring to light things that have been repressed and silenced (Taylor, 2002). This supports Taylor and Ladkin's (2009) claim that arts-based techniques may help participants grasp the "essence" of an idea, situation, or tacit knowledge in a specific way, exposing depths and linkages that more propositional and linear developmental orientations cannot. O'Brien (2016) argues that accessing tacit knowledge would enable participants to communicate the 'unthought known'. Arts-led research methodologies let us investigate feelings, sometimes ultimately captured as text. These methods attempt to capture the sensations, emotions and reactions to performances and representations of 'the local', encompassing a broader set of responses. The suggestion here is that the diversity of responses elicited through arts-led research can increase opportunities for exchange and communication (O'Brien, 2015). The use of the arts for inquiry is justified by a variety of claims, including that we know more than we can express and that the arts reach the whole spectrum of human emotion and contribute to our understanding in a more comprehensive way than words alone (Polanyi, 1983 [1966]). Arts-based inquiry, according to Karen Estrella and Michele Forinash (2007: 377), enables us to examine marginalised, contentious, and disruptive views that are sometimes overlooked in more conventional research methods. Rather than generating distance, these methods facilitate the process of overcoming it (Estrella and Forinash, 2007: 381– 2).

Application of Ethnographic and Arts-Led Methods

How people talk about things is a way to create and extend meaningful relationships towards things (Shankar, 2006: 297). Ian Woodward's (2001) exploration of how people provide a narrative context for objects showing why it is crucial to examine the relationship between what people say and what they do with things. To investigate the material culture

of a specific community, this research employed an ethnographic approach. Participant observation served as the primary method for observing how people interact with objects during object workshops took place at Seventeen Nineteen, the former Holy Trinity Church. Inspired by the concept of 'Cultural probes' (Gaver et al., 2004), the artist initiated reflections on the significance of various objects by providing participants with a selection of items found in the church during the conservation process. Participants were encouraged to choose an item and share their interpretations in order to gather information about people's lives, values, and culture in a non-invasive way. Analysing how people described and interpreted objects, traces of former cultural activities in their surroundings, how they drew from their own knowledge, and the discussions these objects sparked made an important contribution to my data collection. Object elicitation also used as a method to elicit narratives and memories related to objects during the one-to-one interviews. Vaara, Tienari and Säntti (2003) have suggested that such methods elicit different kinds of thinking from people who have not found voices through traditional mechanisms. This is because such methods enable us to explore the places that we do not usually go to comfortably, releasing what Taylor (2002: 827) describes as ‘aesthetic muteness’, where ‘discourse about the aesthetic aspect of day-to-day experience is not legitimate’.

Object elicitation is also employed to extract narratives and memories related to objects during one-to-one interviews.

3.4 Data Analysis

During the empirical phase in Sunderland, semi-structured interviews and observations were conducted to understand how various stakeholders perceive, interpret, and negotiate the heritage of the area. Thematic analysis, as described by Braun and Clarke (2006), was employed to identify, analyse, and report themes within the data, aligning with the research aims. The purpose of thematic analysis is to identify, analyse, and report themes within data and search across a data set to find repeated patterns of meaning (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is relevant to this research as it helps to find out the themes and identify the influencing factors in decision-making process. The empirical data was analysed in light of the conceptual framework, revealing insights into the dynamic nature of heritage and the role of community. The analysis procedure, divided into six main steps, facilitated a comprehensive examination of the empirical data.

Procedure of Thematic Network Analysis:

According to Braun and Clarke (2006, p.87), the procedure of thematic analysis is divided into six main steps.

Step 1 ***Familiarisation with the data****:* Transcribing and reading the data;

The interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed, and coded into thematic codes using Nvivo software. Coding the interview transcripts was a crucial step in analysing the qualitative data. This process involved developing a coding framework, which served as a systematic approach to categorizing and analysing the data (Attrides-Stirling, 2001). The coding framework was created based on a thorough review of the literature and initial insights gained from the data. It aimed to capture key themes, concepts, and patterns relevant to the research objectives.

Step 2 ***Generating initial codes***: Coding the data systematically and collating data relevant to each code;

- ***Generating initial codes***

This step involved transforming the codes from interviews and documents as initial themes. Through the coding framework, all initial codes were grouped into similar clusters. A record was kept of the various codes, the emerging themes, and the reference to the specific quotations that established each theme (such as interviewee name and interview quotes) (Attrides-Stirling, 2001). The coding also focused on commonalities, differences, and contradictions across the interview and observation data. For the interviews, codes were developed based on the most common responses. I began with an initial set of codes derived from the research questions and objectives, which were *community engagement structures, notion of heritage, attachments to place*, and *official heritage frameworks*. These codes were refined and expanded as new themes emerged during the data analysis process. The framework was continuously reviewed and revised to ensure it accurately captured the richness and complexity of the data.

Step 3 ***Searching for themes***: Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme;

Step 4 ***Reviewing themes***: Checking the themes and generating a thematic map;

Step 5 ***Defining and naming themes***: refining the specifics of each theme, and generating clear definitions and names for each theme;

Once the coding framework was finalized, it was applied systematically to the interview transcripts. Each transcript was read, transcribed, and then coded line-by-line according to the predefined codes within the framework. The process involved identifying meaningful segments of text and assigning appropriate codes based on their content.

The coded data were then analysed thematically to identify recurring patterns, themes, and insights relevant to the research objectives. This involved organizing and synthesizing the coded segments into meaningful clusters and exploring the relationships between different themes. The analysis was guided by the principles of constant comparison and theoretical saturation to ensure rigor and validity in the interpretation of the data.

Definition of Heritage

This theme explored the perspectives, interpretations, and meanings attributed to the concept of heritage by both heritage professionals and local community members within the context of the HAZ project area.

Understanding the Approach of the HAZ Project

This theme focused on key professionals' understanding, perspectives, and assessments of the overall approach and strategies implemented within the Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) project.

Engagement with the HAZ

Within this theme, I examine locals' experiences, perceptions, and interactions with the Heritage Action Zone project, including their levels of awareness, involvement, and satisfaction with various project activities and initiatives.

Involvement of Locals in the Process

Within this theme, I explored key professionals' views, experiences, and efforts regarding the engagement, participation, and collaboration of local communities in various aspects of the HAZ project.

Factors Influencing the Outcome of Heritage Regeneration

This theme delved into key professionals' insights, evaluations, and analysed of the multifaceted factors and influences that shape the outcomes and effectiveness of heritage regeneration initiatives within the HAZ.

These themes provided a structured framework for analysing the perspectives, experiences, and insights of both key professionals and local community members within the context of the HAZ project. They help organize and categorize data according to the specific sub-categories identified for each group of interviewees, facilitating a comprehensive exploration of the research topics.

> **Step 6** ***Producing the report***: relating the analysis back to the research question and literature, and producing a report of the analysis.

The analysis revealed insights addressing research aims and questions. A body of literature highlighting the idea of constant rethinking and redefinition of cultural values by different agents, indicating that heritage is subject to ongoing interpretation and negotiation, was used to explore these concepts during in interviews and observations in Sunderland. To examine the emerged themes, the research employed the conceptualization of heritage as a process and participatory cultural phenomenon, emphasizing it is evolving natured by the active involvement of various individuals and groups. The dialogical model of heritage, which emphasizes dialogue, interconnectedness, and inclusive decision-making was also drawn upon (Harrison, 2013). The data collected during interviews and observations were analysed in light of the conceptual framework, revealing insights into the dynamic nature of heritage and the role of physical elements in its construction and interpretation. Findings indicated that heritage values are continuously shaped and renegotiated by various actors, and the physical presence of places and objects serves as a crucial anchor in this process. Building on these findings, the below section address the specific objectives of the research:

Investigating How Historic Buildings Are Repurposed

My analysis investigated the motivations driving heritage-led regeneration initiatives in Sunderland, particularly within the context of the Heritage Action Zone (HAZ).

Understanding the Structural Framework and Dynamics of Engagement

I explored the role of community activities within the HAZ in shaping perceptions of heritage among local residents.

Exploring Emotional and Experiential Attachments to Heritage

My analysis revealed the significant role of emotional and experiential attachments in fostering a sense of place and belonging within the Sunderland community.

Assessing Broader Impacts of Heritage-Led Regeneration

The researched explored the impact of heritage regeneration initiatives within the HAZ that were identified through my analysis. The analysis delved into the multifaceted landscape of heritage-led regeneration within the Sunderland HAZ, revealing an interplay of barriers that impede community ownership and meaningful engagement.

3.4.1 Document Analysis

Qualitative content analysis of documents based on themes concerning conservation approach and community engagement is being conducted, which provided a wealth of data that triangulated with the other sources. Collecting site publications provided a talking point with the research participants. The desk study also resulted in numerous archived materials such as project reports and articles.

The interviewer also sought additional documents with permission from the interviewees after the interviews. The documents included planning and design proposals, government reports, and surveys relevant to the HAZ project. Conducting interviews with people from various groups and using multiple sources and data collection methods allows seeing different angles and crosscheck data. In order to put my empirical research into the wider context, I used a qualitative content analysis of documents based on themes concerning ‘regeneration’, ‘notion of heritage’, ‘sense of belonging’, and ‘community’. Document

analysis demonstrated in what context communities are mentioned and analysis of these documents enabled me to identify how 'communities' are defined. I also searched for the different meanings which people attach to their historic sites and analyse the relationship between values ascribed to the regenerated areas by experts work in the project and by the local community.

Discussion

In conclusion, the thematic analysis provides a nuanced understanding of heritage dynamics within the Sunderland HAZ, shedding light on the complexities and opportunities inherent in heritage-led regeneration initiatives. This nuanced understanding arises from the methodological approach and conceptual framework employed in the research. By viewing heritage as a participatory and evolving process, the study captured the multi-layered interactions between physical sites, intangible cultural values, and the diverse agents shaping them. The complexities emerge from the interplay of motivations, emotions, and institutional frameworks that influence heritage-led regeneration. The Sunderland HAZ serves as a lens through which these dynamics are illustrated—showing how historic buildings act not just as physical remnants of the past, but as active participants in present-day urban and social transformations.

By addressing the multifaceted landscape of engagement, emotional attachments, and broader impacts, this research contributes to the advancement of theory and practice in heritage conservation and community development.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations play a pivotal role in ensuring the integrity, confidentiality, and welfare of research participants, as well as the responsible conduct of research. In this section, the ethical principles guiding the research process within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) are addressed.

3.5.1 Informed Consent

Prior to the commencement of data collection activities, informed consent was obtained from all participants involved in the research. Participants were provided with detailed

information regarding the purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits of the study, empowering them to make voluntary and informed decisions about their participation.

3.5.2 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Measures were taken to safeguard the confidentiality and anonymity of research participants. All data collected, including interview transcripts and observational notes, were stored securely, and accessed only by authorized researchers. Personal identifying information was anonymized to protect the privacy of participants.

3.5.3 Voluntary Participation

Participation in the research was entirely voluntary, and participants were assured of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or consequence. No coercion or undue influence was exerted upon participants to participate in the research activities, and their decision to participate or withdraw was respected without prejudice.

3.5.4 Respect for Participants' Rights and Dignity

The research was conducted in accordance with the principles of respect for participants' rights, dignity, and cultural sensitivity. Researchers demonstrated sensitivity to the diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences of participants within the Sunderland community, ensuring that their voices were heard and respected throughout the research process.

3.6.5 Ethical Approval

Ethical approval for the research protocol was obtained from the relevant ethics committee prior to the commencement of data collection activities in 2019. The research protocol was designed and implemented in compliance with ethical guidelines and standards set forth by the academic institution.

3.6 Reflections on the Research Process

It is important to note here that the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions prompted a necessary adjustment in my fieldwork plans. While originally intended to conduct research in Blaenavon and Ironbridge, logistical challenges stemming from the pandemic led to a reevaluation of my approach. Consequently, Sunderland was

chosen as the pilot study location due to its close proximity and status as a post-industrial site. During the pilot study, I realized that Sunderland was a good fit for my research due to the strong attachment residents had to the place. Despite this unforeseen change, preliminary fieldwork undertaken in Blaenavon and Ironbridge provided valuable insights into various aspects and approaches within industrial contexts.

In the case of my research project in Sunderland, due to pandemic-related restrictions, it was not feasible to conduct the planned fieldwork that involved physical site visits and direct observation. The interviewing process unfolded across different stages to accommodate evolving research conditions. Initially, interviews were conducted via Zoom and Microsoft Teams due to COVID-19 restrictions. As safety measures eased, the methodology transitioned to include walking interviews, which provided a safe outdoor alternative. Subsequently, as restrictions gradually lifted further, in-person one-on-one interviews were conducted. This phased approach allowed for flexibility and adaptation to changing circumstances while ensuring the integrity and safety of the research process.

However, it is important to acknowledge that solely relying on information provided by stakeholders had its limitations. The absence of physical presence on-site restricted my ability to make direct observations and gather data in the preferred manner until the restrictions removed. Moreover, information not explicitly disclosed by stakeholders could not be captured, potentially resulting in gaps in the collected data. Nonetheless, the remote interviews provided an effective alternative approach that allowed me to initiate my fieldwork and gather valuable data under the prevailing circumstances. The use of digital platforms such as Zoom underscores their potential usefulness in academic research and highlights their role as tools for data collection in situations where traditional fieldwork is not possible. Starting with remote interviews offered unforeseen advantages. It was fascinating how individuals' depiction of a site can influence our anticipations and conceptions of it. In the case of your research project in Sunderland, conducting remote interviews with stakeholders allowed me to form a mental picture of the site based on their descriptions. However, actually experiencing the site for myself have provided a different perspective and challenged some of the initial expectations while validating others. This experience highlighted the importance of taking a multi-faceted approach to fieldwork and

gathering data from different sources in order to form a more complete and nuanced understanding of the research topic.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, most researchers have had to change their data collection methods to keep themselves and participants safe, and to follow by government restrictions and laws. I had to redesign the methodology and shift to online interviews due to the unprecedented challenge for in-person interviews and ethnographical fieldwork that COVID-19 pandemic has posed. Although online interviews serve as a lifeline to make research possible, the pandemic also exposed existing inequalities. The first challenge I encountered was not to being able reach out to the locals although the heritage professionals I interviewed kindly shared some of their volunteers contact information. This made me realize the difficulty of conducting remote fieldwork with interviewees who are not familiar with the technological tools, sometimes do not even have internet access. The locals I was able to interview online were not familiar with digital tools either. They had their granddaughter to set it up. We had to make arrangement according to her availability.

3.6.1 Sampling

During the course of my research, I encountered challenges in reaching out to certain communities. One of the methods employed, snowball sampling, and though was beneficial in accessing specific groups, but it also revealed limitations in its application. Despite its potential for gathering insights from interconnected networks, it became evident that this approach did not adequately facilitate engagement with all target communities. Creswell (2013) highlights the inherent bias of snowball sampling, wherein participants are recruited based on referrals rather than random selection.

3.6.2 Gatekeepers

> "Within this process, gatekeepers have a key role to ensure researchers gain access to potential participants and sites for research. Positive influences of the gatekeepers can be invaluable to the research process by facilitating the smooth running of research activity to completion." (McFadyen and Rankin, 2016)

During the research process, a significant challenge emerged in establishing connections with important local figures. In an effort to engage with the local community, during the expert interviews, I explicitly expressed the need for contacts who could offer insights into

the cultural nuances and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research context. However, I was only directed to a volunteer group actively involved in the community.

Despite the positive contributions of the recommended volunteer group, there were active locals, including the keeper of the church, who proved to be invaluable to my research but were not initially referred or put in touch through the provided contacts. To establish connections with these stakeholders, I had to independently identify and reach out to them.

3.6.3 Positionality

Being an outsider threw up its own set of experiences, observations and challenges. As someone who visually deviated from the norm, it was immediately evident that the interviewees exhibited reluctance in initiating conversation with me. This hesitation could be attributed to their surprise in witnessing my interest in their heritage. However, upon introducing myself and assuring them of my genuine curiosity of what they have to say, they became more receptive and forthcoming with their responses. In some cases being an outsider proved advantageous, as they perceived me to be impartial and not judgmental towards them. None of the local resident interviewees expressed any empathy towards the heritage experts they had previously interacted with. Furthermore, those who had not engaged with such experts conveyed a sense of animosity towards them for disregarding their presence. (Field notes, 2021)

Summary

Having considered the justification for the case study rationale and the identification of various stakeholders, the use of an ethnographic approach enabled the ability to maintain close and frequent contact with events, engagements, and opportunities relating to heritage. A participant observation approach provided a familiarisation with the participants and continual interaction and identification of key stakeholders. Supplementary methods of semi-structured interviews and the use of official documentation provided further depth and opportunities of data collection derived from initial observations.

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Chapter 4: An Introduction to Sunderland

Whether it was the River Wear which made Sunderland or Sunderland that made the River Wear may be difficult to decide.

Milburn and Miller, 1988

Figure 4.1 Sunderland, 1917. Source: Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums.

This chapter provides a timeline of key historical events and changes in Sunderland to introduce the history of the case study area and provide some context. This chapter sheds light on the how Sunderland transformed by process of industrialization, deindustrialization and reindustrialization. Development programmes and their impact on the heritage sites and the wider city will be reviewed. Instead of looking at the history and multiple layers of the city as though they are separate, the aim is to seek out the entwinements, contingencies, and understanding how they are connected. The chapter begins with an overview of Sunderland's industrial history. It also touches on the slum clearance efforts that shaped the urban environment in the 20th century, addressing the need for housing and social improvement during industrial decline. Following this historical background, the chapter moves into a review of the redevelopment programs that were introduced in response to the decline of industries like coal mining, shipbuilding, and textiles. These efforts, aimed at regenerating the urban landscape and addressing socio-economic decline, form a crucial part of the city's post-industrial narrative. Through this discussion, the chapter seeks to contextualize Sunderland's evolution from an industrial hub to a modern city grappling with issues of urban regeneration and heritage conservation.

4.1 Rise and fall of Sunderland Industries

Tyne and Wear County has a strong industrial past and an international reputation for shipbuilding. The Tyne and the Wear in the Northeast England were both important medieval ports, however their present form resulted from the industrial revolution in one of its first locations. The development of the Wear started in the early eighteenth century with the establishment of the River Wear Commission in 1717. A series of river improvements and harbour works were carried out for 200 years culminating by the First World War in river and harbour containing a good deal of coal and general dock facilities but primarily focused on shipbuilding (Imrie and Thomas, 1999). Tyne and Wearsiders thought of themselves as seafaring people— those who made ships and sailed them (Finlay et al., 2020). The port of Sunderland by the River Wear developed from the 1850s onwards and led to a vast increase in trade in the latter half of the century (HAZ Delivery Report 2019). Three settlements, Monkwearmouth, Bishopwearmouth, and Sunderland, coalesced to make up today's Sunderland.

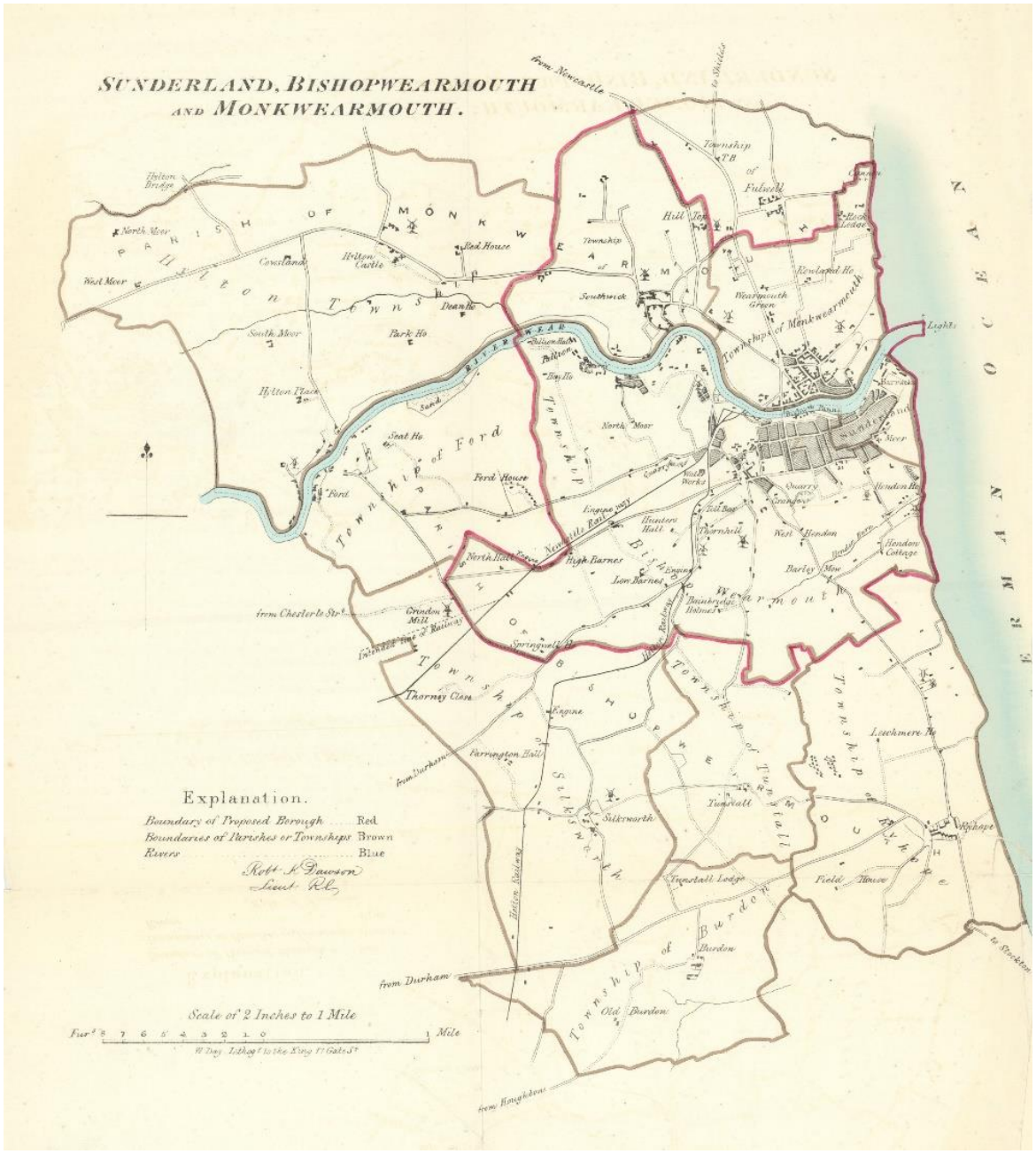

Figure 4.2 Sunderland, Bishopwearmouth and Monkwearmouth, Date 1832. Source: Robin Middleton Personal Collection.

The current Sunderland city centre was historically Bishopwearmouth. The old town of Sunderland was initially located on the south bank of the River mouth. The town developed and proliferated during the industrial era of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with the expansion of coal mining, chemical and glass industries, and shipbuilding (Finlay et al., 2020). Old Sunderland was, in its industrial heyday, one of the busiest, most vibrant parts of town. [10] In Sunderland, the maritime component was vital. Today the former location of the

[10] The borough of Sunderland was granted city status in 1992.

city is referred to as the ‘East End’ or ‘Old Sunderland’ and is home to the port of Sunderland, including the Sunderland quayside and the docks, stretching south to Hendon. The area is now a relatively quiet residential zone with riverside apartments and dockside housing estates (BCA Report 2015). Wearside's population and urban expansion were driven by the success of coal export, mining, and shipbuilding in the 19th century (Cookson 2015). Shipbuilding had modernized intensively. In 1900, shipbuilders on the Wear, Tyne and Tees dominated a British Industry, which supplied the two thirds of the world’s merchant ships. In 1918, one third of male population was engaged in shipbuilding or a related trade. While dominance in shipbuilding was a great source of pride for the north easterners, ‘it was an Achilles heel’ (Cookson 2015). It was at the root of the inter-war problem.

> It is perhaps hard for us to realise after the years of the inter-war depression that for sixty years before 1914, the Durham (and Northumberland) pitmen and the shipyard workers of the Tyne and Wear were among the most highly paid workers in the world outside the USA . . . The decline into the poverty of the inter-war years was from the heights to the depths.
>
> (W.M. Hughes, British Association for the Advancement of Science Meeting, Durham, 1970) (Byrne, 2002)

Wearside's economy and commitment to the war effort remained mainly based on shipbuilding. Dependence on the staple industries of coal exporting and shipbuilding left Sunderland vulnerable in the inter-war years (Miller et al. 2010). The country had to reorganize their industries to ensure the optimum production capacity to aid the war effort. From September 1939 to the end of 1944, 27 per cent of the total output of merchant shipping from all British shipyards was completed (Millburn et al. 1988). Capacity had increased to meet the needs of wartime, but the demand collapsed after the wars. Little had been accomplished during wartime investment to rebuild the town’s economy. The report highlighted that "There are virtually no new industry structures," the town clerk reported. (Milburn;Miller and Sunderland Borough, 1988).

After the war, as the production rose globally, it became more difficult for British yards to compete. The export markets lost during the war were retained by rivals; North-east yards had not kept up with technological advancements; the rocky channel of the Wear was not a practical location for a large deep-water harbour; Sunderland's riverside area was dominated by shipyards and coal facilities, making it difficult to develop other industries.

Newcastle's close proximity also limited the extent of Sunderland's internal industrialism and the types of commerce and manufacture that could have added diversity to the town (Cookson 2015). More yards were closed and merged throughout the 1950s and 60s. Coal mining, sister industry of shipbuilding in Sunderland, declined rapidly in the late 20th century. The collieries disappeared between 1966 and 1993 with all the means, quays, drops, staiths, and railways, by which coal had been exported (Cookson, 2015 #379). The number of people working in the yards was almost halved from 1978 to 1984 (Sunderland City Council Archive).[11] The wave of layoffs revealed that the industry was in serious trouble. In collaboration with the unions, Tyne & Wear County Council mounted a 'Save Our Shipyards' campaign in 1983 and 1984.[12] It had widespread community support and sparked debate in the House of Parliament. Former MP for Jarrow Don Dixon raised the subject in his speech on 31 March 1983 (Shipbuilding (Tyne and Wear) 1983).

> First, I pay tribute to Tyne and Wear county council and especially to its leader, Councillor Michael Campbell, for its current campaign to save the shipyard in its area. That is a credit to the locally elected representatives, who, unlike the Government, are not sitting back and watching the death of one of our oldest and most important basic industries.

The two remaining shipyard groups were merged in 1980. However, despite strong opposition, the PM announced on 7 December 1988 that the Wear shipyards yards were to close[13] (Sunderland City Council Archive). The last colliery in the Wearmouth area was shut down in 1993. In Sunderland, the closure of shipyards in 1988 and the last colliery in 1993 reflected the harsh realities of industrial decline felt throughout the nation. These closures led to widespread job losses, economic hardship, and social upheaval in communities that had long relied on these industries for employment and livelihoods. The ripple effects of deindustrialization were felt not only in Sunderland but in industrial towns and cities across the UK, marking a profound shift in the country's economic landscape.

[11] In 1978, 7535 people worked in the yards. By 1984, this figure was reduced to 4337.
[12] Oral History Collective at Newcastle University interviewed the workers from Swan Hunter on the Tyne and Austin & Pickersgill on the Wear, their families, union leaders and local politicians, for two short films known collectively as the 'Shipyard Tapes'.
[13] BBC News article "Last Wearside shipyard is sunk"

The closure of shipyards and collieries in Sunderland during the late 20th century was emblematic of the broader deindustrialization trend that swept across the UK. During this period, the country faced significant economic challenges as traditional industries struggled to compete with global markets and adapt to technological advancements. Factors such as cheaper overseas labour, declining demand for coal and steel, and shifts in government policies all contributed to the decline of industries that once formed the backbone of the UK's economy.

4.2 Reindustrialization: Capitalizing on industrial culture

In the wake of Sunderland's industrial collapse in the late 20th century, the broader North East of England experienced a profound and far-reaching process of deindustrialization. This region, once synonymous with thriving coal mines, bustling shipyards, and robust heavy engineering sectors, found itself grappling with the stark reality of widespread job losses and economic decline (Garrahan 2017). The loss of these foundational industries not only eroded the region's employment base but also challenged its identity and economic resilience. The impacts of deindustrialization reverberated throughout the North East, as communities faced the daunting task of transitioning away from industries that had long been integral to their livelihoods. The decline of mining, shipbuilding, and heavy engineering sectors dealt a heavy blow to the region's economy, leaving many workers unemployed and communities struggling to adapt to a new economic landscape.

The North East similar to other ‘rustbelt’ regions, has experienced the trauma of change and attempts by the government to offset its adverse effects (Robinson, 2002). Regional policy has facilitated a process of reindustrialization, and multi-national companies have located operations in the North East. Companies set up plants for a variety of factors, such as lower costs of land and labour, the availability of workers in an area of high unemployment, as well as regional policy incentives (Robinson, 2002). The loss of Sunderland’s traditional manufacturing industries resulted in the city losing a quarter of its jobs between 1975 and 1989. The new industries included automotive manufacturing, digital, financial and customer services and much of it based in out-of-town business parks and City Centre shopping areas (HAZ Delivery Report 2019). The nature of Sunderland's industrial heritage substantially influenced the new industries that are growing there, which indicates that deindustrialization and reindustrialization are interlinked rather than being distinct

processes (Stone 1993). Companies such as German-Swiss equipment producer Liebherr have come to Sunderland to take advantage of the remains of Sunderland shipbuilding. However, the jobs they bring were only a few hundred. Nissan Automotive, opened in 1986, is still the largest employer in Sunderland. Sunderland is now noted for its car industry.

Although reindustrialization had helped make up for the decline and loss of the old industries by generating a new industrial sector, Robinson (2002) reported that barely a fifth of jobs was in manufacturing, despite claims that the North East is a manufacturing region, 'where people make things'. The new workplaces were not on a scale to match the old industries they looked to replace and did not compensate for the losses in traditional sectors (Cookson 2015).

4.3 Slum Clearances

The Housing Act 1930 required council to devise a slum clearance plan (Yelling, 2000).[14] A coordinated annual scheme of slum clearances began in the 1930s and residents were moved to estates of new housing.

[14] In 1936, over 20 per cent of the population in Sunderland lived in overcrowded conditions, while national average was 3.8 per cent (Cookson 2015).

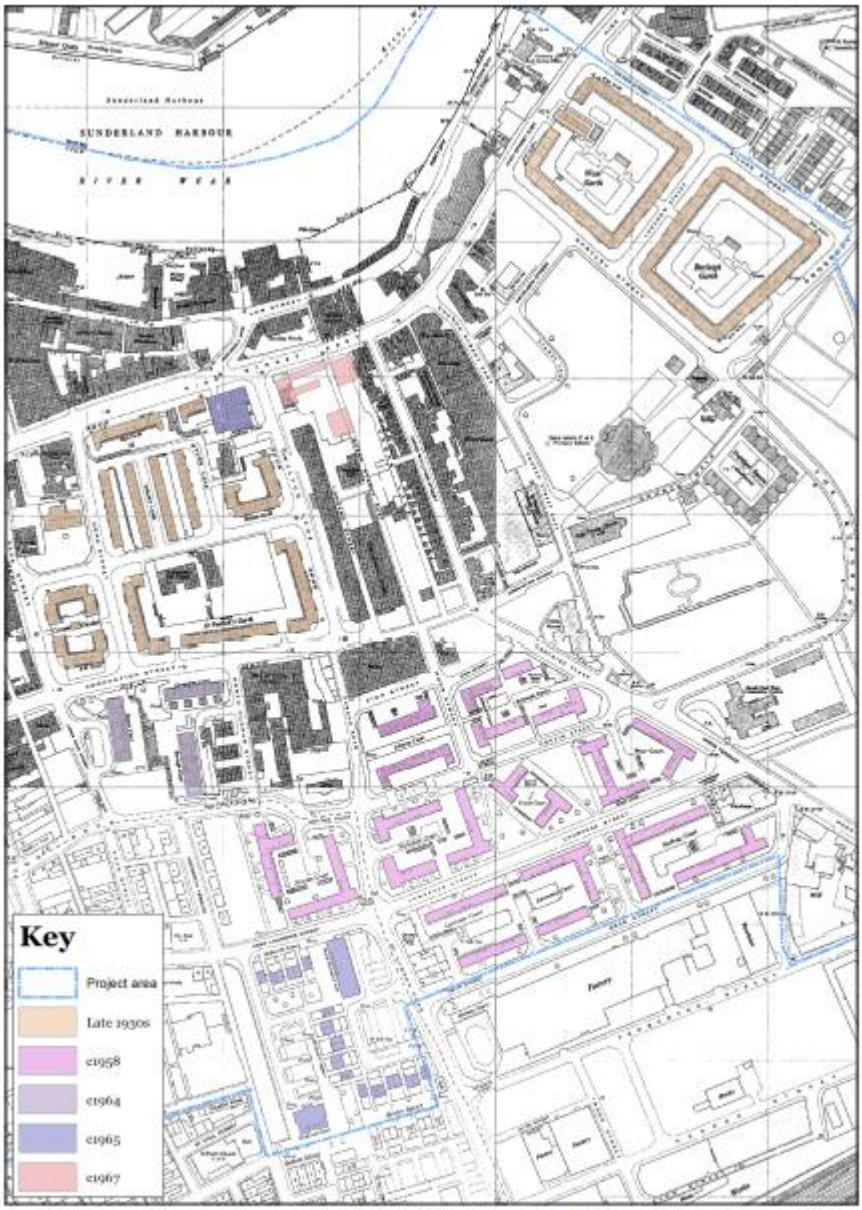

Fig 26: Phases of redevelopment in the East End of Sunderland from 1937 to the late 1960s. Ordnance Survey 1:1,250 published 1963, 1967, 1968 and 1977 © and database right Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd (All rights reserved 2018) Licence numbers 000394 and TP0024.

Figure 4.3 Phases of redevelopment in the East End of Sunderland. © National Library of Scotland Database.

The North Eastern Housing Association (NEHA) was established by the government in 1936 to assist local councils in the most impoverished areas with housing costs. As the large portions of Sunderland's East End were categorized as slum, many of the East End's terraced streets had been replaced by large blocks of low-rise social housing, known as the Garths, in the Moderne style, which combines conventional and Art Deco elements (Jessop and Oakey, 2018). The Garths were constructed between 1937 and 1940 by the recently set up NEHA

(Pevsner 1983). During the development of the area some of the streets were removed and the roads around the Garths appeared to have been remodelled and widened (Oakey, 2018).[15] The largest developments were Wear and Burleigh Garths, located between Silver Street and Hartley Street.

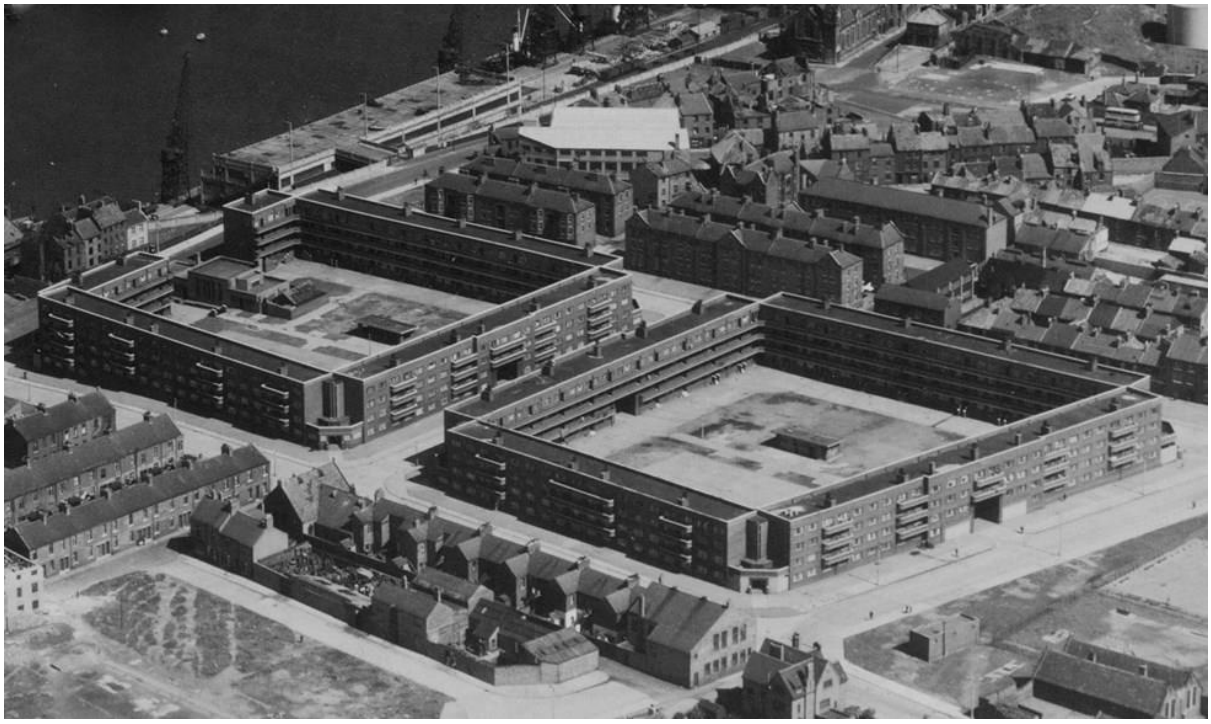

Figure 4.4 Wear Garth (left) and Burleigh Garth (right), depicted in 1948, when they were little more than a decade or so old. © RAF/540/A/396/SFFO-0291 05-JUL-1948 (detail), Historic England Archive RAF Photography.

Both were quadrangular in plan, four storeys high, and included continuous access balconies on the internal elevations and smaller balconies on the street-facing facade. (Figure 4.4) The balconies and shared outdoor areas of the Garths stood in stark contrast to the previously existing tenants' congested and unhygienic living circumstances (Jessop and Oakey, 2018). These housings were largely destroyed in the 1990s. High Garth and River Garth, renamed Bodlewell House and Quayside House, the only surviving examples of the Garths left but

[15] Historic England carried out a project that assessed the aerial photographs of Sunderland ranged in date from 1924 to 2017 in Historic England Archive. The images provide a record of development of the city and document several phases that changed the character of the urban landscape.

both have had their character altered through refurbishment. The others were demolished from 1995 (VCH 2015, 151) and replaced by a mix of houses and flats. Programmes of slum clearance which had seen the construction of the Garths in the late 1930s had been stalled upon the onset of the war (VCH 2015, 164). During World War II, unsurprisingly, Sunderland's docks and shipyards made the city a prime target. On 21 July 1940, the first air strikes hit, and by the war's end in 1945, many parts of the city had been destroyed or rendered inhabitable. Over six hectares of the residential and commercial area had been destroyed. The docks and the East End's densely packed terraced homes were some of the areas that suffered the most severe damage (Jessop and Oakey, 2018).

Figure 4.5 Bomb damage around the riverside and shipyards, as photographed in 1946 © RAF/106G/UK/1598 V 5120 25-JUN-1946 (detail), Historic England Archive RAF Photography.

Dramatic changes occurred in the post-war period. There was substantial investment in the region's infrastructure: new roads, new housing and the redevelopment of urban centres (Robinson, 2002). From the 1950s onwards, a number of redevelopments drastically

changed a significant portion of Sunderland's streetscapes. Providing housing had become the most urgent priority (Cookson, 2015).[16] A national housing crisis exacerbated Sunderland's already acute shortage of decent housing. The town registered high in any index of overcrowding. Programmes of housing demolition and rebuilding had restarted in 1953. Local authority attempted to counter Sunderland's reputation for crowded and unhealthy housing. Removed unfit housing, relocated the households to the outer suburbs, freed land for industrial expansion (Cookson 2015). The council estates offered a level of health and cleanliness. While this improved many people's circumstances, a level of dissatisfaction persisted. The developments in the housing had a major impact on people's lives. Some did not enjoy being uprooted and living on the fringes of the town. Council rents and cost were higher. The suburban estates lacked amenities and adequate transportation (Cookson 2015). The city increasingly dissected and isolated by the roads. Local shopping centres flourished on the outskirts with modern parades situated on several new estates such as Hendon, Pallion, Southwick, and Fulwell (Sinclair 2004).

> A century earlier, the modernization of this industry had refashioned the riverside landscape; now with its death, the town underwent a further physical transformation (Cookson, 2015).

The redevelopment has profoundly shaped Sunderland. The A19 bypass replaced the river as Wearside's main trade route in the early 1970s, and most industrial developments have been built around it. Riverside territory, historically the centre of industry and activity, has fallen into disuse due to modern commerce's obsession with the A19 bypass (Cookson, 2015). Land and buildings near the harbours were problematic for modern needs. As commerce relocated, they could no longer compete with sites that had better access to main roads.

Public administrative functions were moved away from the centre. The retail and commercial cores of the city centre migrated further west, largely because of the Bridges Shopping Centre in the 1970s. Once prestigious the High Street saw a significant decline as a consequence of business relocation, increased vacancy rates, and poor maintenance of

[16] Prefabricated houses were built during post-Second World War housing shortage across the country as prefabs were considered a cost-effective temporary housing solution. The war-time Prime Minister Winston Churchill announced the housing shortage programme in March 1944, and legally outlined in the Housing (Temporary Accommodation) Act 1944.

historic buildings (Historic England, 2020). Other attempts to revitalise the town centre carried on, but locals lamented the destruction of familiar structures. One of the significant losses was Sunderland Town Hall. The locals were upset over the demolition of the beloved building. “The grand old building took three years to build, but was demolished in just 10 weeks,” reported local historian Carol Roberton (Sunderland Echo 2016).

Figure 4.6 Town Hall Demolition, 1971. © Sunderland Echo Newspaper, 2016.

It still is sore point for many. Locals believed that it had been sacrificed for the sake of commercial redevelopment in 1971 (Milburn;Miller and Sunderland Borough, 1988).

Creating new generation of landmarks such as the new Town Hall and Civic Centre was to give *'an image to local government'* and represent modern Sunderland far removed from its heavy industry past. It was geographically remote from the main residential neighbourhoods as well as the commercial district while former Hall marked the centre of the town. The complex's buildings, which were designed by Sir Basil Spence, Bonnington, and Collins, were clustered around a series of hexagonal courts. All of the borough's departments were to be centralised to increase local government efficiency (Millburn et al. 1988). Millburn (1988) postulated that it was a success in terms of architecture and administration, however, questions were being raised about both its function and structure by 1987. For Sunderlanders, the Fawcett Street Town Hall had a charm that the brown brickwork, tiles, paving, and steps of Sunderland lacked (Milburn et al. 1988).

The demolition of the old City Hall marked a significant loss in Sunderland's architectural and civic identity, but it was not an isolated instance in the city's history of transformation. Similarly, the legacy of landmarks such as Binns department store and the aftermath of the Great Fire of 1898 are enduring reminders of the city's ever-changing landscape.

The Binns department store holds a lasting place in Sunderland's heritage, transcending its role as a mere shopping destination. Established by George Binns, a member of the Quaker community, in the early 19th century, the store became a cornerstone of retail on Wearside, with an expansive building on Fawcett Street and numerous branches throughout the North East and Scotland (Sunderland Echo 2022). The site at 173 High Street remained central to Binns operations until 1885, when the business had grown enough to warrant a move to a more expansive building on Fawcett Street (House of Fraser, nd). Its prominence extended into daily life, as the slogan "Shop at Binns" became iconic on local transport.

The store's eventual closure in 1993 marked the end of an era, and the last remaining store in Darlington rebranded to House of Fraser in 2018, marking the end of the Binns name. Today, Binns is remembered in Sunderland as more than just a store.

Yet, the transformation of Sunderland was not limited to the decline of individual businesses; it has also been defined by pivotal moments such as the Great Fire of 1898. The Great Fire of Sunderland erupted on 18 July 1898. Centred in Sunderland's commercial district, the fire began in Havelock House, a prominent drapery establishment occupying a

strategic corner at Fawcett Street, High Street West, and Bridge Street (Jessop, 2018). The fire caused widespread destruction across this dense commercial hub; fortunately, there were no reported fatalities (The Newsroom, 2016).

In total 48 businesses were damaged (The Newsroom, 2016). Hutchinson's Buildings suffered extensive damage, though the iconic domed corner—known as Mackie's Corner—was relatively unscathed, a small but symbolic survival amid the surrounding devastation (Jessop, 2018). In the year following the fire, reconstruction efforts reshaped the city's architectural fabric. Havelock House underwent a complete redesign, adopting a neo-Jacobean aesthetic featuring stone-mullioned windows that evoked early 17th-century architectural styles (ibid.). Additionally, two plots to the east on High Street, between the lane behind Havelock House and John Street, were rebuilt with shaped gables inspired by similar historical references.

Hutchinson's Buildings, meanwhile, required extensive rebuilding on its High Street elevation. Henry Miller Potts, a prominent local architect, was tasked with the design (Jessop, 2018). Recognizing the iconic status of Mackie's Corner—intact and nearly fifty years old—Potts chose to harmonize the new construction with this existing element, maintaining the classical design and thereby preserving the aesthetic integrity of this prominent commercial landmark (ibid.).

The vanished landmarks highlight how spaces and structures, once pivotal to the daily lives of the city's residents, have gradually given way to new developments, marking the evolution of the city's heritage and the ongoing negotiation between memory and progress. The physical absence of such places is a reminder of the landscapes and institutions that have shaped Sunderland, even as their traces, preserved in collective memory, continue to influence the city's cultural identity.

4.4 Regeneration Schemes in Old Sunderland | Visions for ideal city

The recognition of historic buildings and heritage assets as catalysts for regeneration gained momentum in Sunderland, particularly with the city's designation as a Development Area in the 1980s. This status rendered Wearside eligible for Urban Aid and European grants, providing essential resources for revitalization efforts (Cookson 2015). Notable examples of

this approach can be observed in the restoration projects of the Exchange and Eagle buildings in Old Sunderland.

However, despite these efforts, older industries and commercial areas along the river corridors continue to exude an aura of decline and decay. The remnants of heavy industries and commercial activities are juxtaposed with vast expanses of derelict land and redundant buildings, posing significant challenges for adaptation to new uses. Poor road access to the riverside, cramped industrial sites, and limited room for expansion further hinder redevelopment efforts. Consequently, the overall image of these areas remains unattractive to modern industry and potential new uses such as housing, leisure, or tourism.

> The older industries and commercial areas which remain along the river corridors are largely characterised by an aura of decline and decay. The mostly heavy industries and commercial activities which remain are interspersed with large areas of derelict land and redundant buildings which are difficult to adapt for new uses. Road access along and to the riverside is often poor and the general environment is depressing. Industrial sites are often cramped with little room to expand and sites which are available are often relatively small and expensive to develop. The overall image is unattractive both to modern industry and to potential new riverside uses such as housing, leisure or tourism. (Formation of Tyne and Wear Development Corporation, 1987)

The portrayal of these industrial hubs by the Tyne and Wear Development Corporation (TWDC) highlights a shifting perception of the industrial age, now stigmatized as outdated and no longer synonymous with progress or modernity (High and Lewis 2007). This paradigm shift emphasized the need for innovative approaches to repurpose these areas and unlock their potential for sustainable regeneration in the post-industrial era.

In order to revitalize the Rivers Tyne and Wear's waterfront areas to stimulate the economy and attract private investment, the central government founded an urban development corporation called the Tyne and Wear Development Corporation (TWDC) in 1987, revoked in 1998. (TWDC order, 1988) As part of a comprehensive programme of restoration and redevelopment in this run down area, TWDC supported by English Heritage, through a Conservation Area Partnership Scheme in the designated Old Sunderland Riverside

Conservation Area (TWDC Order, 1987).[17] TWDC's major goal was to speed the process of urban regeneration (Wilkinson, 1992). The Corporation with the local partners embarked on an ambitious scheme to restore the Exchange Building[18] to its former glory (TWDC Order, 1987). North East Civic Trust (NECT), in its role as a Building Preservation Trust (BPT), acquired the freehold interest of the building and to carry out the second phase of the restoration programme to bring it back to life. The award of a £2.7 million grant from Heritage Lottery Fund announced in 1997 to complete the works recognised not only the importance of this landmark building to the city of Sunderland but also the role of the building as a catalyst for the regeneration of the historic core of the city.[19]

> At a total cost in excess of £3.5million, this ambitious project to restore and bring back into use Exchange Buildings has restored to the city a building which is synonymous with its history and is providing the confidence and impetus for further regeneration of the area. (Historic England Report, n.d.)

The Eagle Building also had seen to be a vital component in the ambitious programme to regenerate the High Street as it achieved the strategic aims of a number of potential partner organizations, including One NorthEast viewed the area as a regional priority for heritage-led economic regeneration. This initiative followed a history of evolving planning contexts since the post-war period, which saw changing attitudes toward urban renewal, from modernist redevelopment to a focus on heritage and community-based regeneration in later years (One NorthEast 2006). The focus shifted towards using existing assets, such as historical buildings, to stimulate local pride, support economic development, and enhance the urban environment (ibid.).

English Heritage, as well, recognized the contribution of the building to the streetscape and its role as one of the few remaining historical links with old Sunderland to European funding linked to the creation of employment opportunities in this economically deprived part of the city (Historic England Report). The Eagle Building restoration programme received more

[17] After the Second World War, however, these public-private sector partnerships became fundamental to the redevelopment of urban Britain. While the state provided legislation, finance and policy directives, local government worked with the private sector to build social housing, new roads and schools (Shapely, 2013).
[18] The Exchange Building was built in 1814 by the Sunderland Improvement Commissioners as an administrative, commercial and cultural centre for the rapidly developing port area.
[19] "Current Archaeology" AIA Award supplementary information 22nd November 2004.

than £1.8 million funding from a range of partners including the City of Sunderland, English Heritage, the European Regional Development Fund, and English Partnerships. BPT subsequently acquired the unlisted property in 1999 to restore this landmark building and developing managed workspace for start-up businesses.

> The 'landing' of the replica eagle carved from red cedar wood provided an emotive symbol of the regeneration of the historic core of the old city. Representing a tangible investment in the local economy, the project demonstrates that regeneration and conservation can go hand in hand. (Historic England Report, n.d.)

Conservation Area Partnership Scheme was envisioned as a way to secure the future of many of the riverside's historic buildings; many restored from a seriously derelict state to become focal points for economic and physical regeneration. Byrne (1999) compares TWDC with a form of colonial administration. He argues that TWDC's exit strategy was an extension of its 'anti-industrialism' or a succession of post-UDC development strategies undermining the social fabric of North East of England and ignoring the material, cultural, and symbolic significances of places. The criticisms of the role of the TWDC focus on the lack of accountability and misdirected attempts at regenerating Wearside through the property market. It aims at fostering economic revival by removing heavy industries and, `...replacing these with locales and physical structures appropriate for a post-industrial economy' (Healey 1994).

4.5 Community History

The community landscape in Sunderland has evolved over time, closely intertwined with physical changes in the area. Initially, as neighbourhoods expanded or merged, community networks adapted, redrawing social relationships across the city's evolving boundaries (Burbano-Elizondo 2008). This transformation gained momentum with 19th-century industrial growth, which brought waves of migrant labour that shaped Sunderland's early social makeup, leading to the formation of strong, identity-focused enclaves.

Among the earliest migrant communities were Jewish families who, by 1821, founded what would become the oldest Jewish community in the North East (The National Archives, n.d.). This group established a lasting presence, constructing their first synagogue on Moor Street in 1862 before relocating to a larger site on Ryhope Road in 1928 (ibid.).

In the mid-19th century, the Irish community arrived in Sunderland, drawn by the city's expanding shipyards, mines, and other industrial opportunities amid the hardships of the Great Famine (Allen and Allen, 2007). Many Irish immigrants faced geographical and cultural alienation upon arrival, particularly on Tyneside (Hackett, 2009). Entire districts became Irish enclaves, often centred around Catholic churches, as the community sought to preserve its identity in a foreign environment (Cooter, 2005; Hackett, 2009). Scholars highlight the various challenges faced by the Irish community, with Neal (1999) documenting issues of overcrowding and poor health, while Allen et al. (2007) draw attention to significant social tensions of the period, including incidents of civil unrest and anti-Catholic sentiments that affected the Irish community. These incidents illustrate the tensions and challenges within race relations, underscoring that interactions between communities were not always harmonious (Hackett, 2009).

Later waves of migration brought Muslim communities, particularly from South Asia and the Middle East, who settled in industrial regions such as Teesside (Lawless, 1995). Attracted by employment prospects in industries like shipping and steel, these migrants established cohesive communities, founding mosques and cultural organizations to preserve their heritage (ibid.). Hackett (2009) observes that Muslim communities in the Northeast navigated processes of integration and identity formation, contributing to the region's multicultural composition while also encountering occasional social tensions.

Physical changes, such as the mid-20th-century slum clearances in the East End, previously discussed in the chapter, played a crucial role in reshaping Sunderland's community landscape. These initiatives, while aimed at improving living conditions, displaced many long-established working-class families, disrupting tightly-knit social networks and erasing tangible links to the city's industrial past. As communities were uprooted and relocated, they were often forced to rebuild social ties in entirely new settings, leading to shifts in the dynamics of community cohesion and identity.

The community dynamics of Sunderland also reflect the impact of various government programs. For instance, the introduction of the government's dispersal program in 2000, which placed asylum seekers in various parts of the UK, brought a comparatively small number to Sunderland (Finlay et al., 2020). This influx marked another shift in the city's community landscape, adding new diversity and dynamics to local society. However, in

2018, the local council requested a temporary ban on housing additional asylum seekers due to concerns over "social cohesion issues" and local "tensions" (Taylor, 2018). This decision highlights the complexities of Sunderland's demographic and cultural evolution, where each phase of migration has both enriched the community fabric and sparked challenges. As with earlier immigrant groups, the arrival of asylum seekers has influenced Sunderland's social landscape, underscoring the ongoing opportunities and difficulties of integrating new residents into established communities. Another program aimed at reintegrating individuals transitioning from incarceration has also shaped the community landscape. The East End of Sunderland has been among the areas designated for such placements, adding another layer to the social fabric of the neighbourhood. These programs aim to provide opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration but can also create unique challenges for community cohesion. This historical context is important when discussing the dynamics of different communities in Sunderland.

Heritage itself is a temporal construct, often privileging certain past narratives over others. This prioritization can marginalize communities whose histories diverge from dominant heritage discourses. Urban transformations such as migration patterns, government programs, and forced relocations exemplify these exclusions. These initiatives often disrupted long-standing community bonds, displacing residents and erasing physical traces of their shared histories. These initiatives frequently disrupted long-standing community bonds, displacing residents and erasing physical traces of their shared histories. However, they also created opportunities for newcomers to form their own connections, fostering new networks and relationships within the evolving community landscape.

4.6 Summary

Deindustrialization is more than just losing industries. Its loss reshaped a city and had a profound impact on its inhabitants. This brief look into Sunderland's history shows what the industrial represents is altered in transition, which led to loss of industrial heritage. The loss of iconic buildings and street scenes has been keenly felt. Most notable among these was the town hall, but the 1930s Garths tenements and older east end streets have aroused similar reactions. Many in the city, and people much further afield, see family roots and identity in the East End, and have an emotional connection there. Although significant number of public-sector houses have been rebuilt along the streets, most of the shops and

ferries have been closed due to post-war population decline and loss of industry. The port itself remains out of public bounds behind concrete fencing, its renewed prosperity hidden from East End still carrying overwhelming air of decay (Cookson, 2015).

The history of Sunderland's industrial rise and subsequent decline is deeply intertwined with its ongoing regeneration efforts, shaping the city's identity and influencing its path toward revitalization. The city's industrial legacy, characterized by thriving coal mining, shipbuilding, and heavy engineering sectors, laid the groundwork for its economic prosperity in the 19th and early 20th centuries. However, as these traditional industries faltered in the face of global competition and changing economic landscapes, Sunderland faced the harsh realities of deindustrialization in the late 20th century. As traditional sources of employment vanished, Sunderland experienced a period of economic hardship and social upheaval, with many grappling with unemployment, poverty, and dislocation. Sunderland's once-thriving industrial heartland became characterized by derelict buildings, abandoned industrial sites, and a landscape marked by decline and decay. However, amidst these challenges, the city's rich heritage and historic assets emerged as potential catalysts for regeneration.

The city's narrative reflects the profound impact of losing traditional industries, reshaping its identity and physical environment. This transformation, marked by the closure of iconic buildings and the disappearance of familiar street scenes, has left a lasting imprint on the collective memory of Sunderland's residents. The loss of industries like coal mining and shipbuilding not only altered Sunderland's economic landscape but also challenged its social fabric and sense of community.

In the next chapter, we will delve into Sunderland's ongoing regeneration journey, focusing on the Heritage Action Zone project and its role in leveraging the city's heritage to drive economic growth, enhance community well-being, and revitalize urban spaces. Through this exploration, we will gain insights into how Sunderland is harnessing past to shape its future. Recognizing the value of its historic buildings and heritage assets, Sunderland again embarked on ambitious regeneration initiatives aimed at revitalizing its urban core and repurposing historical sites for new uses.

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Chapter 5: Sunderland HAZ as a Case Study

As we saw in chapter 4, the urban landscape of Sunderland has witnessed multiple transformative journeys through heritage-led regeneration initiatives. In this chapter, we delve into the heart of Sunderland's revitalization story, focusing on the recent initiatives, in particular the Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) as a case study. This chapter strives to provide a fuller understanding of ongoing heritage-led regeneration projects started in Sunderland as part of the HAZ, exploring the motivations, strategies, and outcomes that shape the city's evolving cultural and economic landscape.

Aligned with my research objectives, this chapter addresses three fundamental aspects:

Understanding the motivations and structural framework

I begin by peeling back the layers to understand the motivations that drive authorities and heritage professionals to spearhead such initiatives within Sunderland. By examining the structural framework guiding their endeavours, I aim to illuminate the intricate interplay between historical conservation, urban development, and community involvement.

Exploring dynamic of community engagement

Transitioning seamlessly into the dynamics of community engagement within the HAZ, I explore the active role played by local communities and stakeholders in shaping the regeneration agenda. We delve into participatory decision-making processes and grassroots initiatives, highlighting the significance of community empowerment in driving sustainable urban transformation.

Investigating heritage repurposing and reinterpretation

Furthermore, I investigate how heritage is repurposed and reinterpreted within the Sunderland HAZ to meet contemporary needs while preserving its historical integrity. By exploring the motivations of heritage professionals alongside the imperative of community engagement, I aim to explore the rationale behind adapting heritage sites for new purposes and examine how these decisions reflect both the priorities of stakeholders and the perceptions of the local community. Through this analysis, I seek to understand how the

balance between historical conservation and contemporary use influences community involvement, engagement, and identity within heritage-led regeneration processes.

Heritage-led regeneration, a multifaceted approach encompassing conservation, protection, and enhancement of historical character, emerges as a powerful force in addressing contemporary social, economic, and environmental challenges (Labadi, 2016). Sunderland's journey unfolds against the backdrop of the Heritage Action Zone, a nationwide initiative spearheaded by Historic England (HE). The HAZ is a targeted designation by Historic England, a nationwide initiative aimed at comprehensive heritage-led regeneration efforts. This initiative focuses on specific areas identified as having significant historical importance and potential for revitalization. HAZ areas typically undergo a range of interventions aimed at preserving, protecting, and enhancing their historical character while promoting sustainable development and community engagement (Historic England, 2022). In the context of Sunderland, the designation as a Heritage Action Zone signifies a commitment to leveraging the city's rich heritage assets for broader regeneration objectives. It represents an opportunity to channel resources and attention into specific areas with historical significance, such as industrial sites or cultural landmarks, to drive positive change and unlock the potential of heritage as a catalyst for social, economic, and environmental progress (Sunderland HAZ Delivery Report, 2019).

As the research navigates through the Sunderland HAZ, the exploration extends beyond the architectural rejuvenation to encompass the intricate threads of community engagement and the sustainable continuity of local culture within the historic urban environment.

Developing the story started in chapter 4, and sketching out the current heritage-led, for further exploration I will first focus on the HAZ as a case study and a policy context in which individual projects and processes take place. Subsequently, I will explore some of the motivations behind these initiatives and the strategies employed by authorities and heritage professionals involved in the project. The chapter is structured to offer a comprehensive view, beginning with an exploration of Sunderland's heritage-led regeneration initiatives. Utilizing a blend of methodologies, including analysis of Historic England and local policies, interviews with North East heritage experts, and examination of archival material, I aim to provide a detailed overview of heritage-led regeneration initiatives within Sunderland. This

approach will offer insights into the strategic interventions employed and their alignment with both heritage and community development goals.

Reflecting on previous attempts, such as the regeneration of the Exchange and Eagle Buildings, provides valuable insight into the challenges and successes of heritage-led initiatives in Sunderland. Moving forward, the narrative pivots to a closer examination of key conservation projects within the Sunderland HAZ, where the focus lies on understanding how heritage is repurposed and reinterpreted to meet contemporary needs while preserving its historical integrity. By looking into initiatives within the HAZ, including conservation endeavours and community engagement initiatives, I aim to unravel the layers of significance and meaning embedded within heritage sites like 170-175 High Street, Hutchinson Building (Mackie's Corner), and Holy Trinity Church. This exploration not only sheds light on the historical narratives of these structures but also provides a deeper understanding of how heritage is utilized as a catalyst for regeneration. More importantly, my investigation into heritage repurposing and reinterpretation seeks to intertwine the motivations of heritage professionals with the imperative of community engagement. Through interviews, observation, and analysis, I aim to investigate not only the rationale behind adopting new uses for heritage sites but also how these decisions reflect the priorities of both stakeholders and the broader community.

As the chapter's focus shifts to the community engagement strand within the Sunderland HAZ framework, I embark on an examination of the initiatives designed to bridge the gap between heritage professionals and the broader community. Through a combination of interviews, observation of events and workshops this journey delves into the intricacies of defining the Sunderland community and assessing its involvement in the revitalization efforts. Venturing into the heart of community engagement, I will explore specific events such as Heritage Open Days, the Stories of Sanctuary project, and localized initiatives around the 3L Blocks in the East End and the multifaceted ways in which the community interacted with the regeneration process.

In this chapter, the focus is on providing a comprehensive overview of the Sunderland HAZ project, including its key sites, organized engagement events, and community engagement approach. The aim is not just to list these activities but to investigate the underlying complexities and nuances that shape the relationship between the community and heritage

conservation within the Sunderland context in the following chapters (Chapter 6 and 7). The next chapters will take a deeper dive into the discussions with interviews and observations of the organized events. This shift will allow for a more detailed exploration of how these initiatives are perceived and experienced by both heritage professionals and members of the community. By engaging directly with stakeholders and participants, these chapters will offer valuable insights into the effectiveness of the HAZ project and its impact on the community.

This chapter is structured into four main sections, each focusing on a pivotal aspect of community involvement and its interaction with heritage-led regeneration initiatives. First, I delve into the heritage-led regeneration initiatives, exploring the strategic interventions designed to rejuvenate Sunderland. Next, attention turns to the community engagement strand, examining initiatives aimed at connecting the community with the project sites. Following this exploration, the dynamics of community engagement are revealed, analysing the multifaceted ways in which the Sunderland community interacts with revitalization efforts, from Heritage Open Days to localized initiatives around the 3L Blocks in the East End. Finally, the threshold from Engagement to Community is crossed, seeking to unravel the underlying complexities and nuances that define the relationship between community involvement and the conservation of heritage. Through a nuanced lens, this chapter endeavours to understand the intricate dance between conservation and progress within the Sunderland HAZ framework.

5.1 Heritage-led Regeneration Initiatives

Heritage-led regeneration involves a range of strategies that aim to conserve, protect, and enhance historical character and significance of a place, while also addressing contemporary social, economic, and environmental challenges (Patsy, 1992). Heritage-led regeneration projects have the potential to bring significant social and economic benefits to local communities (Plevoets, 2019). These projects aim at incorporating historic urban fabric rather than sweeping it aside (Chandler, 2019). A variety of strategies have been utilized historically to revitalize and renew the built environment, including adaptive reuse as it provides a means of preserving the cultural and architectural heritage of a place or building while also rejuvenate it for contemporary uses (Plevoets, 2019).

First I will introduce the HAZ program. In March 2016, the Department for Culture, Media & Sport revealed plans for the implementation of Heritage Action Zones (HAZs) in England, with the aim of catalysing economic growth within historically significant locales (Policy Summary, 2017). The inaugural selection of ten zones was announced earlier this year. These zones represent areas deemed to possess substantial heritage value and potential for enhanced utilization of their historical assets. Priority consideration is accorded to zones exhibiting economic growth prospects, particularly with regard to housing development initiatives. Projects within these zones are expected to be executable within a five-year timeframe (ibid.).

Support for the establishment and development of HAZs is facilitated by Historic England, a government agency. The assistance provided encompasses various forms of aid, including financial allocations for projects or staffing, provision of legal and technical counsel, support in determining the significance of listed structures, and guidance concerning planning policies such as local listed building consent orders (ibid.). Furthermore, financial assistance may be extended to address urgent maintenance requirements of historical buildings and to facilitate the issuance of repair notices to owners of deteriorating structures (ibid.).

Advisory services are rendered by Historic England on a broad spectrum of matters pertinent to heritage conservation and development endeavours (ibid.) This encompasses consultations regarding pre-application processes, integration of historic environment considerations into local planning frameworks, viability assessments, and strategies for repurposing antiquated structures (ibid.).

Proposals for HAZs necessitate adherence to specified criteria, including the articulation of clear objectives, substantiation of the historical environment's significance and exigencies, delineation of measurable outcomes, disclosure of available resources, and demonstration of successful precedents. Ancillary documentation may include conservation policies, site allocations, heritage asset evaluations, and visual aids (ibid.). HAZs are expected to encompass more than singular building projects, potentially focusing on clusters of structures, ensembles of sites within defined locales, or specific categories of heritage assets across diverse geographic locations. The realization of HAZ initiatives is contingent upon collaborative partnerships, wherein local authorities, community entities, funding bodies, and pertinent stakeholders contribute synergistically (Policy Summary, 2017).

Upon the conceptual ratification of HAZs, a dedicated partnership team is convened, comprising representatives from local authorities, relevant stakeholders, and Historic England. This assembly assumes responsibility for formulating comprehensive delivery plans, delineating governance structures, identifying lead partners, specifying requisite resources, establishing timelines, delineating delivery methodologies, and defining key performance indicators (Policy Summary, 2017).

By adhering to these prescribed protocols and fostering collaborative engagement, Heritage Action Zones endeavour to harness the economic potential inherent within England's historical sites, while safeguarding their cultural legacy for posterity. Since 2016, HE had allocated a total of £6 million into funding 10 Heritage Action Zone projects around the country ´breathing new life into historic places´ that were deemed rich in heritage but need a boost to make them more attractive to residents, businesses, visitors and investors (Historic England, 2022).

> These unsung places[20] are now being recognised and celebrated for their unique character and heritage. (Historic England, 2022)

The funding aimed to utilize and enhance the selected heritage assets to drive regeneration and make the areas more appealing to businesses, investors, visitors, and residents. HE funding had acted as a powerful catalyst for regeneration in these areas, successfully leveraging a further £60 million in investment and has demonstrated that heritage can be a powerful force for levelling up (Sunderland HAZ Delivery Report, 2019). Historic buildings that were deteriorating through decades of neglect have been restored and put back into use, which provided employment and volunteering opportunities, and conservation areas have been improved.

Sunderland was selected for the regeneration program in 2017. The Sunderland Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) was established as part of the national program, Heritage Action Zone, run by HE. The redevelopment in Sunderland has been driven by this scheme for regeneration that has attempted to revive the historic high streets and multiple buildings within the designated zone. It is a partnership scheme between Historic England and local

[20] Refers to the sites joined in the scheme.

authorities; in this case, the partners are Sunderland City Council, Tyne and Wear Building Preservation Trust, the Churches Conservation Trust, and Sunderland Heritage Forum. (Table 5.1) Each partner contributes expertise in heritage conservation, regeneration, community engagement, and cultural programming to breathe new life into Sunderland's historic areas.

Sunderland City Council	The council's partnership team oversees various aspects of conservation, heritage, and regeneration projects within the city. They have extensive experience in delivering heritage-led regeneration schemes and work closely with local communities, businesses, and elected officials to achieve their goals.
Historic England	As the government's expert advisory service for England's historic environment, Historic England provides advice, grants, and support for heritage projects. They offer expertise in research, community engagement, conservation, and planning policy to help preserve and promote historic sites and buildings.
Sunderland Heritage Forum	This forum brings together heritage groups in Sunderland to collaborate on city-wide projects and initiatives. They organize events, conferences, and heritage programs to raise awareness and celebrate Sunderland's history. The forum also secures funding for heritage projects and supports urban regeneration efforts.
Tyne and Wear Building Preservation Trust	This trust focuses on preserving and restoring historic buildings in Tyne and Wear. They acquire, repair, and regenerate threatened buildings, working closely with local communities and stakeholders. Their mission is to

	bring new life to old buildings and enhance the quality of local life.
Churches Conservation Trust	This national charity specializes in saving historic churches at risk. They have extensive experience in heritage conservation and regeneration, working on projects to repurpose churches for community use. The trust collaborates with various partners to deliver major reuse projects and ensure the long-term sustainability of historic churches.
Sunderland Culture	Formed to advance the city's ambitions for arts and culture, Sunderland Culture manages and operates major cultural attractions and delivers city-wide projects. They work closely with partners to promote cultural engagement and support creative initiatives that contribute to Sunderland's cultural heritage and identity.

Table 5.1 Partner Profiles. Sourced from Sunderland's Historic High Streets – HAZ I Delivery Plan Version 4, July 2020. Table created by the author.

The Sunderland HAZ includes two entire conservation areas, the adjoining Old Sunderland and Old Sunderland Riverside Conservation Areas, which comprises of Fawcett Street, Church Street, High Street East and High Street West (2020, p. 1) (See Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2)

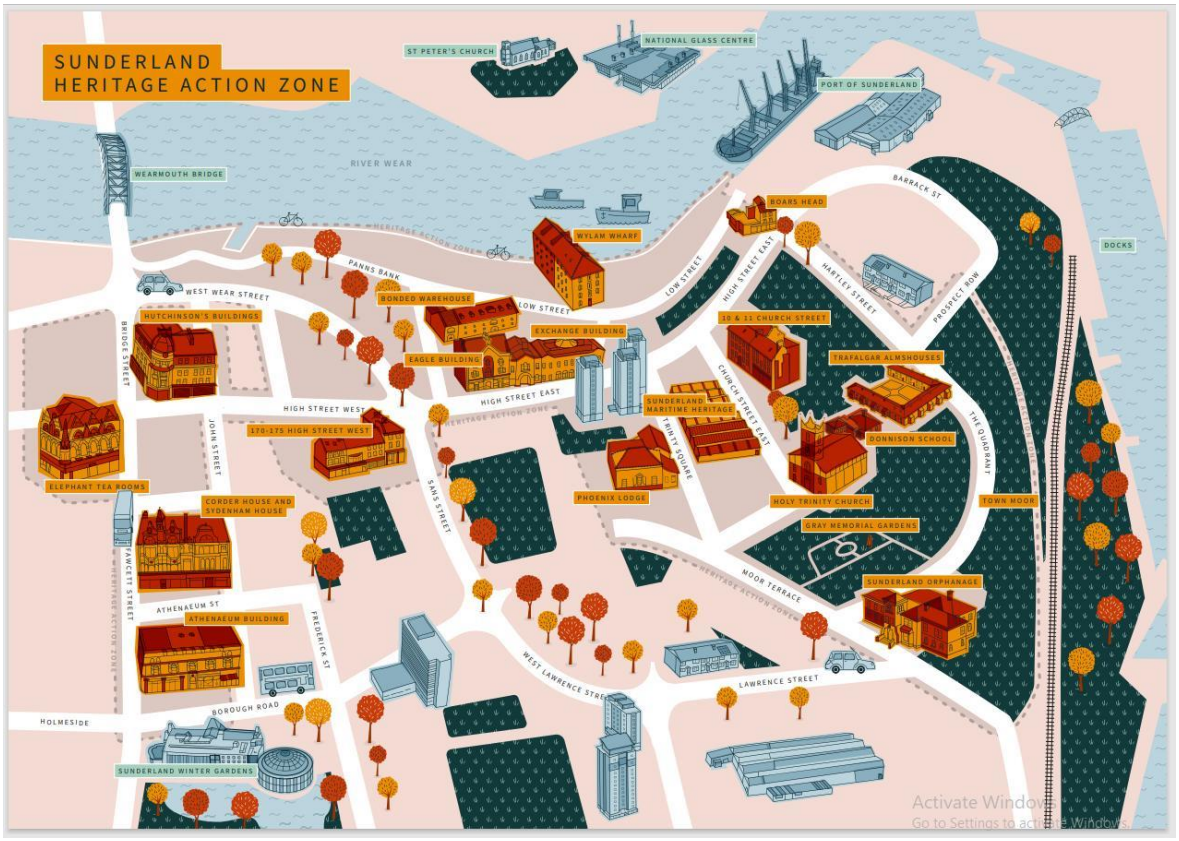


Figure 5.6 Sunderland Heritage Action Zone Map. Sourced from Historic England Website.

The aim of the HAZ is to revitalize this area, using heritage-led regeneration as a tool for economic and community development, to revive historic Sunderland and reconnect the Old Town, City Centre and Waterfront to facilitate economic growth (2020, p. 3). The key City Centre Investment Corridor is focused along High Street West and thus includes the western part of the HAZ, and therefore, integrates with strategic investment corridor initiatives by the Council and its partners along the High street environments, including on-going public realm improvement programme, heritage-led regeneration initiatives of the Music, Arts and Cultural Quarter and Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage scheme (Council, 2019), and the Great Place Scheme (Sunderland Culture, 2018). The Masterplan recognizes the city's position on the waterfront as an important part of its sense of place and providing key opportunities for its economic development (Sunderland HAZ Delivery Report, 2019). To take greater advantage of the city centre's waterfront location, the HAZ is strategically positioned to extend the economic progress of the City Centre towards the waterfront through the re-use of the historic buildings along this route, establishing new businesses, securing inward investment, creating jobs and alongside cultural events such as

the Tall Ships, significantly increasing footfall through the area**.** The Sunderland HAZ strategically positions itself to extend the economic progress of the City Centre towards the waterfront, leveraging both the historical significance of the River Wear and its connection to the North Sea. By focusing on revitalizing the waterfront area, including both the riverfront and its link to the sea, the aim is to capitalize on Sunderland's maritime heritage and scenic beauty (Sunderland HAZ Delivery Report, 2019). This approach aligns with broader trends in urban development, where waterfront areas are often seen as prime locations for revitalization due to their historical significance, scenic beauty, and potential for economic development through tourism, recreation, and commerce (ibid.). Through the re-use of historic buildings along this route and the establishment of new businesses, inward investment, and cultural events such as the Tall Ships, the HAZ seeks to significantly increase footfall and foster a sense of local pride and identity (ibid.)

The heritage sector has become integral to urban regeneration agendas (Pendlebury, 2002). The Sunderland HAZ is part of an effort to change the city's image from an industrial town to a culturally vibrant destination. HE investing time and some financial resources into these otherwise marginalised areas. This effort included promoting, also leveraging, local cultural heritage as a means of revitalizing the area and attracting businesses (Historic England, 2022). Such strategies involved creating cultural events, restoring historic buildings, create new cultural and community spaces or promoting local art and music scenes, aiming to foster a sense of local pride and identity (Council, 2019). A number of historic buildings and spaces in Sunderland have been identified for restoration and redevelopment as part of regeneration program. Some of the projects that have been completed or are currently underway as part of the HAZ program include the restoration of the Holy Trinity Church**,** Donnison School, Phoenix Hall, 173-175 High Street West, and Hutchinson’s Buildings. (Figure 5.2)

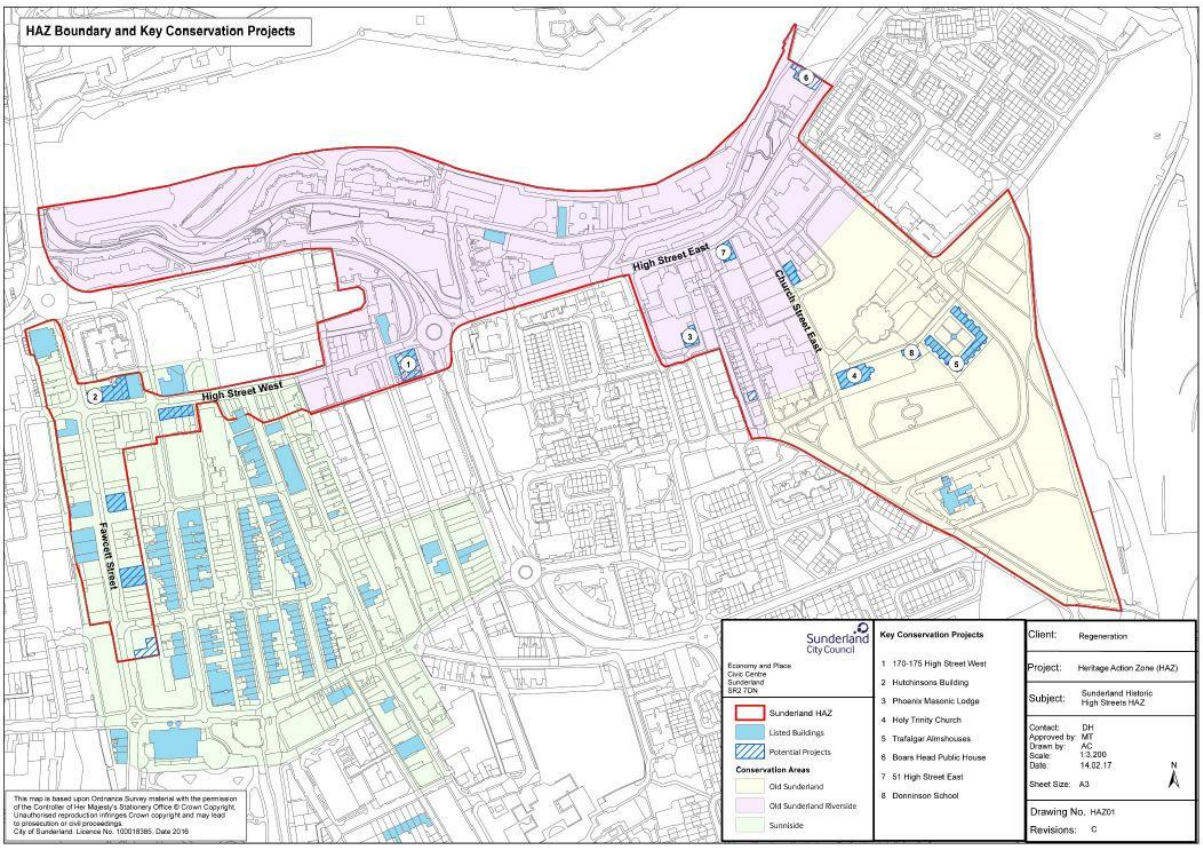


Figure 5.7 HAZ Boundary and Key Conservation Projects produced by City of Sunderland, 2018. Sourced from Sunderland HAZ Delivery Plan 2020.

Sunderland HAZ operates within a policy framework that underscores the significance of heritage-led regeneration and urban renewal. National and local policies, including those outlined by Historic England and Sunderland City Council, provide the guiding principles for the project's endeavours. The designation of parts of Sunderland as a Heritage Action Zone signifies a commitment to addressing the distinctive challenges and prospects associated with safeguarding its heritage. The objectives outlined within this designation encompass the restoration of historic structures and the enhancement of public spaces (Policy Summary, 2017). I will analyse the key conservation projects displayed in Figure 5.2**,** their historical development and evolution, along with their current purpose or function. Through an exploration of these key conservation projects, I aim to explore the official significance of these sites within the HAZ framework, as documented in the gray literature. By examining their documented importance, I seek to gain insight into the broader objectives of heritage-led regeneration initiatives in Sunderland. Examining the official documentation allows me to understand how these sites are officially recognized and valued within the context of

heritage conservation and urban regeneration efforts. This can provide insights into the criteria used to determine their significance and the reasons behind their inclusion in the HAZ framework and also contextualize their role within broader heritage-led regeneration initiatives in Sunderland.

1. **170-175 High Street**

The three terraced houses were built around 1800. The row of 18th-century Grade II listed buildings on Sunderland's High Street West holds historical significance and is one of the Tyne and Wear Preservation Trust's most important ongoing projects. Number 173 is particularly noteworthy as it laid the foundation for the Binns shopping Empire, serving as the original haberdashery store of George Binns in 1811 and occupied the building until 1885 at which juncture Binns & Sons moved to a larger building on Fawcett Street (House of Fraser Archive, n.d.). The small family-owned drapery and linen business became Sunderland's biggest and best-loved department store chain. The Binns retail empire eventually becoming a part of House of Fraser (House of Fraser Archive, n.d.). During the restoration process led by the Tyne and Wear Preservation Trust, several remarkable discoveries were made. Notably, one of the buildings, No.170, was a former bank where a safe was discovered, adding to the historical intrigue of the site (Interview notes, shared by S1, Heritage Professional). Additionally, one of these buildings had a residential history before being repurposed for commercial use. Today, thanks to the efforts of the TWPT, the Grade II listed buildings are now being used by Pop Recs, an independent music and arts venue and housing the Sunshine Co-operative (Historic England, n.d.).

2. **Hutchinson Building (Mackie’s Corner)**

Hutchinson's Buildings represent a historically and culturally significant architectural landmark in Sunderland. Originally the site of a residence, it underwent a transformative phase in 1850 when shipbuilder Ralph Hutchinson enlisted the services of architect George Middlemiss to erect Sunderland's inaugural purpose-built shops (Jessop and Wilson, 2018). The corner shop on the ground floor, referred to as Mackie's Corner, drew its nomenclature from its inaugural tenant, Robert Mackie (ibid.). Operating as a hat shop, Mackie's innovative approach allowed passers-by to observe the hats through the expansive corner window, rendering it a beloved communal gathering point. Mackie's Corner and its interior

spaces survived the destructive 'Great Fire' of 1898 (Millburn, 1988). The subsequent reconstruction closely adhered to Middlemiss' original design, although with a shift towards incorporating offices above the shops rather than residential accommodations. Throughout its existence spanning over a century and a half, the building hosted a diverse array of tenants, and even served as a local army recruitment centre during the First World War. Today, it houses multiple stores and businesses such as Fat Unicorn, Master Debonair, Café 1851, gets name from the date of Great Fire of Sunderland (Historic England, n.d.).

3. Phoenix Masonic Lodge (Phoenix Hall)

The Freemasons in Sunderland were originally called King George's Lodge. Their first meeting place burned down in 1783, so it was rebuilt and its name was changed to Phoenix Lodge. Phoenix Hall, which was opened in 1785, is the oldest masonic hall still used for its original purpose in the country and has a Georgian interior that is highly regarded in the region (Johnson, 2016). The temple's furnishings, including an 18th-century organ, wall panels, gilded carving, and furniture, are well-preserved, and the room's proportions are governed by geometrical rules familiar to the Lodge's members (ibid.). The Freemasons were instrumental in the civic life of Sunderland during the 18th and 19th centuries, participating in a variety of community and building projects, including the construction and funding of the first Wearmouth Bridge and the Quayside Exchange, as well as the town's dispensary and infirmary, which was established through charitable work by a Phoenix Lodge member. Phoenix Hall is Grade I listed building (Historic England, n.d.).

4. Holy Trinity Church

The Holy Trinity Church was an Anglican parish church located in the East End of Sunderland (Johnson, 2016). The church was consecrated in 1719. It was built to cater for the growing population of the newly created parish of Sunderland in recognition of the growing significance of the mercantile heart of the community (Millburn, 1988). In its day was one of the largest brick buildings in northern England. It also acted as a sort of town hall for Sunderland. Parish activities were managed from the vestry room by twenty-four vestrymen under the rector as chairman. The remaining few gravestones include the grave of Jack Crawford, the ‘hero of Camperdown’ , who was a sailor from Sunderland and is remembered for nailing the colours to the mast during the Battle of Camperdown in 1797

and an early victim of cholera (Miller, 2010). The church was heavily damaged during World War II, and the roof and spire had to be reconstructed in the 1950s. It fell into disuse in the 1980s and was left to deteriorate. Today, the Holy Trinity Church is a Grade I listed building, considered to be of national importance and therefore worth protecting, and serves as a community centre (Historic England, n.d.)

5. **Trafalgar Square Almshouses**

At end of the walk you find Trafalgar Square Almshouses, which was built in 1840 for aged Sunderland seamen and their wives and widows. Today, the Trafalgar Square Almshouses are still in operation, providing affordable housing for elderly residents of Sunderland. The Almshouses are a Grade II listed building (Historic England, n.d.).

6. **Boar's Head**

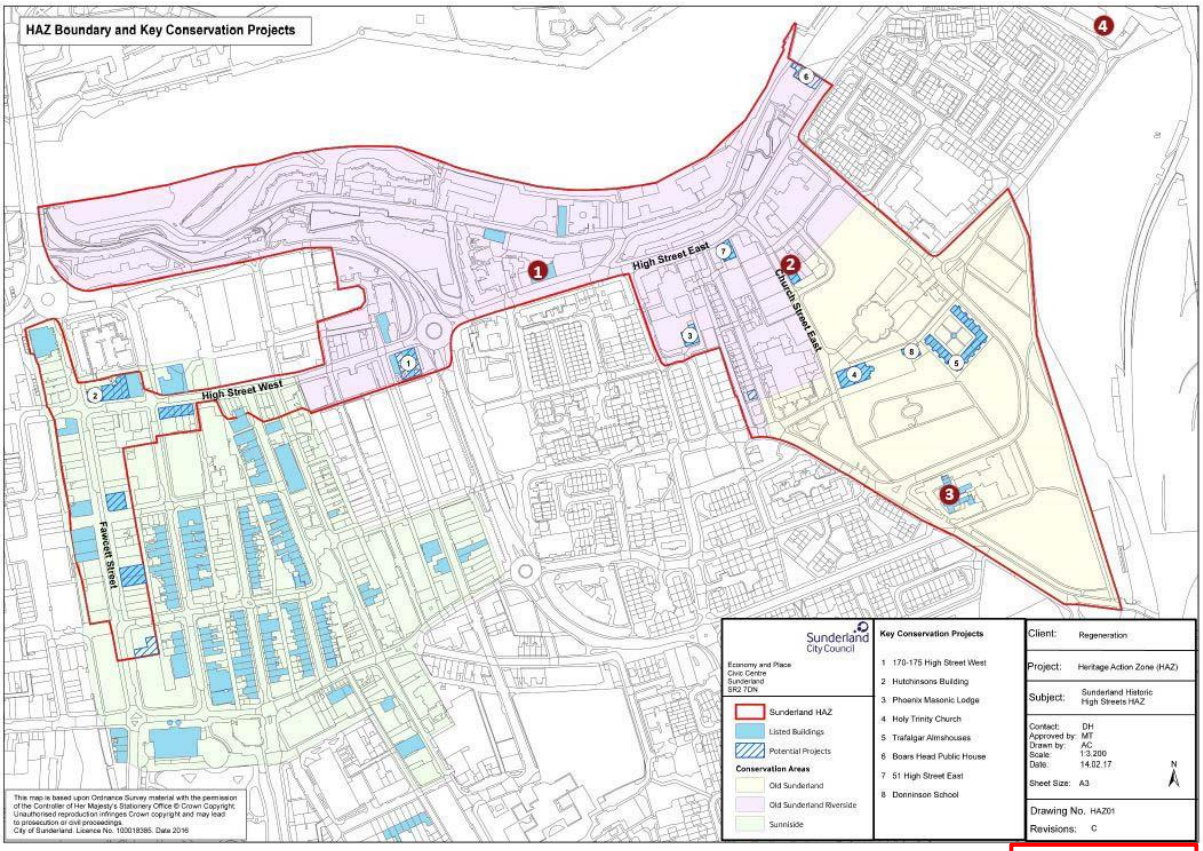
Dating back to 1724, the Boar's Head in the East End was once a popular watering hole for sailors and workers at the nearby port. After a decade closed, it received Heritage Lottery funding and significant improvement works in 2017 and was given new life as the Boar's Head bistro, with accommodation upstairs (Historic England, n.d.).

7. **The Donnison School**

The Donnison School was established with a bequest in 1764 from Elizabeth Donnison to provide free education for thirty-six poor girls (Sunderland Echo, March 2023) The school continued to operate as a free school for girls throughout the 19th century and into the 20th century. In the 1930s, the school became a fee-paying private school, and it continued to operate as such until the 1970s. In the 1980s, the building was restored and converted into a museum, with displays on the history of the school and the life of working-class women in the local area (Donnison School Heritage and Education Centre, n.d.). The Donnison School Heritage Centre was refurbished and inaugurated as a new community facility in 2007 and has evolved into a vibrant Community Hub that actively engages with heritage, education and community activities (Historic England, n.d.). A group of dedicated volunteers from The Friends of The Donnison School are responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of this Grade II listed building, which means it is considered to be of special architectural and historical interest (ibid.)

Other Sites

The structures marked in red in Figure 5.3 are recognized as listed buildings. However, despite not being formally encompassed within the Historical Area Zone (HAZ), they emerged as significant topics during interviews and featured prominently in the context of the heritage walks in Old Sunderland. Therefore, their inclusion in my examination became imperative owing to their palpable presence in the local narrative and their contribution to Sunderland's historical tapestry.



a Eagle and Exchange Buildings

b 10-11 Church Street

c The Orphanage

d The Welcome Tavern

Figure 5.8 HAZ Boundary map edited by the author (Gulnur Cengiz) to display the added sites as marked in red and numbered 1,2,3,and 4. Original map sourced from Sunderland HAZ Delivery Plan 2020.

a. Eagle and Exchange Buildings

Exchange Building

The Exchange was built in 1814 by the Sunderland Improvement Commissioners as an administrative, commercial, and cultural centre for the rapidly developing port area (Johnson, 2016). The building was designed by William Stokoe, with Classical detailing and a

stuccoed frontage to the High Street. It has Italianate features, including pedimented pavilions and an open colonnade (Interview notes and written document provided by Interviewee S5, a heritage professional). Presenting two storeys to the High Street, the land drops away towards the river at the rear, and the building presents a dramatic elevation, including a clock tower, to the north. The Exchange is now being used as a conference centre and function rooms.

Eagle Workshops

Eagle Building, dating back to 1860, was the first factory in the UK to produce Bakelite, a small exhibition within charts its history. The site has a mixed history traced back to the 17th century (Interview notes and written document provided by Interviewee S5, a heritage professional). Its most noted feature is the carved eagle that sits atop its peaked gable. It features an eccentric blend of shopfronts and Venetian-style windows with a central archway leading to a yard. North of England Civic Trust (NECT) restored the Eagle Workshops in 2002 (ibid.)

b. 10-11 Church Street

10 Church Street was built by local merchant John Freeman around 1710. The two three-storey brick town houses are only two surviving houses from this period. The building now serves as the Tyne and Wear chapter house for the Hell's Angels Motorcycle Club.

c. The Orphanage

The Old Orphanage was also known as the Newcastle upon Tyne Seamen's and Mariners' Orphan Asylum. It was established by a group of local businessmen in response to the high number of seafarers who died at sea, leaving behind families who struggled to support themselves. The orphanage originally housed boys between the ages of 7 and 14. The boys received a basic education, as well as training in practical skills such as seamanship, tailoring, and shoemaking (Potts and Johnson, 2013). The Old Orphanage closed in the 1980s, and the building was converted into apartments. However, the original façade and many of the architectural features have been preserved. The Old Orphanage is now a Grade II listed building, which means it is considered to be of special architectural and historical interest (Historic England n.d.).

All of these sites have undergone a comprehensive a repair and restoration work. Alongside the rehabilitation efforts, Sunderland HAZ has incorporated a variety of community engagement activities, including heritage walks, talks, and workshops. According to the delivery plan, these initiatives were designed to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of Sunderland's rich cultural heritage while also encouraging local residents to actively participate in the city's restoration and revitalization endeavours. However, public participation appeared to be more of an afterthought, often occurring after the revitalization efforts had concluded, which will be discussed in detail in the subsequent chapters. In next section, we will delve into the community engagement strand to gain a better understanding of the engagement strategies employed by Sunderland HAZ. This analysis will help us comprehend how the key organizations have approached and executed the efforts to involve the community in the revitalization endeavours.

d. The Welcome Tavern

The Welcome Tavern, situated in the East End of Sunderland and overlooking the port, holds a rich history within the community. Originally established to serve the bustling maritime trade, it likely played a vital role as a gathering place for sailors, dockworkers, and locals alike (Interviewee L6). Over the years, it has witnessed the ebb and flow of Sunderland's maritime industry, from its heyday as a bustling port to more recent times of change and redevelopment. The Welcome Tavern today serves as a hub for socializing, storytelling, and camaraderie among its patrons (ibid.).

In examining the detailed descriptions of Sunderland's heritage-led regeneration projects, several recurring themes emerge that underscore the city's commitment to preserving its rich cultural heritage while revitalizing its urban landscape. Historical significance permeates each narrative, with buildings dating back to the 18th and 19th centuries serving as tangible reminders of Sunderland's maritime and industrial past. Through adaptive reuse, these structures are repurposed for contemporary use, ensuring their continued relevance while preserving their architectural integrity. Central to these endeavours is a strong emphasis on community engagement, evident in the various initiatives aimed at fostering a deeper connection between residents and their heritage. Partnerships with organizations like Historic England and local preservation trusts highlight the collaborative nature of these efforts, while the economic revitalization brought about by these projects underscores their

broader impact on Sunderland's social and economic fabric. Transitioning from the exploration of Sunderland's heritage-led regeneration projects, the next chapter delves into the community strand of the revitalization, aiming to dissect the strategies employed by Sunderland HAZ to actively engage residents in the city's renewal endeavours.

5.2 Community Engagement Strand

The Sunderland HAZ scheme has multiple strands and one of them is community engagement, which aims to engage with the community to create a more inclusive and representative vision for the area. The community engagement strand of the Sunderland HAZ is rooted in a broader policy framework that emphasizes the importance of inclusive decision-making processes and active community involvement in heritage conservation and urban development (Sunderland HAZ Delivery Plan, 2020).

The collaborative efforts among stakeholders have been instrumental in propelling the objectives of the Sunderland HAZ initiative forward. Through these partnerships, resources, expertise, and local insights have been pooled to drive significant change. Employing a variety of strategies such as public consultations, community workshops, and collaborative design sessions, policymakers and professionals have strived to ensure meaningful participation. To cultivate community engagement, extensive consultations with community groups, local residents, and stakeholders have been conducted to ascertain their needs and interests – and during the 2 years I was doing fieldwork, I took part in several of these events, and interviews many of the involved people, both from policy and community perspectives.

Sunderland City Council values community involvement in urban planning, seeking to empower residents, businesses, and stakeholders in decision-making processes. The Council’s key initiatives include early engagement, the development of a comprehensive Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), and the formulation of the Sunderland Local Plan, all aimed at amplifying community voices and aligning development with community needs and aspirations (Sunderland City Council, 2020). While the city council's policies demonstrate a commitment to preserving and enhancing heritage, there remains room for improvement, particularly in providing clearer guidelines for community engagement in heritage decision-making processes. Historic England's Conservation Principles and Guidance also offer valuable insights into best practices, emphasizing the importance of

valuing diverse perspectives and involving local communities at every stage of the heritage process, from identification and interpretation to management and conservation (Historic England, 2020).

Table 5.1 Historic England Logic Model Table, Community related activities highlighted in red squares. Source: Historic England Website, Logic Model 2021.

The strategic activities outlined by Historic England, coupled with the desired outputs and outcomes, provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the impact of heritage conservation initiatives on communities. By developing inclusive content, events, and partnerships, the aim is to foster a deeper appreciation and understanding of England's historic environment among a diverse audience. Expanding digital access to assets enhances participation and user experience, ensuring broader engagement with heritage resources. Investments in knowledge creation and skills development empower the sector to adapt and thrive, while informed advice facilitates the care and development of historic sites.

Collaboration with communities builds capacity for cost-effective engagement, sharing techniques, and expertise in innovative ways. Through these efforts, Historic England seeks to achieve interim outcomes such as increased awareness, diverse participation, and improved social and economic productivity around heritage assets. Ultimately, the desired outcomes include a sense of connection with heritage, resilient and valued places, informed decision-making, and greater public engagement and advocacy for the preservation of our historic environment, both locally and nationally. This logic model forms the foundation for understanding the role of community engagement in heritage-led regeneration initiatives, a crucial aspect that will be explored in depth in the subsequent discussion.

Community engagement lies at the core of heritage-led regeneration initiatives, as it ensures that local residents are active participants in the preservation and revitalization of their cultural heritage. Historic England's strategic activities underscore the importance of working closely with communities to build capacity in engaging and cost-effective ways. By involving community members in decision-making processes and project implementation, heritage organizations can ensure that regeneration efforts align with the needs and aspirations of local residents.

One key aspect of community engagement highlighted in the Historic England model is the development of inclusive content, events, and partnerships. This approach acknowledges the diverse demographics within communities and aims to create opportunities for everyone to enjoy and understand the historic environment. By organizing events that celebrate local heritage, providing educational resources, and forming partnerships with community organizations, heritage initiatives can foster a sense of ownership and pride among residents.

Moreover, investing in knowledge creation, skills development, and organizations within the heritage sector ensures that communities have the resources and expertise needed to actively participate in regeneration projects. By providing training opportunities, Historic England and its partners empower community members to take on leadership roles, advocate for their heritage, and contribute to decision-making processes.

Ultimately, HE’s desired outcomes include a sense of connection with heritage, the resilience of valued places, informed decision-making, and greater public engagement and

advocacy for heritage preservation. This strategic model serves as the foundation for understanding Historic England's commitment to engaging communities in heritage-led regeneration initiatives.

5.2.2 Observed projects and events by partner organizations and local council

The Sunderland HAZ has actively engaged the local community through various means such as providing training opportunities, running events and activities, and engaging with schools and youth groups. This section will discuss the community engagement strategies of the partner organizations and the role of community within the HAZ project.

This section offers an exploration of community engagement initiatives organized by the HAZ partners. I will delve deeper into the community engagement initiatives introduced in Chapter 3 by examining specific observed projects and events. By doing so, I aim to provide a more detailed understanding of the tangible efforts and impacts of these initiatives on community development within the Sunderland HAZ. Within this contextual framework, the curated list of observed projects and events endeavours to provide a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted efforts propelling community development. In the next chapter, I will pivot from discussing the observed projects and events to exploring the participants' engagement with these initiatives. Building upon the groundwork laid in the previous chapter, the focus will shift towards understanding the dynamics of community participation and involvement within the context of these events.

Seventeen Nineteen | Former Holy Trinity Church

Holy Trinity Church in Old Sunderland underwent a conservation-led restoration project aiming to transform the Grade I listed building into a space that facilitates connection, sharing of stories, and appreciation of heritage. Holy Trinity was entrusted to the Church Conservation Trust (CCT) in 1988. The decision to transfer ownership occurred due to the inability of the local parish to maintain the building as a place of worship, coupled with financial constraints. Between 1988 and 2016, CCT undertook vital repairs, yet larger-scale investments became increasingly necessary to ensure the preservation of the church. In 2015, the Church Conservation Trust (CCT) was awarded a stage 1 grant from Heritage Lottery Fund, which initiated the development of this project (Church Conservation Trust, 2019). CCT also has become a major partner in the HAZ. The restoration process involved

sensitive repair and adaptation of the church, resulting in a civic hub called the Canny Space that serves the community.

> "We want the stories at the Canny Space to be relevant to our local audiences. We want local people to help us to reinterpret the stories of Holy Trinity and of Old Sunderland, from 1719 to yesterday." (Interviewee S3, 2021)

The Canny Space was proposed redevelopment and use of Holy Trinity Church in Sunderland's East End. The repurposing of the church as a community and cultural venue aimed to connect current generations of local people and visitors with the heritage of the building and the history of Old Sunderland. The Canny Space set out to create a place of storytelling and discovery, remembering the past, celebrating the present and creating futures. The project coordinators stated that process of building interpretation should be collaborative and working with their communities to create or choose the objects and stories that will be available to learn from and experience at the Canny Space would enable them to build their audiences throughout the closure period and develop a sense of ownership and empowerment.

The Canny Space project, which forms part of a comprehensive 15-year cultural strategy established by The Sunderland Cultural Partnership, was geared towards achieving long-term sustainability. To this end, it aimed to transcend local boundaries and appeal to a more extensive regional and citywide audience through the provision of a diverse cultural experience (Church Conservation Trust, 2019). The project leveraged the formal heritage value of the Holy Trinity church, an exquisite example of Georgian architecture that was rare in the North East region, to create a unique appeal. Collaborations with other Sunderland-based initiatives, such as Hylton Castle, National Glass Centre, and St. Peter's, were instrumental in developing immersive family-oriented activities and itineraries that cater to the needs and preferences of visitors. Furthermore, the project collaborated with local heritage assets such as the Donnison School and Queen Street Masonic Lodge to augment the existing heritage offer in Old Sunderland. Interactive heritage walks and joint celebrations of Georgian history planned to achieve this goal (Church Conservation Trust, 2019). With intention of increasing the involvement of the community, the CCT team has been hosting a series of events including a public programme of Traditional Craft Skills activities including apprenticeships, work placements, hard hat tours, taster days, and

heritage skills training. One of the groups called the Heritage Detectives, which was to enable its participants to investigate and portray key aspects of their notion of culture and heritage through The Cabinet of Curiosities project. This project provides the platform to engage in a dialogue about the things that matter to them can be a powerful way to build connections and empathy (Interviewee S3, Heritage Professional).

The Cabinet of Curiosities installation is designed to showcase the various projects undertaken by the Heritage Detectives project concerning Sunderland's rich heritage. Employing the format of a traditional cabinet of curiosities, this installation serves as a physical exhibition space that will highlight the discoveries made by the Heritage Detectives. The core objective of this initiative is to uncover and amplify new narratives and stories of historical and cultural significance that have remained untold. By empowering the individuals who own these stories to narrate them in their own voice, the project aims to foster a deeper appreciation and understanding of Sunderland's diverse heritage.

Heritage Open Days Events, September 2021

Heritage Walks

Seventeen Nineteen organized a Heritage Open Days event that comprised a 90-minute guided walk through the Old Sunderland. The tour aimed to introduce participants to the notable buildings located in the historic East End and highlight the ongoing conservation efforts in the area. Due to the prevailing COVID-19 restrictions and the ongoing construction work within some of the structures, the walk was restricted to the exterior sections of the buildings. The itinerary commenced from Holy Trinity Church and proceeded to 10-11 Church Street and Jack Crawford mural, followed by a stroll up the High street East to the Eagle and Exchange buildings before arriving at Phoenix Lodge. (Figure 5.4)

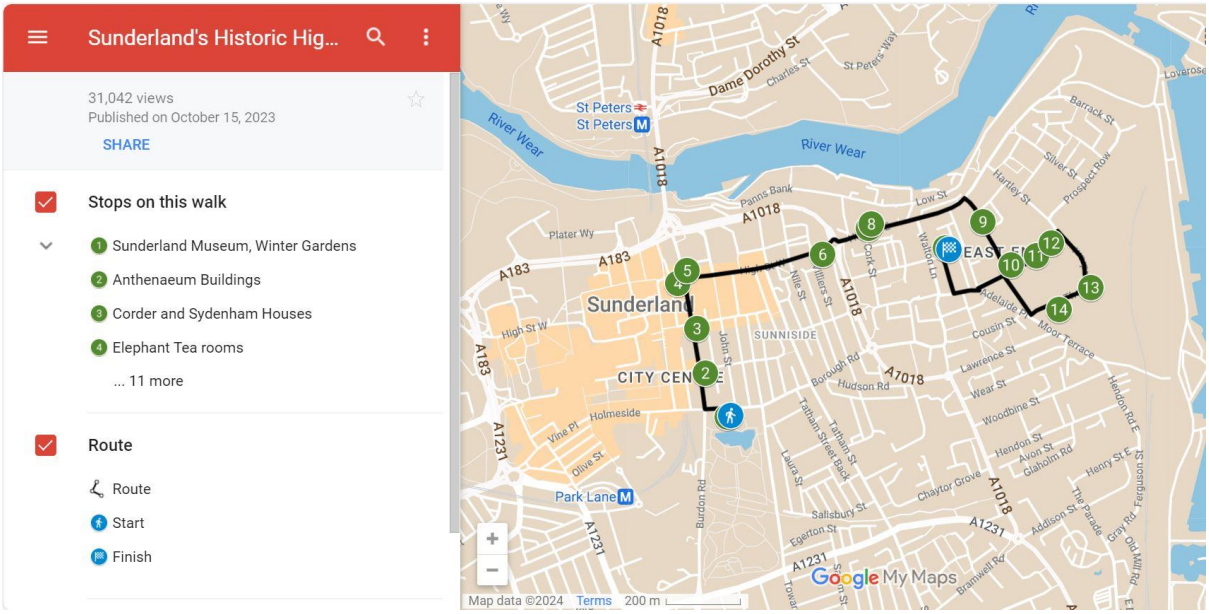


Figure 5.5 Historic England has created a digital walking route featuring historic buildings that are part of HAZ.[21] Source: Historic England, Sunderland's Historic High Streets Walk.

Fishwives Tea

The Fishwives Tea was organized by Seventeen Nineteen as part of Heritage Open Days, aimed to provide attendees with an opportunity to give a brief look into the cultural history of the East End. As the construction at Holy Trinity was still ongoing, the event was held at Sunderland Mind. The event featured a presentation by a volunteer dressed in authentic fishwife attire, who shared some insights into the area's past. The volunteer fishwife even had her daughter dressed up in a fishwife outfit with a fish basket over her head.

Sunderland College's Catering and Hospitality staff and students served an assortment of delicacies. As part of their commitment to authenticity, the catering team also attempted to recreate an original cookie recipe from the era, but the results were unfortunately inedible due to their hard texture. The catering staff still decided to display them, showcasing their dedication.

Black Pudding Battle

The Battle of the Black Pudding was planned as a competition inviting teams of 3-6 individuals to participate in various small challenges. The event was inspired by a historical

[21] The digital trail could be accessed through the following link: https://historicengland.org.uk/campaigns/visit/walking-tours/sunderland-heritage-walk/

incident that occurred in 1931 when a woman criticized the women from the East End. The event was cancelled due to lack of interest.

Other Events

Stories of Sanctuary

The Stories of Sanctuary project by Sunderland City Council was an initiative that seeks to promote social cohesion and integration by bringing together people from different backgrounds and cultures to share their experiences and stories. The project focuses on music and art as a means of promoting understanding and unity among diverse communities. Through this project, the council worked with local artists to create a range of artistic works that explore the experiences of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants living in the Sunderland area. As part of the project, the Council organized a vintage bus tour. The bus visited various locations, namely Bowes Railway Museum, Washington Hall, and Arts Centre Washington. The tour provided a critical reflection on the ways different communities engage with heritage and art.

Heritage & Community Development: 3L Blocks

Preliminary Work at the 3L Blocks

This community engagement project that was conducted by the local council with the aim of gathering opinions from residents of Lumley, Londonderry, and Lambton blocks (3L) located in the East End, their experiences during lockdown, and interests in local heritage buildings. Through the distribution of stylized HAZ maps and open-ended prompts on the back[22], the project aimed to encourage residents to share their thoughts and preferences. The project team also established a Facebook page and sent letters to every household in the area, Gentoo assisted in the distribution, explicitly inviting residents to participate in the events taking place in the area and join the Facebook group. Only three people were attracted to the group. Unfortunately, the response rate was quite low. Out of 210 households reached, only three responded, and only one survey was actually filled out (Interviewee T1). This first event served as a valuable learning experience for the team. Taking the lessons into account, for the following event, they provided a visual element to the event and made it

[22] The questions are: What do you think about your area or what's been important to you during lockdown or have you got a favourite heritage building, or is there one you would really like to see inside?

more engaging for attendees and offered some incentives, such as free coffee and snacks, to encourage people to attend.

"So out of the 210 and we got three replies out of and we offer the 25 pound gift voucher for the best response." (Interviewee T1)

Sunderland HAZ relaunch at the 3L Blocks

On July 28th 2021, the second engagement event was held for the residents of Lumley, Londonderry, and Lambton blocks. The organizers distributed invitations under the residents' doors. The event conveniently took place at a small green area right outside of the blocks with the intention of providing easy accessibility for those residing in the blocks and intercepting people as they entered or left their respective blocks. The event aimed to engage the residents with the local area and heritage and was the second one for the residents of the 3L blocks. The residents were able to learn about the project's progress, future plans, and how it would impact their community. Large boards displaying detailed information on the HAZ project and old pictures of Sunderland were prominently featured. These boards were designed to provide a visual aid to help residents understand the project's scope. The information on the boards included historical images of significant buildings as well. In addition to the boards, a number of books about Sunderland were made available to the attendees. The books contained detailed information on the city's history, culture, and landmarks. Residents were able to browse through the books and learn about the area's past. In addition, tea, coffee, and the (in) famous pink slices, local recipe, were offered to those in attendance.

I was invited to both the Stories of Sanctuary and 3L Blocks events by project managers, which provided invaluable opportunities to understand community engagement efforts related to the Sunderland HAZ. These events served as platforms to engage with marginalized groups, such as refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants, through the Stories of Sanctuary initiative. Additionally, the 3L Blocks project offered an opportunity to meet local residents of the East End area and gather insights into their experiences and perspectives.

Discussion

Although these are not all the events that took place in the HAZ, the community engagement events listed above showcase a diverse range of initiatives aimed at involving

local residents and stakeholders in heritage conservation and urban development efforts within the Sunderland HAZ framework. These events demonstrate a diverse range of initiatives aimed at involving local residents and stakeholders in heritage conservation and urban development efforts. These engagements reflect a concerted effort to bridge the gap between heritage professionals and the broader community. As an observer, I had the opportunity to witness first-hand the collaborative spirit and dedication of those involved in the Sunderland HAZ framework. Through interviews with heritage practitioners active in the HAZ, it became evident that these community engagement initiatives were designed to foster a sense of connection to the revitalization process.

One prominent theme across these events was the emphasis on storytelling and narrative-building as a means of engaging the community with their heritage. Projects like the Canny Space at Seventeen Nineteen and the Stories of Sanctuary project by Sunderland City Council leverage storytelling and artistic expression to create spaces where diverse voices and experiences are celebrated as I will explore further in Chapter 6. Moreover, the inclusion of interactive elements in events such as the Heritage Open Days and the Fishwives Tea demonstrated a commitment to making heritage accessible and engaging for a wide audience. Guided walks, presentations, and hands-on activities provided opportunities for people to actively participate in the exploration and interpretation of their heritage. However, challenges in community engagement were also evident, as seen in the low response rate to projects like the Heritage & Community Development initiative at the 3L Blocks. Despite efforts to solicit feedback and involvement from residents, the lack of participation highlighted the need for more targeted and innovative approaches to community engagement, particularly in marginalized or underserved areas.

5.3 Community Engagement

Exploration of community engagement strand commenced with a review of engagement strategies and in-depth interviews with heritage professionals. This investigative journey aimed to illuminate the intricacies of how engagement was planned, executed, and the extent of community involvement therein. By delving into the strategies employed and the perspectives of key stakeholders, this analysis sought to unravel the underlying mechanisms driving community engagement initiatives. The focus was on understanding the level of community participation and the strategies employed to ensure meaningful engagement

throughout the heritage conservation and urban development process. Through this exploration, a clearer picture emerged of the dynamics shaping the relationship between heritage professionals and the broader community within the Sunderland HAZ framework.

To capture a spectrum of viewpoints, I engaged with heritage professionals, volunteers, participants in the HAZ, and residents of the East End area. This approach aimed to elucidate how perceptions differ and shed light on the community's direct link to the area. Central to my investigation was an exploration of whether local communities wield any authority in the realms of heritage identification, interpretation, and management. Drawing upon Historic England Conservation and Principle Guidance, I explored the expectation for local communities to offer "alternative perspectives" that enrich the expert knowledge produced by the heritage process. This notion suggested that while expert knowledge undoubtedly plays a vital role in heritage identification and interpretation, it was complemented and enriched by the diverse perspectives and insights of local communities. By incorporating community contributions into the heritage process, the research aimed to broaden the scope of interpretation, challenge dominant narratives, and reveal hidden histories that may have been overlooked or marginalized.

To operationalize this framework, I conducted interviews with a range of stakeholders, including heritage professionals, volunteers, participants in the Heritage Action Zone (HAZ), and residents of the East End area as well as observing the engagement events. The interviews and observations provided invaluable insights into how engagement efforts are perceived and experienced on the ground. Through conversations with heritage professionals, I gained an understanding of the existing approaches to community engagement within heritage management. Professionals articulated their perspectives on the methods and perceived outcomes of engagement activities, shedding light on the prevailing attitudes towards community involvement. Concurrently, interviews with local residents and participants in the HAZ offered a different vantage point. These discussions revealed a spectrum of viewpoints, ranging from enthusiasm and active participation to scepticism and disengagement. By listening to the lived experiences and perspectives of community members, I was able to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding community engagement efforts.

5.3.1 Sunderland City Council's Engagement Framework

Sunderland City Council prioritizes community involvement in urban planning, aiming to empower residents, businesses, and stakeholders in decision-making processes. Key elements include early engagement, a comprehensive Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), and the development of the Sunderland Local Plan. These initiatives are to ensure that community voices are heard and reflected in planning decisions, promoting sustainability and aligning development with community needs and aspirations (Sunderland City Council, 2020). The existing policies outlined in the Draft Core Strategy and Development Plan 2015-2033 demonstrate Sunderland City Council's commitment to preserving and enhancing the city's rich heritage. These policies, particularly Policy BH7, BH8, and BH9, provide a framework for managing development while safeguarding historic buildings, conservation areas, and archaeological sites.

Central to this commitment are initiatives such as early engagement, the formulation of a comprehensive Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), and the development of the Sunderland Local Plan. These initiatives serve as pillars to uphold the values of inclusivity and sustainability, aligning development projects with the genuine needs and aspirations of the community (Sunderland City Council, 2020). The policies outlined in the Draft Core Strategy and Development Plan 2015-2033 exemplify the Council's dedication to preserving and enhancing Sunderland's rich heritage. Notably, Policies BH7, BH8, and BH9 provide a clear framework for managing development while safeguarding historic buildings, conservation areas, and archaeological sites. These policies highlight the intrinsic value of heritage assets, recognizing their pivotal role in contributing to Sunderland's character, local distinctiveness, and sustainable communities. By prioritizing the conservation and enhancement of designated and non-designated heritage assets, the Council ensures that structures and landscapes of historical significance are duly preserved for posterity. Policy BH8, for instance, delineates specific requirements for development affecting listed buildings, conservation areas, and historic parks and gardens. This stringent approach mandates that any alterations or additions are sympathetic and complementary to the historic fabric and setting, thereby promoting high-quality design and sensitive redevelopment within these areas.

Despite the strengths of these policies, there exist opportunities for improvement, particularly in the realm of community engagement and participation in heritage decision-making processes. While the policies acknowledge the significance of community involvement, there is a need for clearer guidelines and specific mechanisms for engaging with local residents and stakeholders.

5.3.2 Sunderland HAZ Engagement Views

The fieldwork has revealed a tendency to view community engagement as an endeavour that comes after the restoration of buildings, raising pertinent concerns about underlying motivations. These include the instrumentalization of community participation for project completion and the potential prioritization of visual appeal over community-driven needs. One interviewee (C2, Heritage Professional) articulated this perspective, highlighting the complexities inherent in the relationship between community engagement and project objectives.

> "It was very much about setting up a heritage action zone and then doing bits of engagement as and when the opportunity was there. So it was kind of there wasn't a planned programme as such."(Interviewee C2, Heritage Professional)

In discussing the Sunderland HAZ framework, it is crucial to delve into the nuances of its approach to community engagement within the context of its overarching goal of revitalizing the economy. Interviewee C2's insights shed light on the complexities surrounding this issue.

The observation that community engagement appears ad hoc, lacking a structured plan, raises pertinent questions about the framework's approach to involving the community in its regeneration efforts. Without a cohesive strategy for engagement, initiatives risk becoming disconnected from the genuine needs and aspirations of the community. This disconnect may be exacerbated by the sequential nature of community engagement, which occurs after the restoration of buildings, suggesting a perception of it being secondary to the primary goal of economic revitalization.

This raises broader questions about the project's priorities and underlying motivations. If community involvement is perceived merely as a means to an end, there is a risk of marginalizing community voices and overlooking their contributions to the regeneration

process. The sequential approach may inadvertently prioritize physical restoration over meaningful community participation, potentially undermining the long-term sustainability and inclusivity of the project.

5.4 Unveiling Dynamics of Community Engagement

> I am doing two projects actually there's that one so that is a program of activities that engage local people possibly visitors, but it's more focused on local people and learners in colleges and training centres in traditional craft skills and heritage learning so that is a program over three years, I think, is of hard hat tours of historic buildings that are being restored, work placements, so that people can come on site and develop skills. Video content, the less people see some of those skills in action, so you know videos of the replacement of windows on Mackie's Corner is one of them. I did walks and events, so all of those kind of things and that's running as part of the wider heritage action zone scheme. (Interviewee S2, Heritage Professional)

Interviewee S2's description of the two projects within the Sunderland HAZ framework presents the efforts to engage the community in heritage conservation. By offering a range of activities such as traditional craft skills programs, hard hat tours, work placements, video content, walks, and events, there is a diverse set of opportunities for community members to participate and connect with their heritage. The focus on skill development through programs like traditional craft skills and work placements is laudable. By providing tangible opportunities for residents to acquire new skills and actively contribute to heritage conservation efforts, these projects empower individuals and foster a sense of ownership over their heritage. 'The East End Remembered'[23], a documentary on the Garths in the East End of Sunderland, was another engagement effort and an oral history project undertaken by the CCT. Through a series of interviews with local residents, the CCT captured the lived experiences and memories of those who once inhabited the Garths. Spanning from the late 1930s to its eventual demolition in the 1990s, this documentary serves as a powerful testament to the enduring legacy and rich heritage of the East End community.

[23] The full documentary, 'The East End Remembered' can be accessed by following this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oj5IKyI2LVU

At its core, community engagement involves actively involving community members in decision-making processes, valuing their input, and empowering them to take ownership of their heritage. It's about creating spaces for dialogue, collaboration, and co-creation, where diverse voices and perspectives are welcomed and respected. This can take various forms, including participatory planning workshops, community-led initiatives, oral history projects, cultural celebrations, and public art installations, among others.

While examining the community engagement projects within the Sunderland HAZ framework, it was evident that while there were commendable efforts to involve residents in heritage conservation, there were also shortcomings that need addressing to truly contribute to regeneration efforts. The diverse range of activities offered, such as traditional craft skills programs, hard hat tours, and documentary projects like "The East End Remembered," initially seemed promising in fostering community involvement and empowerment. These initiatives provided opportunities for skill development, preservation of local history, and celebration of cultural heritage, all of which are essential components of regeneration efforts. However, the interviews with the local residents revealed that some people felt disenfranchised by the process. For instance, during an interview with a contributor to "The East End Remembered" documentary, it became apparent that his experience was one of disappointment and frustration. Despite participating in the project, he felt that their involvement was merely a token gesture, a checkbox exercise with little genuine interaction or inclusion in the decision-making process.

During the fieldwork, I observed and conversed with local residents about community events, revealing an interesting observation: the participants were not necessarily locals. While these places are not exclusive to locals, this raises the question: why do some individuals not engage? Understanding this discrepancy is crucial to enhancing community engagement in Old Sunderland. For instance, during the 3L event, approximately 10-15 individuals participated, while some residents chose to observe from behind their windows. While the scepticism towards the pop-up canopy featuring the Churches Conservation Trust (CCT) branding may have contributed to this disengagement, suggesting a religious event, it was still unclear why. Despite the organizers' efforts to raise awareness by enlisting the help of Gentoo to distribute flyers of the event, most residents remained disengaged. This

suggested that factors beyond mere awareness may be at play, such as cultural barriers or perceived relevance of the event.

Contemplating the present-day purposes and activities within specific contexts, it becomes evident that they can either reinforce or challenge existing power relations and social exclusions. These activities, whether in urban spaces, community engagements, or heritage conservation, hold significant potential to either perpetuate entrenched inequalities or create spaces for more inclusive participation. However, as we examine who benefits from these activities, it is crucial to recognize the structures of power that govern inclusion and exclusion. This recognition raises a series of important critical questions: Who actively participates, and who decides to stay on the sidelines or finds themselves sidelined?

This reflection raised a crucial point regarding the definition of "community." The interviews with heritage professionals did not provide a clear understanding of who constitutes the community in Old Sunderland. Therefore, we will delve into the multifaceted dynamics observed during various community activities and explores the complexities surrounding the definition of "community". Through interviews, observations, and reflections, we explore the layers of community engagement in Old Sunderland.

Who joins these events? For whom they intended?

The expert insights and project delivery report on the community engagement strand of HAZ provided valuable information about the type of activities being conducted; however, the specific definition of the community being engaged remained unclear. One of my key observations during my participation in community engagement workshops and walks was the question of who constitutes the community. There was some ambiguity around the definition of the community in Sunderland. Some of the heritage professionals appeared to use a broad definition that included all residents of the city, some extended beyond the residents to include anyone who visits or gets involved in heritage-related activities. All these different groups were lumped together under the term “community”. As I directed my attention towards the East End area of Sunderland, I asked about the communities in this area to gain a comprehensive understanding of the locality.

Who is the community in Old Sunderland? Who are the locals?

5.5 Crossing the Threshold: From Engagement to Community

As revealed in the chapter, many of the heritage professionals' interviews noted that a significant proportion of the community comprises temporary residents who move away after a short period, leading to a lack of continuity and a diminished sense of community and cohesion. This phenomenon has given rise to a perception of transience within the community. The long-term residents who have established deep roots in the area were barely mentioned in the interviews with the heritage professionals. The discussions were stirred toward the diverse range of activities and initiatives being organized for the community. Almost all of the heritage professionals interviewed often portrayed the East End as an unsafe area. One long term resident described the East End as "dead by postcode," implying a negative reputation attached to the place.

> The majority of people that live in that bit of Sunderland quite often just staying there then be moved on some to another place, like a temporary home for them until they move somewhere else in this city and 'cause it's not seen as a particularly desirable place to live. (Interviewee C2)

> But in Sunderland, I did some community engagement back in 2015 where they did say they didn't want to do residential that was one of the requirements because they were having problems with transient communities people coming in and coming out so there's people coming into an area not really caring for it and then just leaving. (Interviewee S1)

Another interviewee, life-long resident of the East End, mentioned the significant demographic changes. The area was once characterized by a working-class, tough community, but has seen changes due to the developments.

> Sunderland's East End went from proper working class where you had, you know, the docks and people work in shipyards. (Interviewee L6)

> There's examples of what happens now when you've got a transient area, very transient area, you get the wrong type of people moving in, and then it's quickly becomes a slum area, problem area, drugs, bad landlords, etc. (Interviewee L6)

However, the specific demographics contributing to this were not fully explained. As per the insights provided by one interviewee, the efforts to address housing challenges and provide support for individuals with criminal records inadvertently contributed factors to the formation of a transient community. Further investigation into the policy measures, the intricacies of this transient community and its impact on sense of belonging and community cohesion in Old Sunderland neighbourhood needed. The data on housing tenure and residency duration could provide important insights into the notion of transient community in this specific area. By analysing this data alongside with other relevant indicators could help to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics within the community. Unfortunately, the data was not available neither in the Census 2021 nor from housing associations. Among the heritage professionals' interviewees, no other individual provided more comprehensive or specific insights into the composition and characteristics of the community in question. This absence of data limited the depth of the analysis. In the absence of quantitative data, the research relied more on qualitative insights and personal narratives to understand the dynamics of the community. This proved to be valuable for capturing the experiential aspects of living in this area. Furthermore, the unavailability of needed quantitative data suggested several implications for engagement activities. Without precise information on the community, engagement activities is likely to struggle to target specific groups or address the needs of transient and long-term residents effectively.

Smith (2020) highlights the importance of recognizing that the term "community" can have different meanings for different people at the same heritage site. This is because people's understanding of the concept of community is often shaped by their pre-existing values, politics, and experiences. It is important note here that belonging and community are not solely determined by how long someone has lived in a particular place, and thus, a transient community does not necessarily equate to a lack of belonging or sense of community. Engaging with visitors to the HAZ sites to understand how they define their role in the community provided insights into their perceptions and perspectives. By actively listening to and engaging with multiple groups, including volunteers, long-term residents of the old Sunderland area, former residents who relocated due to slum clearances, individuals from Sunderland, and those with a connection to the site, you gain a deeper understanding of how each defines their role in the community and each group have different perspectives

and expectations regarding the heritage events. Knowing and understanding the composition of the community would have enabled tailored interventions, inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, and measurement of impact.

Within the discourse on community engagement strategies, the absence of a well-defined and context-specific understanding of the term "community" is a pivotal factor that often precipitates the adoption of a blanket approach. This inherent ambiguity surrounding the identity and composition of the community serves as a catalyst for uniform strategies that fail to account for the nuanced variations between different community groups. Consequently, this lack of definition can lead to a disconnect between the intended goals of community engagement initiatives and their actual outcomes. The blanket approach, characterized by a uniform set of activities and messaging applied indiscriminately across diverse communities, fails to account for the intricate and multifaceted nature of communities, disregarding the unique characteristics, needs, and preferences that distinguish one from another. The repercussions of such a strategy are multifarious, encompassing issues of exclusion, ineffectiveness, and the exacerbation of mistrust. By not customizing engagement efforts to accommodate specific community dynamics, marginalized and underrepresented groups are often overlooked, hindering the goal of equitable participation. When heritage projects draw inspiration from historic events or narratives without a clear grasp of the community they seek to engage, the risk of producing irrelevant or incongruous content becomes palpable. The narratives, symbols, or events chosen for interpretation may not resonate with the diverse values, experiences, or identities within the community, rendering them ineffectual or even alienating. Thus, the absence of a well-grounded understanding of the community can inadvertently perpetuate a blanket approach that overlooks the intricacies of community dynamics and leads to engagement efforts that lack relevance and resonance.

Community Voices

While the challenges posed by a one-size-fits-all approach to community engagement are evident, to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of such strategies, we will shed light on the perspectives of those directly affected by these initiatives. Through interviews and interactions, I endeavoured to capture their perceptions and experiences with the projects within the HAZ scheme. In this section, we delve into the voices and viewpoints of

individuals who reside within or are connected to the East End area, shedding light on their diverse perspectives and revealing the nuances of community engagement efforts. To achieve this, I sought to engage with members of the community. While conducting the interviews with heritage professionals, I asked to be put in touch with locals who could provide valuable insights into the engagement efforts. The first group of interviewees consisted of dedicated volunteers from Sunderland who actively participated in some of the heritage projects. Two of them were members of the Antiquarian Society, had a profound knowledge of the area's history and conservation work. They were not locals of the East End Area and had no connection. Instead, their engagement with the sites was rooted in their professional capacity, fuelled by their passion for history. While the input from these volunteers brought valuable perspectives to the table, the original intent was to connect with individuals who have a more intimate and personal connection to the East End area and who could offer a more grassroots or layman's perspective, capturing the sentiments of those directly embedded in the community. It is important note here that all the contacts provided by heritage professionals had professional capacity to an extent rather than layman or individuals with a more immediate and personal stake in the East End.

During my exploration of the heritage walks, I had the opportunity to engage with another group of individuals. Through casual discussions, it was revealed that all of the participants hailed from outside of the East End, with the exception of one person who had been forced to relocate due to slum clearances in the 1950s. These visitors were primarily from Sunderland and were motivated by their curiosity to witness the transformations unfolding in the infamous Old Sunderland.

> When I was growing up in Sunderland that was an area (referring to the East End) that you would never go to. It was just it was a kind of no go zone. (Interviewee C2)

> I would want to go there are like when we came from the heritage walk before my dad was like don't park in Hendon. (Interviewee L3)

> At the walks I realized that people do not come the East End as it was perceived as an unsafe place. (Interviewee V1)

However, the views vary depending on the individual perspective and experiences. Although many people held a negative images about the neighbourhood, some saw the place

differently. As I continued to listen to the interviews, I was struck by the different perceptions of the mentioned area. For some, it was merely a home to temporary home to be traded for something better while for others, it was a place that held cherished memories and a sense of home.

> I have never felt unsafe in Sunderland at all ever. (Interviewee V2)

> I knew lots of people from there, and I knew they weren't like that. So I guess, yes, it definitely has a reputation in the city as a scary area that you wouldn't with that, like where things happen. And but also, I guess, because I had the personal connections to the area, like I knew also, that wasn't true. (Interviewee S4)

These were the people who shared a deep connection to the neighbourhood, either through residing there for a period of time or having strong family ties. Through their eyes, a place's worth is not solely determined by its outward appearance or reputation. For these individuals, the neighbourhood was more than just a place on a map; it was a repository of memories and a source of identity. They had grown up on its streets, played in its parks, and celebrated life's milestones within its boundaries. One interviewee recounted a vivid childhood memory of walking past Donnison School with her father on their way to her grandparent's house (Interviewee V4). This seemingly ordinary memory held great significance for her, and it had a lasting impact on her life. It was this childhood memory that had led her to volunteer at Donnison School today. The experiences, intertwined with the neighbourhood's history, had shaped their perception. To them, the area represented more than just its physical attributes; it held a unique charm and character that was not immediately evident to outsiders. They saw the value in the community, the bonds formed over generations, and the resilience that had seen the neighbourhood through both good and challenging times.

This raised a question about the level of involvement of heritage professionals with the residents of the East End area and whether there was a perception that their contributions were not sought or deemed valuable. This prompted consideration of whether there might be a gap in the engagement process and suggests a potential oversight in initially connecting with those who could provide a grassroots perspective. This is why the community

engagement events served as a crucial and effective avenue to directly connect with the residents of the area.

During one such event, a 3L gathering, I had an encounter with a lifelong resident of the East End where she expressed her reservations about the ongoing projects. In her view, these initiatives were not direct contributors to improving her personal and the community's well-being. When asked about her views on heritage of this particular area, instead of offering her own insights on the area, she pointed me in the direction of one of the local pub owners. It was interesting that she did not believe she had any knowledge to contribute. The person she directed me to was also recommended by another 3L resident who mentioned that he had previously led walks and "done study in the past". To them, he was the one to reach out to talk about the heritage of this area but not them. What is particularly intriguing about this situation was that both residents seemed to view the pub owner as a spokesperson or someone with a significant role in preserving the heritage of the area, even though he did not have formal expertise in the heritage field. It became apparent that there was a prevailing lack of awareness within the community regarding their own role. There seemed to be an assumption that heritage-related activities were typically carried out by individuals with expertise or those they perceive as having specific role, like the pub owner. This observation shed light on a prevailing lack of awareness within the community regarding their own potential role in heritage conservation. It hinted at a broader issue where community members may not fully recognize the value and significance of their contributions or understand how their involvement could positively impact heritage conservation efforts. Moreover, there is a pertinent question about whether community members feel empowered or allowed to contribute to these initiatives.

To explore this further, I arranged an interview with a community member who had been repeatedly referred to by the others. This seasoned community member seemed as he assumed the role of a guardian of heritage. With roots that stretch deep into the area, his life's narrative was intricately woven into the tapestry of this locality. The interviewee highlighted that they, along with several generations of his family, have lived and worked, some of them as mariners and sea captains, in the East End of Sunderland. This long-standing connection demonstrated a strong sense of place and heritage. His voice carried a distinct tone of concern as he recounted the local authority's grand strategies and master

plans. He described these as both empowering and isolating, holding the potential to uplift or marginalize individuals deeply connected to this region. What was interesting that he did not merely dwell on bricks and mortar while talking about heritage. To him, heritage was not only confined to physical landmarks but also the very soul of the community. The way he talked about his role suggested that he viewed himself as a custodian of heritage of the East End, he has nurtured connections between generations, hosting historical talks and preserving artefacts, which is discussed in the objects section, and old photographs.

> We have worked for community for years. We have had numerous groups that come down and do historical sort of talks and show them all photographs and what we have because a lot of the older people memories are not exactly crystal clear, because the memories moved out the area. And obviously a lot of the places have been pulled down and stuff. (Interviewee L6)

His narrative revealed not just the story of one individual but also the collective experience of a specific community, grappling with the ebb and flow of history and progress. Being local is not a private activity; it is one that is performed in spaces that are, to some extent, public (Bernstein et.al, 2016). In English culture, the pub is the iconic 'local', but local shops, parks, cafes or community centres could be also thought of as providing a space for people to get together and 'be' local. Without space in which to meet, there is no local. There is a very real connection between both the built environment and community and they are independent (O'Brien, 2015). Pubs are often associated with important cultural traditions and events such as pub quizzes, live music performances, or holiday celebrations. Many pubs have regulars who visit the pub frequently, and over time, these regulars form a community of people who know each other well and share a common bond. This physical space provides a space for people to connect with their community and feel a sense of belonging. Without space in which to meet, there is no local (O'Brien and Matthews, 2016). The pub I was invited to meet locals was established in its current form in 1915 and boasts a rich history dating back to the 1600s, when a pub first graced its site. This venerable establishment exuded an air of timeless charm, inviting patrons to step into a world of tradition and camaraderie. As you step through the doors, you are greeted by the warm hum of friendly chatter of regular patrons as they await the evening's festivities. The crowd eagerly gathers for the weekly bingo game and karaoke extravaganza on Saturday nights.

The pub crowd I was introduced to by the owner recounted stories and shared insights. As we engaged in conversations, the anecdotes and recollections breathed life into their narrative and, by extension, into their shared understanding of the local context. When we sit down to chat and delve into the past, we often find ourselves immersed in nostalgia, reminiscing about the good old days. These conversations are not one-sided; they are a mutual exchange. The stories shared by the community become woven into our own narratives, enriching our understanding of our shared history. They shared with me stories about carnival, the life in the Garths, the close-knit community they used to have here. The exchange at the pub was a testament to the power of communal spaces, where the past became a vibrant part of the present. The exchange at the pub was a testament to the power of communal spaces, where the past became a vibrant part of the present.

However, amid the warmth of these interactions, there was an aspect that seemed overlooked—the exclusivity of the pub community. The sense of belonging within this group was defined by specific backgrounds, races, and classes. The term 'local' carried a nuanced meaning for this particular community, and the long-term residents or former residents from the East End expressed dissatisfaction with newcomers, attributing the decline in community cohesion to this demographic shift. The interviews suggested that demographic landscape has been transformed over the years. The East End, once characterized by working-class fortitude, now witnessing an influx of newcomers drawn by cheaper property prices. One interviewee (L6) was very concerned as he spoke of halfway houses and individuals transitioning from incarceration. He reflected on evolving social dynamics and the challenges that come with it. In his perspective, the presence of newcomers was perceived as a contributing factor to the perceived lack of cohesion within the community. During another interview, a notable nuance emerged when the interviewee exhibited hesitation in discussing another group of newcomers, the duration of these residents' presence in the area remained unclear, suggesting that the term "new" might be subjective. This reluctance appeared to be linked to my identity as a hijabi. The interviewee seemed to imply concerns about Muslim residents posing a threat to the sense of community, but the message was conveyed ambiguously, due to the awareness of my position as a hijabi. This underscores the delicacy required in navigating discussions about demographic changes, especially when addressing perceptions related to cultural or religious identities. This

tension between some of the East Enders and the other communities could be further analysed using social identity theory, which suggests that individuals define themselves in relation to the social groups they belong to. In the context of the East End, some long-time residents view the newcomers, drawn by cheaper property prices, as a potential threat to their established social identity.

The concept of being "local" as a social activity that occurs in spaces that are somewhat public and plays a role in bringing people together and fostering a sense of community and locality. However, it also acknowledges that not everyone welcomed or included in these spaces. The idea here is that even though these spaces can potentially promote a sense of local identity and community, there are still exclusion or limitations in terms of who is accepted or made to feel welcome. The way the pub community spoke suggested that while the HAZ sites have the potential to foster a sense of community and local identity, there were still barriers or exclusions that prevent everyone from fully participating or feeling at home in these settings. This is due to social dynamics, cultural factors, or even prejudices that exists within the local community.

The tension between different groups within the community, exemplified by the exclusivity observed in the pub community, raised pertinent questions about community engagement events and the role of heritage in bridging divides. Recognizing and addressing these challenges is essential for creating community events that are more inclusive. Including everyone may be challenging, however, initiatives can aim at promoting dialogue, understanding, and collaboration, which can help mitigate tensions and promote a sense of belonging.

The Sunderland HAZ project community involvement efforts are evident through various initiatives and events organized by partner organizations, local councils, and volunteers. The Heritage Open Days events showcased a commitment to engaging the community in immersive experiences. Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19 restrictions, the events provided opportunities for people to connect with the history and ongoing conservation efforts in the East End. The Canny Space, a civic hub, designed to connect the local community with the heritage of the building and the history of Old Sunderland. The emphasis on collaborative interpretation and community involvement in choosing stories and objects for the space demonstrates a commitment to empowering local residents and

building a sense of ownership. However, the community engagement efforts were not without challenges, as evidenced by the low response rate in the Heritage & Community Development project at the 3L Blocks. The initial lack of engagement prompted a re-evaluation of strategies, incorporating visual elements, incentives, and a more engaging format for subsequent events. The learning experience underscores the importance of adapting approaches to better capture the community's attention and participation.

The blanket approach to community engagement, arising from the vagueness surrounding the term "community," is pinpointed as a significant contributor to exclusion and inefficiency. This assertion is substantiated by observable instances where various groups coexist within the same locality. For instance, during 3L engagement event, numerous individuals chose to observe from their windows, perhaps hesitant to participate. Additionally, it was noticeable that volunteers predominantly represented specific demographics or affiliations, inadvertently excluding others.

A particularly telling encounter underscored this issue: one volunteer, mistaking me for a Sunderland resident, expressed excitement at the prospect of engaging with a Bangladeshi visitor, highlighting the missed opportunities in reaching out to diverse community members. These anecdotes underscore the necessity for a more nuanced and inclusive approach to community engagement, one that acknowledges and actively seeks to engage with the diverse groups that comprise a community.

The risk of overlooking nuanced variations between different community groups becomes apparent, hindering the goal of equitable participation. The narratives, symbols, or events chosen for interpretation seem not to resonate with the diverse values, experiences, or identities within the community, leading to engagement efforts that lack relevance and resonance. The voices of community members, particularly those directly affected by heritage initiatives, shed light on diverse perceptions and experiences. The pub emerges as a crucial communal space, fostering interactions and preserving shared histories. However, the exclusivity within certain groups raises questions about the inclusivity of these spaces and the challenges of fostering a sense of community amid demographic changes. The impact of demographic changes, concerns about local authority strategies, and the need to preserve a sense of community highlight the delicate balance between empowerment and marginalization. The experiences and perspectives of long-term residents, newcomers, and

heritage professionals converge in a narrative that speaks to the intricate interplay between heritage, community, and development. In moving forward, it is imperative to address the identified challenges by adopting a more nuanced understanding of the community, tailoring engagement strategies to specific community dynamics, and involving community members in decision-making processes. Recognizing the diversity within the community and fostering inclusivity in heritage initiatives will contribute to more meaningful and sustainable community engagement in Old Sunderland. Moreover, bridging the gap between heritage professionals and local residents, ensuring diverse voices are heard, and promoting cultural sensitivity are vital steps towards creating an environment where heritage is a shared and valued asset for all.

5.6 Summary

This chapter commenced with an exploration into the conceptualization of community engagement by heritage professionals, aiming to unravel the intricacies of existing policies and expert perspectives. It became evident that while there is recognition of the importance of community involvement, the absence of specific mechanisms or requirements for engaging with local residents and stakeholders is notable. Further inquiry delved into dissecting the community engagement strategies employed by partner organizations within the HAZ project, with a keen interest in understanding the community's role in shaping project outcomes.

Through a series of interviews with heritage professionals, volunteers, and residents of the East End area, diverse perspectives were identified and analysed to ascertain the extent of local authority in the identification, interpretation, and management of their heritage. However, the discrepancy between project intentions and community experiences emerged, highlighting a gap in the community engagement process. While initiatives aimed to empower residents, the reality for some individuals was one of marginalization and disempowerment.

This discrepancy underscores the importance of reevaluating engagement strategies to ensure inclusivity, accessibility, and genuine collaboration. Moving forward, addressing these challenges requires prioritizing education, empowerment, and meaningful participation. By bridging the gap between project objectives and community perceptions, heritage projects can be created that resonate with and empower the communities they

seek to serve. Through collaborative efforts, heritage conservation becomes a shared endeavour, enriching lives and safeguarding the legacy of our collective past for generations to come.

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Chapter 6: Understanding Sunderland

> The establishment of value, however 'value' is defined, is central to the act of conservation; individuals and societies only attempt to conserve the things to which they attach value. In addition, the very act of conservation gives a building, object, or environment cultural, economic, political, and social value. Thus, value is not an intrinsic quality, but rather the fabric, object or environment is the bearer of an externally imposed, culturally and historically specific meaning. (Pendlebury and Brown, 2021)

The first thing the lifelong resident of the East End mentioned was that his pub was sat right next to a historical site, where the first Southern Railway Station once stood. However, he lamented the neglect this site has suffered, among other grievances related to the HAZ. He believed that the interest and investment often hinged on the promise of financial gain. He was the first local of the East End I interviewed, after being immersed with professionals. The interviewee's disillusionment highlighted the potential disconnection between grassroots perspectives and professional viewpoints, prompting questions about how heritage was constructed for this heritage-led intervention. Understanding the dynamics of heritage conservation and its role in urban regeneration demands a multifaceted exploration of values, perspectives, and objectives. As Pendlebury and Brown (2021) assert, the establishment of value is pivotal in the act of conservation, yet it often varies across individuals and societies, reflecting culturally and historically specific meanings.

The instrumental use of heritage in regeneration plans was discussed in Chapter 5, explaining the objectives and the approach to heritage. The objectives and approach defined the way narrative was constructed. This chapter seeks to grasp the more nebulous concept of heritage among laypeople. The interviews with the people who lived in the study area revealed cultural, social, and geographical dimensions through the prism of intellectual, conceptual, or spiritual meaning and interests, which communities or individuals attached to this place (Boyd 2012, 175). The research emphasises the need for a broader recognition of community values that allows for the contextualisation of heritage across different urban

scales. In the context of Sunderland's Heritage Action Zone (HAZ), the interplay between grassroots perspectives and professional viewpoints becomes particularly poignant. The narratives of residents, like the individual from the East End interviewed here, revealed a disconnection between local values and the objectives driving heritage-led interventions. Their disillusionment highlighted the necessity of engaging with the people of Sunderland to explore the role of heritage in their lives and the way they form bonds of place attachment.

A sense of belonging and ownership is developed when people try to make associations with a site within a particular physical and social context. In order to understand this process, mapping the individual interests and the relationship between different interested parties was crucial for this research. Drawing from Serres' football theory, as detailed in Chapter 2, I aimed to comprehend how heritage perception played out in the East End context. Through interviews with locals and observation of engagement events, the chapter revealed the different dimensions of heritage, emphasizing the importance of understanding how communities form bonds of place attachment. The importance of community engagement and the potential benefit of meaningful dialogue they build with their environment to a project is discussed. Boyd (2012) argues that few components of that relationship will be static, and shifts in one necessarily affect all others, which would mean the past may be constantly reconstructed. Merely renovating a built structure may not be sufficient to ensure its reintegration, sustainability, or viability. It might even result in conceptualizing the structure as a new addition rather than an integral part of the existing realm. To address this challenge, we will carefully consider the reintegration of the HAZ sites, for instance Holy Trinity Church into Old Sunderland context after not being in use for four decades, and will examine its relationship to the surrounding context. The notion of heritage is an important concept encompassing the meanings, values, and traditions associated with places, buildings, and artefacts. In the context of Sunderland's Heritage Action Zone, this refers to specific structures that are designated as having significant historical, cultural, or architectural value. It was important to seek an answer to why a particular building was viewed as an important symbol of local history and Sunderland thus included in the HAZ by heritage professionals.

Assuming, in line with Graham and Howard (2008), that heritage is 'made' rather than inherited, and acknowledging the idea that memory 'works by reinvesting places with new

accretion of significance' (Kearns and Philo, 1993), it is crucial to recognize the importance of examining cultural narratives. These narratives unveil how the process of selection is undertaken, shedding light on who determines the final beneficiaries of a particular interpretation of heritage. By delving into these cultural narratives, the aim is to unravel the intricacies of heritage selection, gaining insights into the motivations, values, and stakeholders shaping Sunderland's regeneration initiatives.

In the preceding chapter, I enumerated the sites and organizations participating in the heritage-led regeneration project. Yet, a deeper exploration of the engagement events was necessary to discern what is considered 'heritage' in this context and how it contributes to the overarching project. To unravel the selection process of heritage, I now turn to the perspectives of those overseeing the projects in Sunderland.

The first part of this chapter will analyse the insights gained from the heritage walks and interviews focusing on the experiential aspects. I will explore the buildings, landmarks, and objects encountered during the walks, as well as the memories and stories shared by participants, which will provide a foundation for understanding the historical and cultural significance of the area. The second part analyses objects of Old Sunderland. I will share objects produced by the locals and my observations of a specific artefacts workshop. This analysis will help to further develop an understanding of (in)significance in this place. Ultimately, these two sections will provide a comprehensive understanding of the cultural and historical significance of the area. Analysing individual experiences and communal memories and stories shared by the participants provides a foundation for understanding the historical and cultural significance of the area for the people who reside or engage with the area.

6.1 Varying Perceptions: Viewing HAZ through Multiple Lenses

During an interview with a heritage expert (Interviewee C2), she noted, "If you ask people today about heritage, they associate it with what was in their touch, in their memory." According to her, for many, heritage resonates with the tangible remnants of their history, such as shipbuilding, coal mining, and glass manufacturing or iconic landmarks like the Sunderland Empire.

This sentiment was echoed by Interviewee S2 (heritage professional), who emphasized the transformative impact of regenerating historic buildings, citing the visual enhancement of the cityscape and its positive effects on footfall, high street diversity, and overall identity. Providing a specific example recounting the state of buildings at 170-175 HSW: "They looked atrocious, like they were literally about to fall down. The roof was coming off; there was no back on them; they've been set on fire. They were terrible." Further emphasizing the significance of investing in the historic environment, Interviewee S2 pointed to the visual enhancement of the cityscape through regeneration. The revitalization of structures like 170-175 HSW, situated prominently on a roundabout, not only improved aesthetics but also positively influenced footfall, contributed to high street diversity, and fostered an overarching sense of identity for the city.

S2 offered a scenario to illustrate this point: “I will say you know you have arrived in Sunderland because it has got these particular buildings in it. Rather than just arrived at an English city, and you know you are going to a new building, a new shopping centre. You could be in the North, you could be in the South, you wouldn't really know.” (Interviewee S2, Heritage Professional) But there was a critical gap in explicitly stating how these structures distinctly represent Sunderland or embodied its heritage.

These interviews highlighted the role of tangible heritage in shaping people's perceptions and fostering a sense of place. The example of the transformation of 170-175 HSW served as a tangible testament to the positive ripple effects of investing in the historical fabric of a city, transcending mere visual appeal to influence the city's identity and visitor experience. However, these were views of these interviewees rather than conclusion drawn from interactions with the community, which underscores concern regarding the disconnection between professionals and lay people. While professionals like Interviewee S2 recognized the significance of specific buildings in defining Sunderland's identity, there was a lack of clarity on how these buildings were officially recognized as representative of the city or embody its heritage.

Another perspective, as articulated by Interviewee C5, emphasized the need to "find a new vision for the era" and regenerate the area with a contemporary focus. The interviewee did not explain what he meant by this new era. Without a detailed exploration of what aspects of Sunderland's identity or heritage are being redefined or modernized, the notion of a 'new

era' remained somewhat abstract. The lack of explicit connection to Sunderland's heritage raises questions about whether the proposed changes might inadvertently compromise or dilute the city's unique historical narrative.

On the other hand, the interviewee S3 reinforced the importance of community involvement, quoting Paolo Freire to highlight the collaborative aspect: “I cannot think for others, nor others think for me and I cannot think without them." Like I can't tell them what to do**.** We need to create an ecology of people in Sunderland who is interested in this stuff(referring to heritage) and feel like it is there is otherwise what the Church will fall back into disuse and in 50 years’ time we will be having this conversation again about whether it is worth saving.’ (Interviewee S3, Heritage Professional)

These diverse perspectives raised questions about whose interpretations of heritage prevail in heritage-led interventions. The narratives revolved around a general sense of historical preservation and improvement, leaving room for ambiguity regarding the specificity of Sunderland's heritage that is valued.

Social value is defined as a collective attachment to place that embodies meanings and values that are important to a community or communities (Johnston 1994: 10). The concept is used here to encompass the ways in which the historic environment provides a basis for identity, distinctiveness, belonging, and social interaction. It also accommodates forms of memory, oral history, spiritual association and cultural practice associated with the historic environment (Jones, 2017). It is common for memories to be associated with physical structures or places that hold personal significance to us. For instance, the former church or the old pub holds memories of important events or experiences that the East Enders had there, such as weddings, funerals, or social gatherings with friends and family. On the other hand, memories can also be associated with simple acts. As participants walk through the area and encounter different structures, they may be prompted to recall memories or stories associated with them or experiences that occurred in a specific location, such as childhood visits to a grandparent's house or rescuing a kitten at the docks. Our brains have a remarkable ability to associate memories with different sensory cues, including sights, sounds, and smells. One of the former residents still vividly remembered an overpowering rotten smell in this area. It is possible that this smell was particularly potent, and thus, stuck

with her. This is why certain objects, places, or experiences can evoke strong emotional reactions and vivid memories.

6.2 Walking down memory lane

6.2.1 Heritage Walks

The things the participants experienced individually rather than communally, and thus were subjective, surfaced during the heritage walks. The walks required an attention to the active positions that visitors take up during their visit.[24] Instead of focusing on their immediate actions and responses, I approached the visit as a moment in a person's life, where a relationship is constructed between an individual biography, a social field that assigns value to different identities, and the particular set of symbols encountered during the visit. The participants' actions and responses were shaped by their personal biographies and social identities. A woman pointed out to a building on the High Street East stating that she used to go there for yoga classes. One remarked that her mother was a member of a biker gang linked to the Hells Angels. Another stated that he was christened at this very church, Holy Trinity. He was born in the East End. His father and brothers worked at the shipyards. When he was little, he could not remember the age, his family had to relocate due to the slum clearances in the area. He also added his father and brothers' involvement with building a new church with their community where they moved. Places impress themselves upon people through habitual experience. As Bachelard (1964) shows, the habitation of our houses provides an early framework for the child to orientate themselves, an image of stability. The past is held in place. Once habitually experienced in this way the re-experiencing of places also has the power to evoke memory (Mitchell, Thompson et al., 1997). For a certain group within the East End community, the Welcome Tavern provided this stability. The pub served as more than just a place to gather; it served as a foundational framework akin to Bachelard's notion of the house as a stabilizing force for a child. Just as the habitation of houses provides early orientation and stability, the regular patronage of the tavern created a similar sense of rootedness and familiarity within a certain group. In this context, the tavern became a repository of collective memories, holding the past in

[24] Adopted Dick's visitor experience approach. (Dicks, 2016)

place much like a cherished home. Moreover, similar to Mitchell, Thompson, et al.'s (1997) exploration of how re-experiencing places evokes memory, returning to the pub stirred nostalgia and recollections of shared experiences among its patrons. Thus, beyond its role as a mere social hub, the tavern emerged as a symbolic cornerstone of communal identity and continuity, where memories were not only created but also preserved through the passage of time.

6.2.2 Digital Memory Walk

The workshop “Memory walk-Old Sunderland and the East End” was organized by the Churches Conservation Trust (CCT) and run by one of the volunteers, who showed a series of images of the East End. The volunteer facilitated a meaningful interaction through the discussion on the photographs of the well-known places, structures, and murals of the East End. The focus was not predominantly on the places or what it was depicted in the photographs, but on the different memories that were evoked. The attendees talked about their ancestors or the stories they have heard from them. Respondents talked about why they felt a connectedness with the place, which transcended conventional legal ownership.

6.2.3 Memory Walk

At one of the HAZ community engagement events, that I attended to observe and recruit more interviewees, I met someone who had lived her entire life in the East End. She told me that if I was interested in the area, I should talk to the owner of the local pub and she kindly put me in touch with him. I met with him on a breezy summer day and sat outside his pub. It was very easy to find. Once you arrive the end of the East End, you see an old building standing alone against backdrop of ships. Sitting outside looking at the view and being surrounded with the scent the breeze brought, it was quite pleasant. Although it is much changed now, with the help of the information boards filled with old pictures of the shipbuilding heritage that were placed along the road, you can visualize how this area looked in the past. While approaching the pub, you first see a fabric banner (Figure 6.1) that you might think that was put up by one of the heritage organizations or the local authority and that this area was part of the Heritage Action Zone.

Figure 6.1 The banner displayed by the pub owner. Photography by Gulnur Cengiz.

However, to my surprise, the banner was made by the pub owner. He believed that the project was not reflecting the history of the area so he made one that he thought better described what the East End was about. This rough looking old pub called, the Welcome Tavern, had been standing here for almost 200 years. The current owner had been running it for 30 years. He had lived in this very area his entire life and run the local pub. Five generations of his family had lived in the East End. Some of them were sea captains and seafarers and their lives were pretty much intertwined with the river. He lived, worked, and socialized in the same place. It was obvious that he was proud of being from the East End and sharing the rich history of the place with me. I started with asking his background and moved to more specific questions about the regeneration works. He described the transformation of the area with the decline of the industry as 'the East End went from proper working class where you had the docks people working at shipyards to a rundown area however, retained that working class toughness'.

As his pub is only a walking distance to Seventeen Nineteen and he was involved in their work, I asked about the specific site. The pub owner stated that he had an affinity with the church for having many memories spending time in it. He stated that his parents had been married in this very church. He had been christened there. He had been a choir boy. Then all repeated again with him getting married and having his children christened at the Holy

Trinity just like his parents. Interestingly, the interviewee displayed a pragmatic approach rather than sentimental attachment to the past even though he had so many significant events of his life in the church. He was very open to the idea of change. He used the well-known phrase 'If you do not use it, you lose it' and said that the adaptive reuse was necessary if we want to keep the church or any other historic building. We talked about the reasons for the disuse of the church. As in many other places, the congregation of the Holy Trinity had got smaller over time, and consequently, the church had fallen into disuse and disrepair. He stated that the community was happy that the church was being restored. What angered him was that the heritage professionals barely communicated with the residents.

All the engagement events were merely a feasibility study or ticking a box exercise as recounted by active non-professional participants of the project. The consensus was, "It is not about what general public wants, it is about what the decision-makers want." Heritage professionals lost the East End community's trust with different issues.

He was not happy about the lack of interest in the history of the area. He believes that "If you do not align with the local authority's strategy you would be pushed aside." He pointed out the remains of the former railway station tracks and claimed it to be the first railway station of Sunderland, yet lamented the absence of thorough excavation. "No one cares about the history of the area unless there is money involved." When I asked him about his thoughts on the heritage of the area. He replied by saying it was more than only buildings.

Another interviewee, who underscored her deep roots in the area stating that her father had been a shipwright, shared similar concerns. Actively engaged in the community, she dedicated her time to volunteering with organizations and was deeply connected to local affairs. She expressed concerns about ongoing projects, emphasizing the absence of input from the community.

> I do not want to dismiss what has been done. But I feel that the community has been completely cut out. (Interviewee N1, Community member/volunteer)

In a conversation with funders, she reminisced about a cherished New Year's Eve tradition, and said that it "would be a lovely tradition to revive". To her disappointment, she later learned that the planned event deviated significantly from the original concept. Instead of

an outdoor celebration, the event was moved inside a church and transformed into a ticketed affair, excluding those who could not afford to attend. She conveyed her disappointment, emphasizing that the revised tradition failed to capture the essence of the original, fostering exclusivity rather than unity among residents.

With an invitation from the pub owner, I went to the Saturday bingo/karaoke night. I walked around and introduced myself to the people and had conversations. Considering the atmosphere, it was a friendly chatter where people shared their fond memories with each other and me. When I explained what I was doing, they started to share what they considered as significant. A recurring theme in these conversations was the Garths and the carnival. They recounted their memories of living at the Garths. This was not the first time I had heard about the Garths; a previous discussion with a professional had portrayed them as unpleasant and dilapidated places.

> We had things like in the East Enders this like really weird passionate love for the Garth buildings. (Interviewee S3, Heritage professional)

However, for these people, the life in these flats was an important chapter in the East End history. The regulars of the pub at the corner table shared excitedly how much they enjoyed living there. The strong sense of community that prevailed during those times was emphasized. Contrary to the earlier negative portrayal, one interviewee expressed a positive perspective, stating that life in the Garths was an improvement in living standards. He specifically mentioned the cleanliness and the availability of hot water as upgrades that enhanced the quality of life.

This series of conversations evoked a quote from another resident: "So perhaps it is in the local history, but it absolutely does not mean anything to anybody who lives in the area" (Interviewee N1 Community member/volunteer).

These long-term residents had a profound connection to the place, valuing aspects that may not align with authorized value systems or be recognized as significant by heritage professionals. During one-on-one interviews, participants raised concerns about the experts, not being from the area or failing to engage sufficiently with locals. This lack of engagement was seen as a potential reason for overlooking what is genuinely valued by the community. Those locals actively involved with local organizations expressed concern that the

perspectives of the community might be being ignored due to a lack of local involvement by experts.

My working assumption was that a community that has ties to the local industries would reveal the traumatic experiences of the closure of the manufacturing industries and its negative impact on their lives. I expected the interviewees focus on the bitter memories of the past. Yet, there was a tendency to not dwell on the negative aspects of the past among the interviewees. The interviews, surprisingly, revealed the other spectrum of human experience, which was happiness. The happy memories of the past. Ireland (2017) draws from Bourdieu's conceptual framework of habitus and argues that the habitus of happiness is culturally shaped and socially structured. Bourdieu (1977) defined habitus as "an internalised system of perceptions, conceptions, and actions common to all members of the same social group or class". Their shared world-view and their "apperception" of the world is structured by these "internalised structures" and "schemes of perception". In Bourdieu's view, the habitus instils a worldview in its subjects by imparting cultural value to things, whether they are material or immaterial. It is important to note that memories of the past can be very selective and highly unreliable, which causes people to misremember events and cast them in a rosy glow (Mitchell *et al.,* 1997) However, analysing the participants recollections of the past to understand why they remembered or shared certain things helped me to understand whether the interviewees only idealizing the past or whether their experiences genuinely reflected a broader sense of happiness and contentment.

All of the locals I met at the Welcome Tavern shared their experiences of living in the Garths, making an unexpected effort to persuade me that it was in fact a good place to live and an even upgrade as they appreciated the amenities and features that the Garths offered, such as indoor plumbing, heating, and modern kitchen facilities, as well as their fond memories of the old carnival. Heritage professionals viewed the Garths as unattractive or unremarkable from an architectural standpoint. In this context, habitus reveals that the residents of the Garths made value judgements based on their perception and conception of those buildings and their experience living in them, not on aesthetic or architectural value.

The life was better in the 'good old days' ethos was quite palpable during the conversations and revolved around the disappearing sense of community. Our memory for a bounded

event in time can be a lot more favourable, positive, and fulfilling than was the actual experience of the event itself (Mitchell *et al.,* 1997). What is more, the past was better ethos goes beyond recalling passive memories; we actively use these memories while thinking about future. We use the rosy retrospections to predict what we will and will not enjoy in the future. When we think about a future event, we predict that it is going to be great just like the similar events are in our biased positive memories. Scholarship indicates that people often experience nostalgia during times of rapid societal or personal change when they feel heightened anxiety and fear. (Davis 1979, Sedikidis et al. 2008). Given the ongoing changes in the area is potentially triggered negative feelings and fuelled their desire to safeguard traditions from any outsider as a coping mechanism. Those who feel nostalgic about how life used to be and how as a community they were bound by the common things they used to do together.

The Saga of Holy Trinity Church's Organ

While heritage professionals were focused on bringing the Holy Trinity back to life as a community hub, the demise of the organ and church pews upset the East Enders. Both losses had had a profound impact. The first time I heard about the Church's organ was at an interview with one of the heritage professionals. As mentioned earlier, the restoration of the Holy Trinity Church was taken over by the Churches Conservation Trust (CCT). While talking about the community engagement events run by the CCT and the public's response to the changes happening in the area, the interviewee brushed over the fact that there was a deep resentment from the public over the sale of the organ.

> Whilst the Church has been with us since the 80's and it was vacant. It was occasionally opened, while it was safe and we had a volunteer who would bring which show people around and they would have very, very occasionally play the organ or they would have a church service in there. (Interviewee S2, Heritage professional)

The same issue came up again at a conversation with another project manager who stated,

> Before I started, there was a lot of consultation for the restoration, in terms of things like what was important, what did they want us to preserve. There was a real

> miscommunication over our organ so we were not able to raise enough money to save our organ. We completely lost community backing for a little bit. They thought that we had gone back on our promise. That we sort of were not paying attention to what they wanted. And we have had to work really hard to prove that we were not trying to get rid of anything we were just happy to be practical. (Interviewee S3, Heritage professional)

In both interviews, the same subject was discussed when we talked about the response of the locals to the changes in the area, particularly the transformation of the former church. After further research, I came across a series of articles in the local newspaper the *Sunderland Echo*[25]. The plans for the organ were reported in this local newspaper. The first article's headline clearly articulated the reaction against the proposed plan of the organ's removal in 2018.

> *Hands off! Fight to stop historic Sunderland church organ being lost to Germany. (Sunderland Echo, 21st Nov 2018)*

The article reported that the Trust had a plan to take out the instrument from the Holy Trinity and had made arrangements with a firm planning to install it in a church in Germany (Sunderland Echo, 21st November 2018). The article quoted the Trust's spokeswoman,

> The position of the organ in the church presents significant challenges to the proposed repairs of the historic fabric of the building with the work urgent due to damp and water ingress. Given the cost constraints of the project, the CCT felt it could not justify the additional expenses associated with storing and reinstalling the organ. Furthermore, the area freed up by the removal of the organ could benefit the overall regeneration scheme by enhancing the flexibility and utility of the space within the site.

In response to this decision, members of the 'Sunderland - East End and Hendon Born and Bred' Facebook group launched The Save Our Heritage appeal (Sunderland Echo, 21st November 2018). The group had set up an online petition and taken to the streets of

[25] Sunderland Echo is a daily newspaper serving the Sunderland, South Tyneside and East Durham areas of North East England since 1873.

Sunderland to collect names as they fought to keep the organ, parts of which dated from 1889 (Sunderland Echo, 21st Nov 2018). It was intriguing to read that they had made a point of highlighting the organ's historic components. While the motivation behind the campaign was not the organ's historic value by the definition of age, people who were part of the campaign felt strongly that the organ was the heart of the church. The associative value of the organ and place urged them to take an action. However, they felt compelled to second-guess a value typology of heritage significance that would make the organ "conservable" for the authorities and made their case accordingly. Where had this thinking stemmed from? Why was there an assumption that heritage had to be defined and validated with formal definitions of heritage significance and the criteria used to assess this? The group appeared to feel pressured to conform to the institutionalized definitions and criteria of heritage significance and believed that only advocating for the value of the organ based on their own personal experiences and associations with the place would not be enough to keep it. This thinking that heritage needs to be defined and validated with formal definitions of heritage significance and criteria used to measure it is often rooted in the institutional and regulatory structures that govern heritage preservation. There are formal systems in place for assessing the significance of heritage sites and determining their conservation status in many countries. Historical, architectural, or cultural significance are typically used to evaluate the value of a site. It can be helpful in guiding heritage preservation efforts and ensuring that resources are allocated effectively. However, this approach can also lead to a narrow focus on certain types of heritage, and exclude other forms of heritage that may be less recognized or appreciated by the wider community. The community's efforts to preserve the organ were fuelled by the personal connections and associations with the place, rather than formal definitions of heritage significance. However, the institutionalized definitions and criteria of heritage preservation put pressure on the community to conform, highlighting a broader tension between community values and regulatory structures governing heritage preservation. While formal criteria may have guided conservation efforts, it is important to recognize the subjective and personal nature of (in)significance, as exemplified by the community's impassioned campaign to save Holy Trinity Church's organ.

It was clear that heritage could be in very different forms for the East End people. They wanted the preservation of historic buildings and landscapes not because of they are

aesthetic qualities but because they represent a connection to the community's past, and embody values such as continuity, resilience, and connection to place.

> It is part of the building's history but it is not of such importance that its retention should be sought at all costs, especially when there are more pressing repair priorities. This together with the freer use of the north aisle and the difficulty found in funding its repair means the decision falls in favour of its permanent removal. (Sunderland Echo, 29th Aug 2020)

This statement from 'church bosses' shows the decision making process in the day-to-day practice of heritage conservation. This statement from the Trust's spokeswoman stated that the decision on permanently removing the organ was made through balancing its historical significance and the value of freeing up the space it occupied. This decision also took into account the likelihood of the organ ever being repaired again. Prior to being dismantled, the CCT recorded every note that can be replicated by a sound engineer to be played electronically through a keyboard, as part of learning and engagement work and to ensure future generations have access to the sounds of the organ (Interviewee S2, Heritage professional). Heritage professionals believed that the removal of the organ and repairs would also benefit the character of the interior of the church and help to secure its future. Yet, this value assessment was a foreign concept for the laypeople. The reasoning behind the sale of the organ was viewed as a practical solution to a problem. Reducing an object which was meaningful to the community to an impediment that needed to be removed.

Losing the organ meant sacrificing the very thing that brought the community together. A series of articles followed. All released the latest updates on the controversial issue. The latest article announced that the Historic Sunderland church organ almost ready to start its new lease of life in Malta, 2,000 miles away from its home (Sunderland Echo, 28th Feb 2022). Most viewed the removal of the organ as their heritage being uprooted from its home. Even though Holy Trinity was only one of the chapters over the course of organs life, according to the HE records, the organ was a late addition to the church, erected in 1936 (Sunderland Echo, 29th Aug 2020).

> They ripped the church's heart out. (Interviewee L6, Community member)

> They used to have meetings and people, people are now fed up with them really. Because you turn up and you're talking to them. And it is like, well, what is the point? You know, with the setup, we raise money to save the organ? Then it gets put it in a warehouse and all of a sudden, oh, it is unsavable. Now it has to go. You know, what is going on here? Like you are doing the exact opposite. What is the point? You have got no control over what they are seeing what they do. It's all about the money. (Interviewee L6, Community member)

In this case, the controversy was not only that the organ did not fit within formal system of classification. The decision to keep or sell was based on a combination of factors, including cultural significance, preservation costs, and financial needs. For the Trust, the benefits of selling the organ outweighed the potential drawbacks. On the positive side, selling the organ generated an income that was used to support the project and freed up a valuable space that put to a different use, as the representative stated. However, the sale of the organ also led to a loss of credibility and community support, and resentment towards those involved in the project. People felt that a valuable cultural asset had been lost and that the project was no longer aligned with their values.

Different senses help us to remember places, memories, or people. Some emotions are produced by the material and social world of discourse and politics, and they connect and align individuals with communities or bodily space with social space, and thus, some materials and places particularly perceived as more significant (Ireland, 2020). The sound of the organ was an essential part of the church. It served as a fundamental component of the worship experience. Worshippers engaged with the church through various sensory means, including listening to hymns played on the organ while sitting in the pews with their families. These sensory experiences created a sense of familiarity and belonging, transforming the church building into a cherished home where they actively participated in communal rituals and gatherings. “How can anyone in the future walk into Holy Trinity and look at all its traditions if it’s gone? How will they get a sense of its beauty if it is just a glorified community centre?” asked one of the campaigners. Their view was that the removal of the organ was the next stage in turning it into a “glorified community centre” and that they wanted to preserve “the heritage of the building”. When we unpack this rhetorical question, it conveys that there was not only backlash against the loss of the

organ; the campaigners were cynical about the revamping of the former church as well. The Holy Trinity Church was in a dire state and not being actively used. Why was the concept of a new community hub strongly criticized by the campaigners? What would make the church significant and worth-conserving if it is not the tangible aspects of the church? Would this suggest that the building is considered to be a mere shell containing "the traditions of Holy Trinity"? This implies that the entire church might be thought as a cabinet where curiosities and rarities are stored. The immaterial aspects attached to objects that people believe needs to be kept. Harrison (2018) postulates that sometimes memories and events attached to specific objects or places and these 'things' could be useful for making those stories tangible although they were not in and of themselves 'heritage'. This prompts us to pay attention to how subject, object, place, and experiences become meaningful when they all come together in a specific time and context. Recognizing that there can be value in the application of terms such as unimportant and unworthy when used in a situational or relational sense might create an opportunity for heritage practices that engage with memory, materiality, emotions and the sensuality of places. So what do these artefacts convey? An anchor to their past or a constant that would not change.

The letter from William Elliot suggests a similar notion. (Figure 6.2) This is a poignant story about a young boy's desire to be remembered. Elliot was a 13 year-old boy living in the orphanage for 6 years. He was a choirboy who wrote a note on the back of a service booklet in 1897 and hid in the back of a church pew. In the letter, he asked "tear it or throw it away but keep it in remembrance of me". He was due to the leave the orphanage later that year and wanted to leave something behind that would be discovered by someone else in the future. This may suggest that the church was a place of permanence and stability for Elliot. The church would have been a constant presence in his life, with the pews and the building itself remaining in the same place year after year. By leaving his note in the church, he may have felt as if he was leaving a piece of himself in a place that he knew would remain unchanged and would always be there.

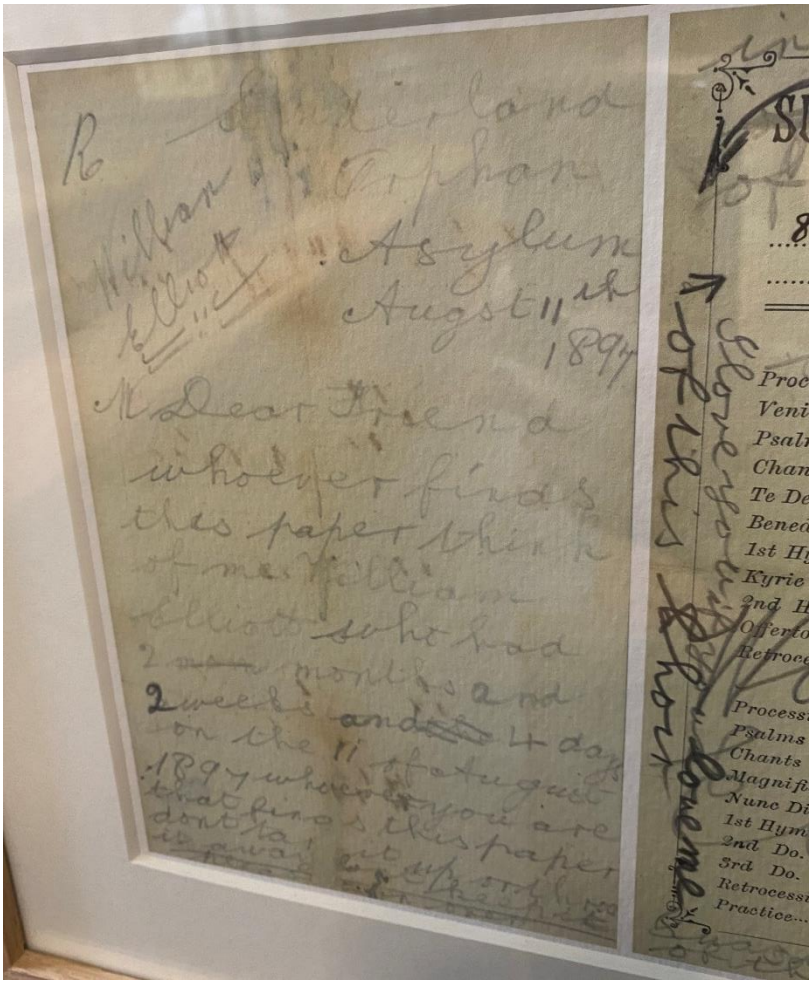

Figure 6.9 William Elliot letter found hidden in a pew during restoration. Photography by Gulnur Cengiz.

Selling the organ was not the only controversial decision by the trust. 53 pews from the church were sold online via a London firm for £140 a piece (Sunderland Echo, 2021) Why not embrace and engage the community through the objects they might have a connection? This question was raised during an interview with an East End resident while talking about the sale of the church pews. When I asked how keeping the pews would help their connection with heritage, he responded, “People would have saved a little bit of their heritage”. He in fact saved one pew, which he proudly showed me later with rest of his collection. His suggestion was putting the pews up for sale to the local population and giving people the opportunity to be able to own a piece of history. It would have made them a part of heritage recovering process. This could both contribute to the renewal of the church and not to lose an object represents their connection to the church. “When you have an affinity with a building, it is different.” Even if it will not serve a purpose in one’s life anymore, still

the memories attached to the object make it significant. The meaning of objects become clear in narrative contexts. A piece of wooden furniture was his connection to his past. While the pew looked entirely out of place and absurd at the back of the pub, hidden under the boxes and shopping bags (see Figure 6.3), it was obviously his prized possession not only because of the attached memories but also for what it represented, a victory against the heritage professionals.

Figure 6.10 Church Pew. Photography by Gulnur Cengiz.

He 'rescued up' the pew as he had a deep connection to the church. I noticed that he picked the word rescue. It was clear throughout the interview that he considered the professionals as the villains who benefits from his/their heritage. He said that his grandmother might have sat on the pew; then why should someone else have it when he had all this history? The

pew was only one of the items in his 'heritage' collection. The walls of the pub he owned were filled with old photographs and maps of Sunderland. He also showed me a mural (see Figure 6.4) that was well known among the long-term residents.

Figure 6.11 Mural. Photography by Gulnur Cengiz.

A group of women I met at the Seventeen Nineteen were chatting about the mural and wondering about its current whereabouts. They believed that it would be a great addition to the former church. One of them mentioned that it used to be at Boars Head, Coffee Shop & Boutique Hotel in Sunderland East End has been here since 1724 overlooking The River Wear, and now hanging on another wall. The mural was done in 1993 with the instigation of Fred Fowler who was part of East End Pop In. This was a mural depicting the key characters and events of Sunderland that were considered an integral part of this area. Jack Crawford, a sailor, Jack Casey who was a successful boxer grew in the old orphanage; Winnie Davis, a Spanish immigrant, who had important contributions to the Carnival; FA Cup in 1937 when Sunderland won; fishwives; St. John's Church built for overspill as the congregation was so large. An ice cream car was also painted, representing the ice cream parlours in the area, which were set up by the Italian immigrants. The iconic bridge, ships, and old orphanage were also included. The interviewee (L6) said that this mural encompassed all the important things in this area. Everything important to 'them'. This made me to take another look at the

mural to see what was not in there. Neither the museum nor the Holy Trinity Church was depicted in this mural. At the time this mural was made, the church was not in use. However, all of the other characters and buildings were long gone as well. What made the church irrelevant then? Or what made others more significant? What are things part of their system of social relations? Harrison (2018) defines heritage as an active assembling of a series of objects, places, and practices that we choose to hold up as a mirror to the present, associated with a particular set of values that we wish to take with us in to the future. This definition highlights the active and intentional nature of heritage, as well as its connection to our present and future values. The mural and pub, whether intentionally or unintentionally, reflected this specific group's own values, beliefs, and experiences. The pew or mural added additional layers of meaning and significance to the pub. The pew provided a tangible link to both the area's and the pub owners history. The mural helped to tell the story of the community in a visual and engaging way. Overall, displaying old photographs, maps, and other objects is a powerful way to create a sense of place and connection in a community. By doing so, the pub owner has created a unique and interesting environment for his patrons. This made the pub more than just a place to drink or socialize - it had become a hub for local history and culture. This could also be seen as a contribution to the preservation and celebration of local history and culture. His collection expressing deep appreciation for their history and heritage helped me gain insights and perspectives that were not easily expressed in words. His approach to ownership will be elaborated in the following chapter.

We can consider in this context, as a potential object lesson in (in)significance, the use of the objects the interviewee collected as his process of "saving" his heritage and his intervention to heritage sphere. His pub/museum used the affordances of material culture or (in)significant objects to constitute an experience of what he claimed revealed the East End's heritage. His collection was reimagining of a form of effective heritage that was not uprooted from its neighbourhood and it was cared for in its home where it could evoke the everyday experiences of residents and express something of their emotional lives. They valued the embodied experience of materiality and emotion rather than a representation of a value or a particular past. The (in)significant thus becomes significant within the context of everyday happiness (Ireland, 2020).

6.3 Communicating knowledge through objects

> *Evocation implies an open dialogue between the object, the maker and the consumer in constructing meaning* (Kwint 1999, 3).

Prown (1995) argues that an artefact –a made object, whether you call it art or not –is a historical event, something that happened in the past. But unlike other historical events, it continues to exist in the present and can be re-experienced and studied as primary and authentic evidence surviving from the past. Artefacts have been made or used by people in the past and have cultural or historical significance and can be a powerful tool for engaging with heritage, as they offer a tangible and personal connection to the past. Artefacts produced by locals can become powerful symbols of local identity and pride and an expression of what is deemed significant. Another way in which artefacts can be used to engage with heritage is through community projects and events. Heritage organizations or community groups might organise exhibitions, workshops, or public talks that can bring people together to share stories and knowledge and can help to foster a sense of connection to local heritage. By (re)interacting with them, people can gain a deeper understanding of historical and cultural contexts, and can develop a sense of connection to their own cultural heritage. We will be looking into a specific context in this chapter to explore how these methods are implemented. The CCT running the Seventeen Nineteen, in the former Holy Trinity Church, had carried out various projects and collaborated with artists in an effort to engage with the public. This section will delve into the events and projects aimed to engage the locals with heritage through artefacts by showcasing, studying, interpreting or producing them. I will start with delving into the objects accumulated or created by the locals. Subsequently, I will proceed to the events organized by the organizations and conclude with a discussion. In this chapter, while scrutinizing closely the use of artefacts in community engagement and analysing the participant reflections, as well as the objects that are being produced by the current residents of the East End, I will be asking the following questions: Do the objects embody retentions from the past? How do objects act to promote remembrance or forgetting? The contents of this section are a meditation on these questions.

Objects can have multiple, and sometimes contested, meanings. Diverse methods of inquiry enable people to connect on a deeper level and reveal tacit knowledge. People make

connections in highly personalized ways: families, experiences, and the past shape their perceptions. The daily activities of people in settlements were shaped by the performances they witnessed growing up in certain settings (Houston and Stuart 1998; Jones, 2007). Collecting objects can be a rewarding and meaningful way to share your local history and heritage with others. The act of collecting and preserving artefacts can itself be a way of creating and preserving tacit knowledge. For instance, one of the interviewees had a 'heritage' collection, which will be further elaborated later in this chapter.

Another local was able to reify his heritage as an object. He was a former fisherman and upholsterer. (Interviewee L7) He grew up in the East End, moved into the Garths after slum clearances and now residing in a terrace house. Being about 85 years old, he witnessed profound changes in this area. Most of his memories were linked to the shipyards. Even his cat has come from the shipyards. He found her when he was out for his daily walk, recommended by his doctor. Due to his limited mobility, he can only go to places close by. However, he does not have to travel too far as he lives only minutes away from both the pub and docks. The places he enjoys and he feels belong. He talked about the ships with a great passion and enthusiasm. He has translated his passion into an object (see Figure 6.5) using his skillset and locally sourced materials. An acquaintance of his provides large scallop seashells, about 10cm wide. The seashells are used as a stand. He fills the inner surface of the scallop with white spray foam as a water feature with some blue paint splashed, places a clipper ship or a fishing boat sailing out on the ocean to catch some fish, and adds sharks made out of cardboards prowling in the ocean. To him, the process was more important than the final product. While I was praising his work and thanking him for gifting me a model, he was ensuring that I understood the process of the production, how the ship I was holding in my hand had come to be.

Figure 6.12 Ship and Boat Models created by Interviewee L7. Photography by Gulnur Cengiz

A person's possessions can reveal one's character, interests, and quality of life if they are interpreted carefully (Grassby, 2005). The making of the ship models was his way to materialize his memories and his history. Heritage is not just a collection of objects, places, and practices from the past that we should preserve for their own sake. Instead, heritage is something that we actively assemble and choose to hold up as a mirror to the present. In other words, we select certain aspects of the past that we believe are relevant and valuable to our present and future. The objects, places, and practices that we choose to preserve and celebrate are not arbitrary, but are associated with a particular set of values.

Another case in point is by also someone else, Interviewee L8, I met at the local pub. The night we met, she told me about a book that would contribute to my research. The emotions the photographs arose in her, the meanings she attributed to them revealed. The book was almost a family album as these people looking out at us were her and her husband's relatives, friends, and neighbours. Pictures of her granddaughter and her friends were in there. She pointed out Millie's sister, who I met at the pub, and told that they had lost her fortnight ago. The information this book elicited generated insights that I was not able to obtain in verbal inquiry. It helped her to communicate her story and her perception of heritage. Photo elicitation techniques have been widely used in qualitative interview studies (Harper, 2002). In this case, this method was not intentionally used. The interviewee's connection to her neighbourhood and heritage, as revealed through the way

she talked about her husband's book, suggests that heritage is more than just a collection of artefacts or historical facts for her. It is about the people, events, and stories that are passed down through generations and are deeply rooted in a particular community or place. The book represents a tangible link to the interviewee's heritage and allows her to reconnect with the people and events that have shaped her past. By discussing the book with pride and enthusiasm, she demonstrated a sense of ownership and belonging to her neighbourhood and heritage. This notion of heritage is important because it highlights the importance of community and collective memory in shaping our sense of identity and place. It also emphasizes the role that personal connections and stories play in preserving and passing down our cultural heritage to future generations. By putting together a book, her husband was able to capture and share their unique experiences in Hendon.

> Always came back to Hendon. It is where my roots are. (Interviewee L8, Community member)

Unearthing Treasure: Objects Workshop at Seventeen Nineteen

Now we will be moving on to the next part, where we will be discovering the objects that were chosen to be preserved and used for engagement events. In February 2022, against the backdrop of Seventeen Nineteen, the former Holy Trinity Church, an event organized by the CCT unfolded. The Hidden Stories introductory workshop—Music, making, and more with Verity Quinn—brought together a group of people, all woman aged over 50, with deep ties to Old Sunderland. These participants embarked on a journey of rediscovery and reminiscence. This gathering aimed to unveil the hidden narratives that weave through the fabric of their lives using the selected objects. Guided by Verity Quinn's expertise, attendees delved into the rich tapestry of their memories. The workshop aimed to investigate how people talk about the items and they articulate their relationship to them. This method enables to access the range of human emotions and make a more holistic contribution to our understanding. Hidden Stories introductory workshop—*Music, making and more with Verity Quinn*—was organized by the Seventeen Nineteen, former Holy Trinity Church, inviting heritage venue volunteers in Sunderland to explore their collection.

The event started with a tour of the former church and ended in the old meeting room where a number of artefacts were placed on the large wooden table waiting to be deciphered by the participants. (See Figure 6.6)

Figure 6.13 Artefacts for the workshop. Photography by Gulnur Cengiz.

Object elicitation method entail participants being given a set of objects to explore, which provoke responses in participants; with people responding in different ways. Object-focused questions such as

- What is it made of?
- Where is it from?
- How was it used?

were raised and answers to these questions opened up further research areas about how objects connect people and express knowledge and cultural values. We gathered around the table. Everyone had one object in a white wrapping sheet. We all unwrapped our objects. We went around the room, presented the item, and reflected on it together. Among the objects, there was a key, a christening spoon, a leather notebook, a glass bottle, a rusted handle-like piece, and an envelope. In this discussion, it is also essential to understand how material culture is employed in the performance of remembrance. Jones (2007) suggests the materiality of objects and the performance of remembrance are closely interwoven and objects act to promote remembrance or forgetting something that is dependent on the performative capacities of materials. Thus, an object highly coloured or decorated, dull or worn, or easily fragmented, or able to resist destruction and decay can be more powerful cue than another. As we delved deeper into the discussion of each object and its role in the performance of remembrance, this became clearer.

The participants tried to make sense of the objects given to them. Some of the items were still in good condition, and it was fairly easy to deduce their use. This process of deduction was informed by various factors, such as the object's physical characteristics and any cultural or historical knowledge that this specific group had. Individuals may have different experiences, interests, or levels of knowledge when it comes to heritage items. Therefore, some items were more immediately recognized or significant to certain individuals, while others did not resonate as strongly. The spread on the table were very different from each other in terms of their size, age, and material. The rusted handle-like piece, for instance, showed significant signs of wear and tear. The shape and material suggested that it had come off one of the doors. The person who was looking at the object held it up to the meeting room’s door to see whether the material matched and any similar pieces were available. Otherwise a meaningless rusted piece became meaningful in this context. The next item was an empty glass bottle; it was small and nicely decorated. The participant opened the lid of the bottle to understand its content. However, the only odour she could get was dust. The glass bottle remained as a mystery. The item did not lead to more conversation, as it was not traced back to the church or seemed relevant to the participants.

The christening spoon was as obvious as it gets. It was the most obvious item among the collection in terms of its purpose, and interestingly, that did not mean a long discussion or more interest from the participants. However, the discovery of an old rusted key sparked a lively conversation. Despite its apparent lack of utility—as the artist confirmed it did not fit any of the doors—the key intrigued the group. It was revealed that the church possessed a bucket of similar keys. This discussion became more interesting when it was diverted to the chest sitting in the corner of the meeting room. During the restoration process, there had been efforts to open this chest, however, none of the keys found in the church opened it. This mystery captivated everyone, leading to a flurry of suggestions and potential solutions, including enlisting the help of a local locksmith who could help. The next item was a visitor book. It was a meeting book of Sunderland Township, which was a history group that one of the participants said used the church as a meeting space. We looked into the notebook to see the dates when they had used the former church.

When discussing heritage items, some items were less relevant or interesting to the participants than others. Though Jones (2017) argued about the power of tangible aspects of the artefacts, the performance of remembrance was not only triggered by the physical attributes of the objects. The familiarity and their tacit knowledge played an important role in remembrance. Some of the items were still in good condition, and it was fairly easy to deduce their use. However, the good state of some objects, though contributing to discerning their identity, did not necessarily mean they were more effective in sparking interest. The participants were more interested in the objects that were linked to a specific place or memory and this lead to more in depth conservations. The next item was very successful in doing that. The object was a brown envelope. Someone opened the envelope and extracted its content, which was an article published in *Sunderland Echo* in 2019 titled 'The day it rained black puddings in Sunderland'. After all the artefacts, all physical materials that had survived into the present, an article that seemed strange and boring, turned out to be the most relatable and engaging item. The participant briefly explained what the article was about. Back in the late 1920s and early 30s, the East End was infamous for its overcrowded housing and unsanitary conditions. The local government took action and enlisted the Sunderland Housing Association to investigate the problems. The investigation report included derogatory remarks about the East End residents, and in particular, the

women, made by one of the landowners. The East Enders were infuriated by these damning criticisms. On the day, the landlady came to collect the rents, the women and children were waiting for her with sausage and black pudding.

> The sky was black with flying food and Agnes (the landlady) ran for her life, jumping on board a moving tram and disappearing into town – and back to Newcastle where she had come from.

None of the participants had any recollections of the event. However, two of the participants had remembered an old rhyme and begun slowly singing.

> All of a sudden a dirty black pudding came flying through the air
> Missed my mother hit my father and knocked him off the chair

Once they started singing, some recalled hearing this from their parents or grandparents. The song prompted the participants to draw from 'tacit' knowledge, which opened up 'undiscovered avenues of understanding' (Estrella and Forinash, 2007) much more so than the tangible objects. This moment made me ponder on an event that was supposed to take place almost a year before. The list of events for the Heritage Open Days (HOD) 2021 included the Black Pudding Battle, which was apparently inspired by this very incident. The Black Pudding Battle was going to bring people together and revive this strange and fun event that took place almost 100 years ago. However, due to the lack of interest, the event did not happen. I was one of the few who signed up for the event, yet it was a relief that it was cancelled as I was not so keen on getting into a food fight. This workshop took place after the HOD. Reflecting on participants' reaction once they remembered this incident or only the song being sung to them and how they became instantly interested have raised concerns about community engagement strategies. How are they being organized? Who decides what type of events will be held?

This object workshop aimed to introduce the Seventeen Nineteen and invited the participants to explore what interested them. Object elicited methods were adopted to examine the materials, construction techniques, and other features of the artefact to learn about the time and culture in which it was made. It is important to think critically about how people attach various meanings to objects or places, using them to think through and account for aspects of self and society more broadly. In this case, the session also worked

towards unearthing the artefacts' significance for the participants instead of merely understanding how it was used or valued by its creators and users. For the participants, the workshop was more than just an exploration of material culture, it was a poignant ode to their shared heritage, a celebration of their past, and a testament to the enduring memories that bound them together.

> The very act of conservation gives a building, object, or environment cultural, economic, political and social value. Thus, value is not an intrinsic quality, but rather the fabric, object or environment is the bearer of an externally imposed, culturally and historically specific meaning. (Pendlebury and Brown, 2019)

6.4 Summary

This chapter has delved into the intricate interplay between material practices, remembrance, and heritage conservation within the broader context of urban regeneration. The study emphasizes that how people articulate their relationships to things is integral to understanding the multifaceted nature of material practices (Shankar, 2006: 297). In Sunderland, for instance, we witnessed this interplay as residents engaged with historical objects to reconstruct their collective memory and shape the identity of their community. Remembrance, as highlighted by Jones (2007), cannot be perceived as an isolated act, but rather, it is intricately woven into a relational structure of reference. Crucially, individual acts of remembrance are inseparable from collective modes, as individual remembrance finds its grounding in the broader tapestry of collective remembrance. This was evident during the fieldwork as the different groups within community connected personal memories to shared narratives of local history, reinforcing their sense of community identity.

A pivotal insight drawn from the analysis is the embeddedness of value within the act of conservation. Pendlebury and Brown (2021) contend that the cultural, economic, political, and social value attributed to a building or environment is not intrinsic but rather a product of externally imposed, culturally and historically specific meanings. This insight resonates throughout the discussion, revealing that the very act of conservation imbues cultural significance, thus shaping the narratives and identities associated with heritage. The restoration of Holy Trinity Church and preservation of its artefacts served as tangible

examples of how value is constructed and perpetuated through conservation efforts. Examining the construction of narratives within heritage conservation reveals variations among different actors. Heritage professionals and laypeople, driven by distinct motivations, select specific elements from the past to transform into heritage. Expert curation involves deliberate planning, while laypeople's approach is often a selective process, underscoring the nuanced ways in which societies construct historical narratives and cultural identities.

The chapter further draws attention to the perceived unnaturalness of preservation, echoing Otero-Pailos' argument, which is discussed in Chapter 2, that cultural significance arises not naturally from built forms but through preservation's mediation. This was observed in this case study as the community grappled with the preservation of historical landmarks amidst ongoing urban regeneration efforts. Fitch's assertion on the contemporary phenomenon of accessing one's cultural treasures underscores the evolving relationship between users and used in the modern world. Returning to the concept of value, the acknowledgement of its paramount importance in driving conservation efforts is emphasized. Pendlebury and Brown's contention that individuals and societies engage in conservation only for things they value underscores the profound connection between value and the act of preservation. In the Sunderland HAZ, this was reflected in the community's efforts to preserve and revitalize their heritage sites in order to maintain their cultural identity and sense of place. The discussion expands to encompass social value, defined as a collective attachment to the historic environment, embodying meanings, values, identity, and social interactions. Memories associated with physical structures or places are explored, illustrating the powerful role of sensory cues in evoking strong emotional reactions and vivid memories. By recognizing and valuing these diverse perspectives and experiences within the community, urban regeneration initiatives can be more responsive to the needs and aspirations of all residents.

The chapter highlights the importance of recognizing the existing world in the context of urban regeneration, drawing lessons from Sunderland’s experience. The regeneration process is positioned as an intervention within an already inhabited and engaged space. Understanding what is still present, actively used, and deemed important, as well as deciphering the ways in which people negotiate and engage with the area, provides

essential insights into the holistic understanding of the existing world. This nuanced understanding is crucial for developing regeneration plans that respect and integrate with the lived experiences of the community.

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Chapter 7: Sunderland's Heritage Tapestry: Threads of Preservation and Dissonance

In the preceding chapters, we delved into the intricacies of heritage regeneration, first examining the overarching projects and approaches in Chapter 5, peeling back the layers to understand the broader context within which Sunderland's heritage is embedded. Subsequently, Chapter 6 provided insights into the subjective meanings locals attribute to their surroundings, shedding light on their perspectives toward regeneration endeavours. Building upon this foundation, Chapter 7 is poised to embark on a comprehensive exploration of the reasons underlying the discord between heritage professionals and the local community, offering a nuanced understanding of the dissonance within the realm of heritage conservation in Old Sunderland.

> There is a very real connection between both the built environment and community: we cannot disaggregate the two (O'Brien and Matthews, 2015).

Building upon earlier chapters that delved into overarching heritage regeneration projects and the subjective meanings attributed by locals to their surroundings, this chapter aims to provide not only a portrayal of the heritage landscape but also a critical examination of the discord between heritage professionals and the community. While exploring the dissonance between heritage professionals and the community, the chapter offers a multifaceted understanding of the challenges inherent in heritage preservation and regeneration. In doing so, it acknowledges the very real connection between the built environment and the community, echoing O'Brien and Matthews' assertion that the two cannot be disaggregated. One of the central themes woven into this exploration is the palpable impact of numerous regeneration programs in Sunderland. Through interviews with long-term residents and former residents, I investigate not only the physical restructuring of spaces but also the profound tear in the communal identity caused by the removal of homes and the dispersal of neighbours. The seismic consequences of such interventions set the stage for deeper exploration, inviting us to comprehend the intricate layers of Sunderland's heritage tapestry and the resulting dissonance that echoes through the community.

7.1 Invisible Boundaries

The Sunderland Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) held promise for revitalizing the city's historic landscape. However, beneath the surface of regeneration efforts lie invisible barriers that hinder community cohesion and heritage preservation. This chapter delves into the intricacies of these barriers, examining their tangible and intangible manifestations within the Sunderland HAZ.

Barrier: Physical Divisions and Symbolic Walls (Section 7.1.1)	The A1018 road and the ring road serve as physical barriers, dividing East and West Sunderland and impeding movement between heritage sites, worsening feelings of fragmentation and neglect.
Barrier: Historical Neglect and Perceived Exploitation (Section 7.1.2)	Residents express frustration over the prioritization of certain heritage sites, such as Mackie's Corner, over others in the East End. They perceived a pattern of exploitation, where their heritage is leveraged for funding without proportional benefits to the community.
Barrier: Digital Exclusion amidst the Pandemic (Section 7.1.3)	The COVID-19 pandemic deepened existing inequalities within the community, particularly in terms of digital connectivity.
Barrier: Navigating Ownership Dynamics (Section 7.3)	A significant barrier persists in the form of community ownership and impacting meaningful engagement.

Table 7.2 Barriers in Sunderland HAZ

7.1.1 Physical Divisions and Symbolic Walls

The HAZ boundaries were illustrated, in Chapter 5, and the map showcased the regeneration area, stretching from Church Street to Fawcett Street. (See Figure 7.1 for boundaries) However, the Sunderland HAZ map presented below in Figure 7.2 suggested a closer proximity of sites, yet in reality, the cartography of the map created a disillusion of close proximity and easy accessibility.

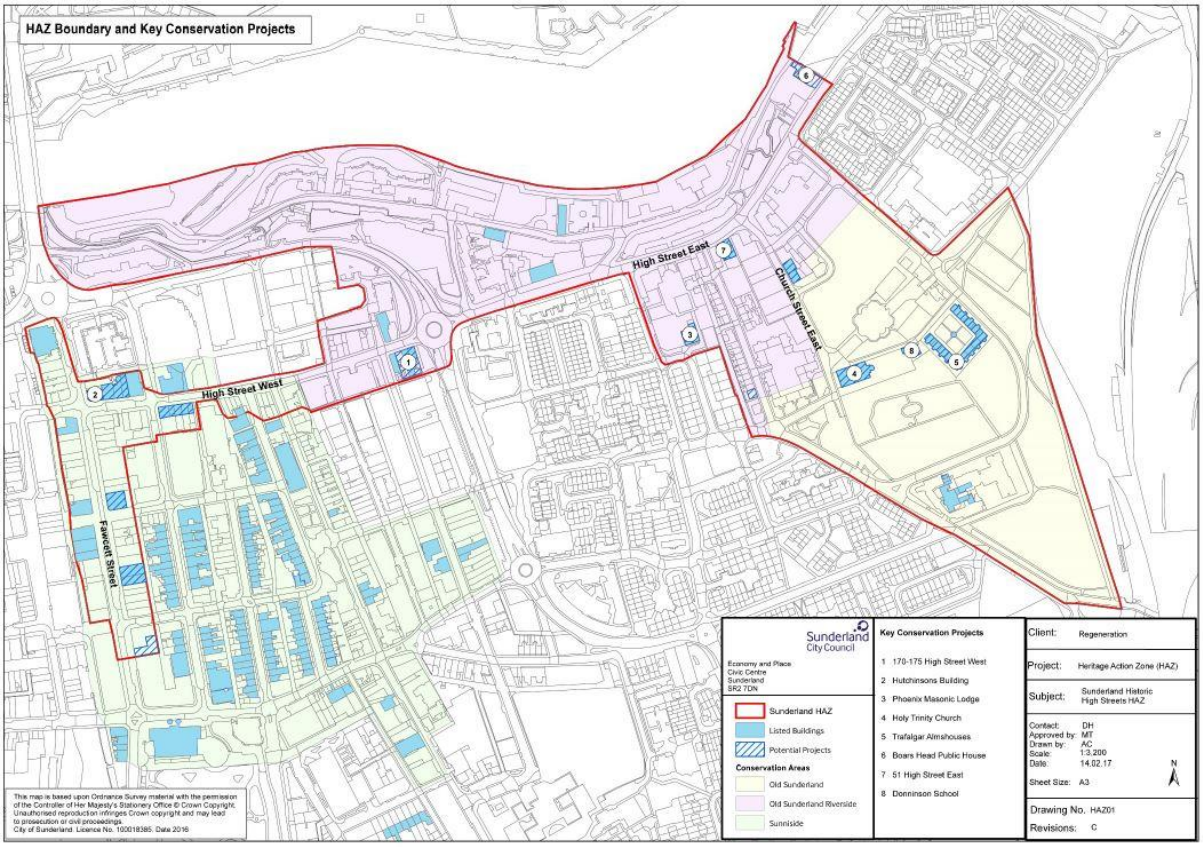

Figure 7.1 HAZ Boundary and Key Conservation Projects. Source: HAZ Delivery Plan, May 2020.

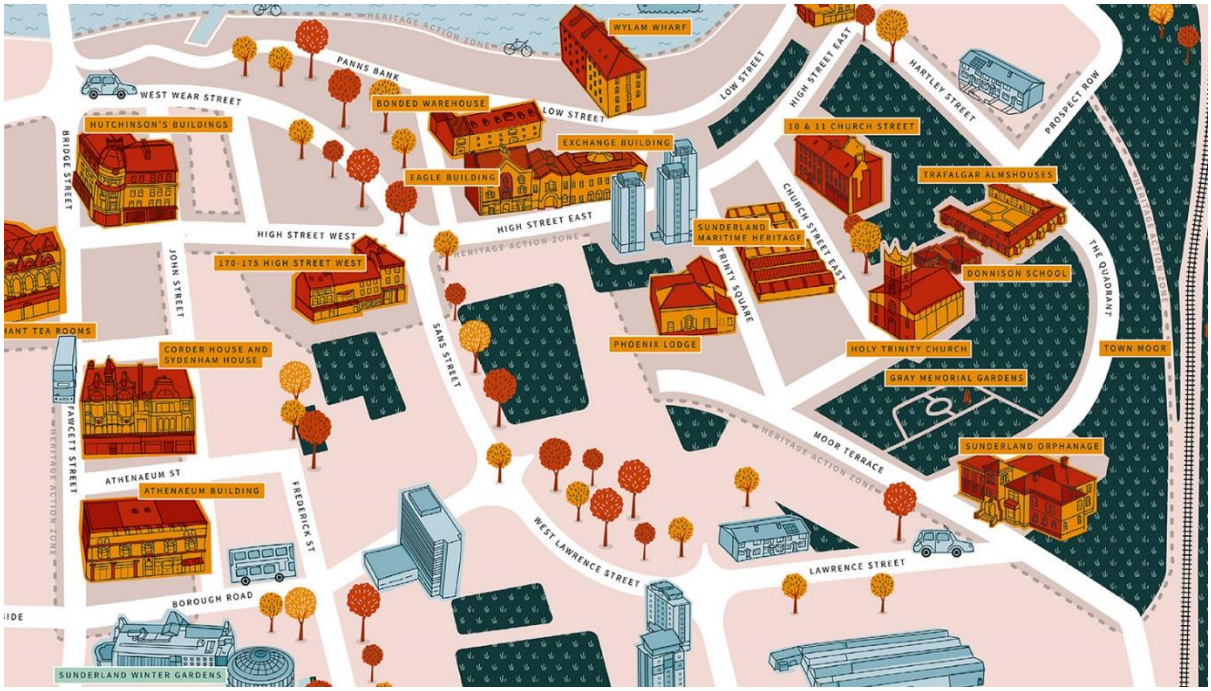

Figure 7.2 Sunderland Heritage Action Zone Map that is commonly used. Source: Historic England Website.

The geographical reality presented a significant obstacle, with the A1018 road separating High Street West and High Street East. (See Figure 7.3)

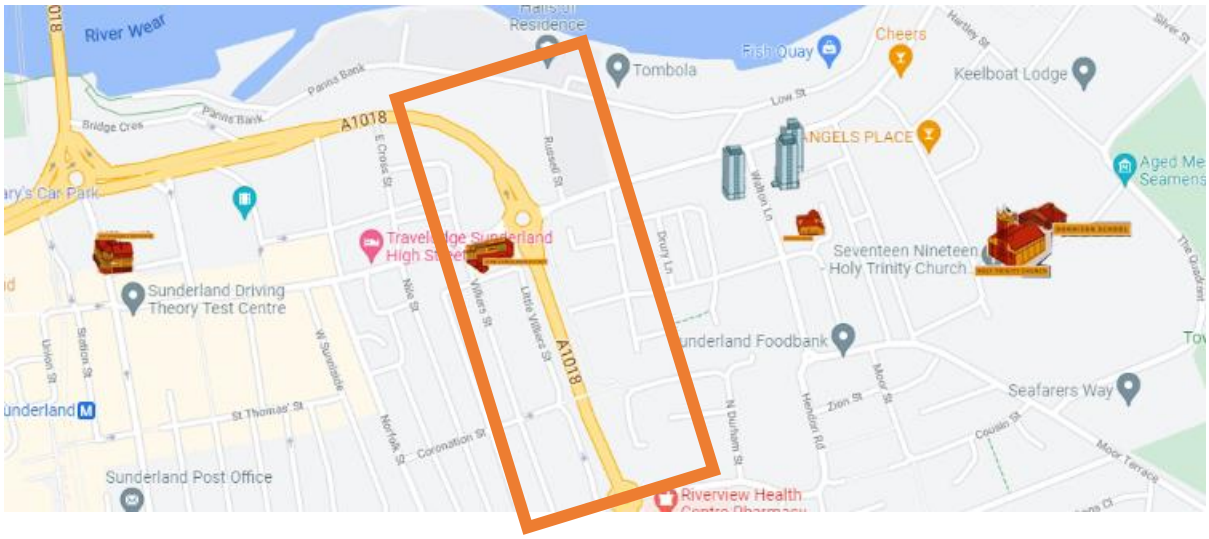

Figure 7.3 Map indicating A108 road that divides the HAZ. Source: Map is sourced from Google Maps and edited by Gulnur Cengiz.

Interviewee S4 (Professional/Artist) described the situation near Pop Rec's as segregating the East End, pointing out the lack of obvious and safe ways to traverse the road— an essential crossing to access Seventeen Nineteen, former Holy Trinity Church, Donnison School, and Phoenix Lodge. The interviewee statements below from heritage experts portray the adverse consequences of urban interventions that have disrupted the area.

> Some horrible interventions like the ring road splits Sunniside down the High Street basically. (Interviewee C4, Local Authority)
>
> They put a ring right through the middle of it which never helped. (Interviewee S2, Heritage Professional)
>
> It is not easy to cross. That needs to be improved. (Interviewee C5, Local Authority)

Interviewee S4 (Professional/Artist) echoed this sentiment: “So I can totally understand why people who live that side, in the East End feel. Yeah, like there's actually been like a wall put in between.” Interviewee C4 further emphasized the danger associated with crossing the road: “Did you cross the really busy ring road? When you cross that's a real issue because that kind of cut through the middle of the HAZ. It's quite dangerous, road actually. Once you get over there, you walk down further in the High Street East.” (Interviewee C2, Local Authority)

The first visit to the case study area was after these online interviews. As outlined in the methodology chapter, the research initially commenced with online interviews, limiting the exploration of the site’s physical realities. The first site visit, March 2021, involved leisurely walking and following the HAZ walking route, where statements from the heritage professionals’ interviews were experienced first-hand. It is important to note here the visit was influenced by the COVID restrictions, which had a notable impact on the atmosphere and hindered a comprehensive understanding of the typical flow of people in the area. Moreover, the Sunderland HAZ map contributed to a sense of disorientation as the sites appeared closer than they actually were. Once I arrived at Pop Recs, it seemed as though there was nothing beyond. After this visit, during a subsequent walking interview with a local, we crossed the footbridge, which was first mentioned by the interviewee S4, to reach Seventeen Nineteen. This very bridge was utilized by two additional locals during the walks. However, for those unfamiliar with the site as the bridge lay outside of the HAZ boundaries,

the sole alternative was to cross the ring road. One local/heritage professional (Interviewee S4) brought up the footbridge but also mentioned its somewhat concealed location emphasizing more practical choice for unfamiliar individuals would be the main road.

The interviewee S5, a heritage professional, emphasized: “Sunderland HAZ had a relatively small amount of money in a very large area, a very disparate and varied area with communities.” He shared an analogy, who perceptively compared each HAZ site to a currant, insightfully suggesting that, in hindsight, the project needed to function more like a current bun to seamlessly connect everything, currants being the sites and bun holding all together. (See Figure 7.4 and Figure 7.5)

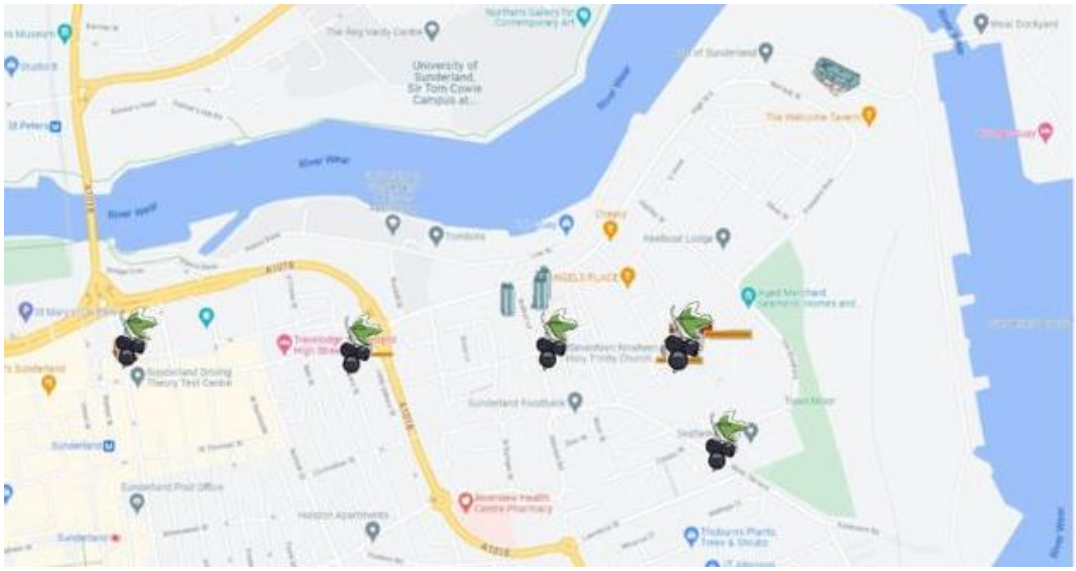

Figure 7.4 Map indicating the individual project sites within the HAZ. Source: Map is sourced from Google Maps and edited by Gulnur Cengiz.

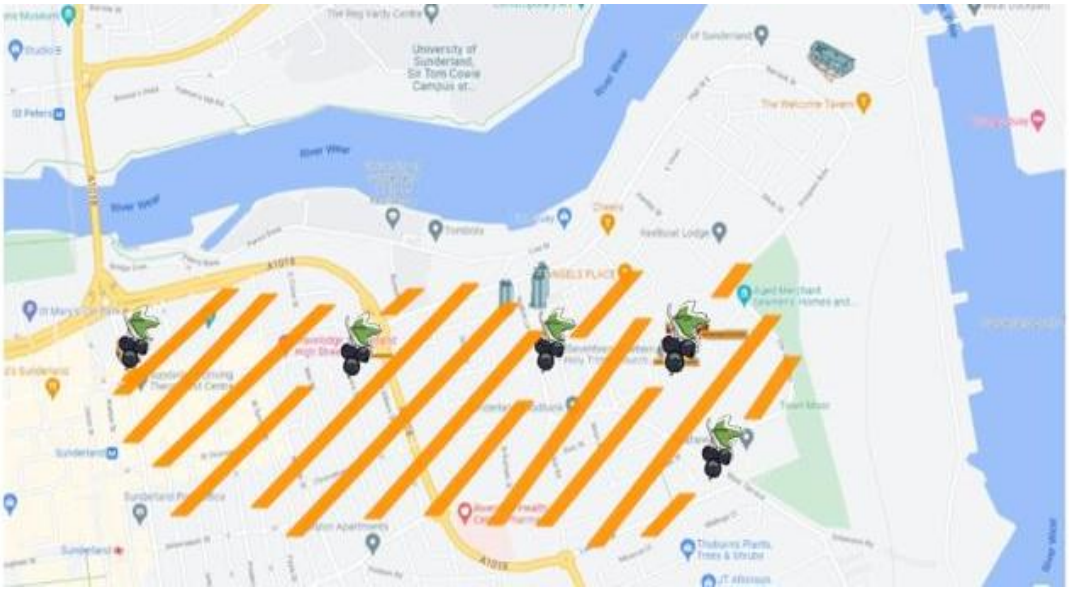

Figure 7.5 Map indicating need for a landscape approach within the HAZ. Source: Map is sourced from Google Maps and edited by Gulnur Cengiz.

In his analogy, each HAZ sites is likened to a currant. The interviewee implied that the project initially took a site-by-site approach, treating each location as a separate entity. However, this approach presented issues because it failed to consider broader context and connections between sites. He suggested that instead of viewing each site in isolation, there should have been a cohesive framework, represented by the “current bun”, which held everything together. The analogy might need further refinement. A currant bun ideally incorporate all the currants within it to achieve a cohesive whole, also the heritage action zone could aim to encompass and acknowledge (in)significances, including those that lie outside its defined boundaries but still contribute to the overall cultural landscape and community identity.

The analysis highlighted the tangible barriers posed multiple factors such as, the A1018 road and disconnection between the sites. The ring road was portrayed as a symbolic “wall” dividing the East and West, with echoes of community fragmentation resonating through respondent narratives.

7.1.2 Historical Neglect and Perceived Exploitation

> When I asked him about his thoughts on the other HAZ sites, such as Mackie’s Corner, he got upset and said that it had no use for the people ‘down here’ and

> added that the East End heritage was used to preserve ‘up there’. (Interview notes, 2021, Interviewee L6, Community Member)

What he meant was that he believed that the funding application for regeneration work leveraged the heritage of East End to get the funding for other parts of the city. His statement about people not going shopping “up there” was seconded by other participants who live in the East End and Hendon. As it was mentioned earlier, pub community felt as though their heritage was being leveraged to get funding but money was being poured into the other sites and the East End was not being recognized and not benefiting from these regeneration efforts. Even the participants of the events were according to some locals, even the ones who were actively involved with organizations, believed to be not from Hendon or the East End. The events were not for the people of the area not catering to their needs or not being offered to be involved.

> The community that run the doors, not the Hendon community or the Sunderland community or the regional community where is the very local people involved? Because that was one of the things that was meant to aim for and get the stories from the families of those people. Because that was part of definitely was part of one of the bits that the storytelling was going to be stories of local people. (Interviewee N1, Community Member/Volunteer)

> I'm not just being cynical, this is what happens. And because I have, as I say, been on the other side (the interviewee is an active volunteer), I can see why it happens. It is easier to work with that if you've got an organization such as the CCT, which is no business in Sunderland. They talk about local, and when they talk a lot about South Shields, if you talk local, here’s the main people, your neighbours to surround your door. (Interviewee N1, Community Member/Volunteer)

In Sunderland's heritage landscape, boundaries manifest not only in physical structures but also in intangible divisions. As discussed, physical barriers like the A1018 road and the ring road segregate neighbourhoods, hindering connectivity and accessibility to heritage sites. However, alongside these tangible obstacles lie deeper, intangible boundaries rooted in historical neglect and perceived exploitation by external actors. Interviews revealed the challenges of navigating these barriers and expressed dissatisfaction with the perceived leveraging of East End heritage for funding, without proportional benefits to its residents. Interviewees spoke passionately about the need for deeper community involvement in

decision-making processes, highlighting the importance of capturing their stories of impacted by the initiatives. Interviewee N1 (Community Member/Volunteer) emphasized the desire for grassroots engagement and representation in the project's storytelling component. N1 also emphasized a disillusionment regarding the rhetoric of "local" used by external organizations. Interviewee highlighted that the people who walk through the door are not necessarily representative of the local community. This distinction highlighted a crucial nuance in community engagement efforts. While the term "community engagement" often implies a broad outreach strategy, including various stakeholders and interest groups, the reality on the ground revealed a different need. Specifically engaging people in the immediate surrounding area, as identified through interviews, ensures that the voices and concerns of those directly impacted by the initiatives are heard and considered. The phrase "CCT is no business in Sunderland" reflects a broader sentiment of scepticism towards external entities claiming to prioritize local interests while allegedly neglecting the needs and desires of the community.

To delve deeper into these dynamics, it is essential to consider the role of conservation how urban interventions may inadvertently create invisible boundaries, exacerbating anger and alienation within the community. Conservation efforts associated with heritage structures often involve defamiliarisation, altering the original context and purpose of these buildings. While such alterations may add layers of functionality, they can also create a sense of disconnect and alienation, in other words, a barrier.

7.1.3 Digital Exclusion amidst the Pandemic

Another barrier was unearthed with the COVID-19 pandemic. The existing inequalities within the community was further emphasized by the pandemic. Lockdown measures and social distancing protocols have limited face-to-face interactions, forcing heritage Action Zone initiatives to rely on digital platforms for community engagement. However, not everyone has access to the necessary technology or internet connectivity, creating a barrier for marginalized residents to participate in virtual events and consultations.

> And it made us think about kind of user that with digital connectivity I think there's a huge caveat, which is coming right back to that community research about who your communities are. Digital deprivation in the East End of Sunderland is actually really high. So there are a lot of people who don't have connectivity, so they can't connect

> they don't have computers, they don't even necessarily have smartphones. How we can ask those people now that's really difficult. I think it's seen as like you know great we'll just do everything digital doesn't necessarily work depending on who your communities are. (Interviewee S2, Heritage Professional)
>
> Obviously Covid has come in the middle of that which is made it really difficult to work with the kids. (Interviewee T1, Professional/Consultant)

The irony lies in the paradoxical nature of this situation: while striving for inclusivity and broadening participation, the reliance on digital platforms inadvertently exacerbates exclusionary dynamics.

> Because of Covid it is all been a virtual kind of experience. That has been quite a benefit because it allowed us to link with people who don't necessarily live on the doorstep, or who couldn't necessarily attend in person anyway. (Interviewee S2, Heritage Professional)
>
> We've just finished a pilot program of doing those activities online and we reached an international audience, so we had somebody from America took part. (Interviewee S2, Heritage Professional)

This irony highlighted a fundamental tension in community engagement. On the one hand, there was a genuine desire to reach as many voices as possible, which the shift to digital tools facilitated. However, this very shift also served to deepen existing inequalities, as not everyone had equal access to the digital tools required to participate or skills to effectively use these tools.

Sunderland HAZ grappled with the challenges of boundaries, both physical and symbolic, impacting community cohesion, and regeneration initiatives. Interviews revealed the challenges of navigating these barriers and expressed dissatisfaction with the perceived leveraging of East End heritage for funding, without proportional benefits to the current residents. The intricate dynamics of HAZ, as outlined in the exploration of invisible boundaries, are enriched when viewed through the lens of Caitlin DeSilvey’s ruination and James Fitch's concept of preservation as the fourth dimension.

Delving into the nuanced realm of conservation efforts as potential triggers for the fourth dimension of preservation, I detect the complex interplay between heritage conservation and community within Sunderland HAZ. Fitch's concept (1990) of preservation as the fourth dimension is scrutinized, this section shed light on the unintended consequences of

conservation initiatives, revealing how they might inadvertently create another invisible boundary, resulting in heightened anger and alienation within the community. Fitch (1990) introduced a dynamic approach that transcends the physical restoration of structures. This fourth dimension advocates for storytelling, community engagement, and the preservation of cultural identity. Parallels emerge as we recognize that breaking invisible boundaries involves not only physical connections but also a deeper understanding of the cultural narratives tied to heritage. The interconnectedness of the built environment and community emphasizes the profound repercussions of urban interventions on personal histories and community bonds. The exploration extends to the geographical reality of invisible boundaries, symbolically represented by the road, physically and emotionally dividing East and West Sunderland. The consistent pattern of being overlooked manifests itself again. While the map, though a crucial tool, created a disillusion of easy-accessibility, urban interventions, particularly the ring road, exacerbate community fragmentation, emphasizing broader socio-cultural implications that extend beyond physical barriers. The concept of preservation[26] as a fourth dimension added another layer to this observation. The map created an illusion of accessibility that did not align with the geographical reality. This disparity further emphasizes the role of preservation in shaping perceptions or narratives that did not resonate with the experiences of the community.

This "unnatural layer" was particularly evident in the conservation efforts associated with heritage structures. In this context, the term "unnatural" was used to emphasize that preservation efforts deliberately intervene in the natural course of architectural evolution. Traditionally, buildings undergo changes over time due to various factors such as wear and tear, changes in architectural styles, and societal needs. However, preservation efforts aim to disrupt this natural progression by intentionally conserving.

Incorporating Fitch's concept of preservation as the fourth dimension and DeSilvey's (2017) notion of ruination offered a new perspective to the revitalization of the buildings within HAZ. Repurposing a historic church, for instance, into a community centre altered its original purpose and, consequently, changed the way it feels and is perceived by the community. Such alterations, while adding layers of functionality and relevance, the familiar becomes

[26] American terminology. Explained in detail in Chapter 2.

unknown. This shift can inadvertently create a barrier, as it did in Old Sunderland, particularly when the new function fails to resonate harmoniously with the surroundings. An interrogation of how the transformation of Holy Trinity Church to Seventeen Nineteen reflected not only changes in physical structure but also shifts in its societal relevance and communal significance. The conservation of buildings involve defamiliarization. The perceived misalignment between conservation efforts and the needs of residents can create a sense of discord and frustration, further contributing to the ruination[27]of community cohesion. DeSilvey's concept invites to view ruination not just as a physical process but also as a cultural and social phenomenon. In Sunderland context of urban development and heritage preservation, ruination becomes particularly relevant. Preservation efforts sought to arrest or reverse the process of ruination by conserving historical structures and spaces, as Fitch also emphasized. However, these efforts inadvertently contributed to ruination by altering the original context and meaning of heritage sites, leading to a loss of authenticity or connection with the past (DeSilvey, 2017). The presence of visible and invisible barriers within Sunderland HAZ contributed to a sense of ruination within the community. These barriers acted as tangible manifestations of historical, social, and economic divisions, disrupting the spatial continuity and cohesion of the area. The physical barriers, such as the A1018 road, physically separate different parts of the community, creating obstacles to movement and interaction. This fragmentation not only isolated neighbourhoods but also contributed to the erosion of the sense of collective identity and belonging, contributing to a feeling of ruination within the community's collective memory.

Conservation disrupts the natural course of evolution, questioning the assumed identity of architectural form and cultural significance as inherently intertwined. By intentionally preserving buildings and structures in this way, we not only interrupt the natural cycle of decay and renewal but also ensure that they continue to play a significant role as curated artefacts of our past. This also reminds to recall the historical, the present, and the curated future — coexisting within a preserved structure. Preservation acts as a deliberate intervention, shaping landscape beyond the constraints of time.

[27] Ruination, in the context of cultural and heritage studies, refers to the process through which something deteriorates or falls into a state of decay.

There is a patchwork of emotions in the East End, with resentment and exclusion woven into the fabric of regeneration efforts. Some events and projects portrayed as misplaced stitches, failing to mend the tears in the heritage tapestry. Among life-long residents, there is a palpable sense of resentment and exclusion, stemming from a feeling of disconnection from the unfolding narrative of change. For many residents, regeneration initiatives are perceived as flawed attempts to revitalize the community. Some events and projects, often touted as transformative, are viewed as misplaced stitches in the heritage tapestry, failing to address the underlying concerns and aspirations of those who call the East End home. Some residents were concerned when their neighbourhood was used as leverage for funding without having a meaningful say in how these resources were allocated. Even when residents were invited to participate, their roles were limited to passive observers rather than active contributors to the decision-making process. Consequently, many residents still negotiating their place within this evolving narrative.

In another instance, during a dialogue with a local resident on the HAZ efforts, a pertinent question emerged: Who benefits from these endeavours? At the 3L event[28], one participant expressed her concern about the well-being of the people living in the area, noting that despite substantial funds were invested in the regeneration project, the initiatives were not positively impacting their daily lives. Labadi (2018) emphasizes the economic dimensions of heritage, pointing out that communities tend to prioritize economic gains over preservation when faced with high levels of poverty.

The heritage tapestry, rich with the stories and memories of generations past, is frayed and torn in places, bearing the scars of neglect and disregard. Despite efforts to mend these tears, the wounds of exclusion and marginalization persist, leaving life-long residents grappling with their place in this new narrative of urban renewal. For marginalized members of the community, these wounds run even deeper as their voice is not even heard. In the midst of uncertainty and upheaval, there is a shared desire among residents to reclaim agency over the future of their community. The intricacies of the community, characterized by a mix of immigrants and individuals with low income, add layers of nuance to the spectrum of ownership dynamics, challenging traditional paradigms and complicating the

[28] See Chapter 5 for details of the event.

understanding of who constitutes the community in this context. The presence of immigrants and individuals with low income introduced a socio-economic dimension that significantly impacts perceptions of heritage ownership. The economic challenges faced by some members of the community led to a prioritization of economic gains over preservation. Some residents were more interested in the economic benefits that can be derived from these resources, as there are high levels of poverty. This economic lens further complicated the negotiation of ownership, as differing economic priorities within the community created tensions and divergent perspectives on how to engage with heritage assets.

7.2 Navigating Narratives of Displacement, Memory, and Mistrust

The exploration now shifts to Garths. As explained in Chapter 6, my initial encounters with heritage professionals brought forth some references to Garths and their demolition, hinting at the community's sentiments surrounding this significant event. However, it was during subsequent interactions with a group of former Garths residents that the narrative unfolded. Their stories shared provided glimpses into life within the Garths – not confined to architectural details, but rather focusing on lived experiences, neighbourly connections, and courtyard gatherings that defined their communal existence. Engaging in one-on-one interviews with a lifelong East End resident further enriched my understanding. Remarkably, discussions did not revolve around the mere physicality of the Garths; instead, they delved into the profound intricacies of daily life, capturing the essence of the community's shared history. The architecture became a secondary backdrop, overshadowed by the vibrant memories, social bonds, and the cultural significance attached to this specific setting.

> What we're doing, we're diluting the communities and taking people out of the zones that they lived in. (Interviewee L6, Community Member)

This sentiment echoes through extensive interviews with long-term residents of the area. The impact of slum clearances was further emphasized as we delve into the experiences of those forced to leave their homes and communities. This shift created a ripple effect on the community and the area, with relocated individuals having to start anew. A participant in a heritage walk shared the experience of his family building a new church in their new location—an attempt to construct a new community after being uprooted from their

homes. These narratives underline the profound consequences of urban interventions, adding depth to our understanding of the intricate relationship between physical spaces, personal histories, and community dynamics.

The palpable anger by long-term residents towards heritage professionals can be traced back to a historical undercurrent of neglect and a sense of being dispensable or exploited for the benefit of others. Through their shared history, residents perceive a consistent pattern of their needs and concerns being overlooked, their voices marginalized, and their homes treated as expendable for broader societal objectives. This history of neglect creates a deep-seated mistrust and scepticism towards heritage professionals who are seen as external actors potentially prioritizing their own agendas over the genuine concerns of the community. This feeling of exploitation intensifies their anger and contributes to a reluctance to collaborate with heritage professionals.

One resident aptly summarized this frustration:

> We've got a regeneration of this area for five years, and then they kind of forget about it and go somewhere else. And then they come back to it. (Interviewee S4, Professional)

Another described a sense of betrayal within community dynamics:

> Because my last thing was somebody who caused a lot of trouble was used to do presentation as a community representative. And I just thought well, that's a nice slap in the face. (Interviewee N1, Community Member/Volunteer)

Through extensive interviews with long-term residents of the area, a poignant revelation emerged— the physical structures stood not merely as architectural entities but as integral threads woven into the very fabric of their community's heritage. These structures served as the backdrop for cherished memories, encapsulating the essence of a shared history within a specific setting. In this context, the impact of slum clearances became palpable, representing not just a restructuring of physical spaces but a profound tear in the tapestry of communal identity. The removal of homes where fond memories were crafted and the dispersal of neighbours contributed to a sense of loss, highlighting the complex interplay between physical spaces, personal histories, and community cohesion.

> So you got an organisation representing the people, don't necessarily represent the people. (Interviewee N1, Community Member/Volunteer)

Someone from the CCT team (Interviewee S2) reflected on the unexpected turn of events during an Open Day event where a conversation about the Garths unfolded. Despite initially lacking interest in this topic, the engagement with the community brought forward a piece of work related to the Garths. The interviewee emphasized the importance of not being fixated on specific interests and instead allowing the community to guide the discussion towards their heritage. According to her, this unplanned exploration contributed positively to the community involvement aspect of the project. The CCT team's account of the Open Day event introduced a contrasting viewpoint from two locals actively involved in the engagement efforts of the CCT. According to them, the heritage expert who conducted a specific work around the Garths was perceived as pretentious and lacking genuine knowledge about the area, "despite her claims of being from East End" (Interviewee L6). The local interviewee demonstrated a clear anger towards her believing she did not have respect for either the community or their heritage. The quote suggests questions about how expertise is communicated and received. As the heritage expert in question was not involved in the project anymore, we cannot explore her intentions. This discrepancy in perceptions sheds light on the challenges of community engagement and the potential pitfalls associated with the role of experts in such endeavours.

7.3 Sense of Ownership

> People won't take ownership; your local people have got to take ownership of a project for it to succeed. (Interviewee N1, Community Member/Volunteer)

This quote served as a catalyst for delving into the reasons behind some locals' hesitancy to embrace ownership of heritage projects. Amidst the discussions on ownership, silent barriers emerged, shaping the community's relationship with heritage projects. Assumptions, mistrust, and fears of external intervention silently influenced perceptions of ownership. The notion of ownership within the context of heritage and regeneration is a multifaceted and complex issue, as highlighted by the diverse perspectives of individuals deeply connected to local heritage. This reveals a spectrum of perspectives within the local community, showcasing the intricate dynamics of heritage ownership. As we reflect, it becomes clear that conservation efforts possess the power to either pull communities together or push them further apart. The unexpected turns in community engagement, highlighted during Open Day events, emphasized the importance of allowing the community

to be actively involved. The dissonance created by conservation efforts led some locals becoming overprotective of their heritage. This heightened protectiveness was a response to the perceived threats posed by external interventions.

The discourse on heritage ownership emerged as an important aspect in understanding the impact of conservation. There was a palpable tension when some locals perceived their heritage being appropriated or even stolen. Some of the residents struggled with embracing sense of ownership of heritage projects due to feeling excluded or doubting their ability to contribute while others exhibit an overtly possessive stance. The spectrum of ownership dynamics emphasized the complexity of ownership dynamics, influenced by power dynamics, representation, and decision-making authority.

A striking contrast emerges in the narratives of two current residents of the East End, one originally from Ryhope and the other a lifelong resident of East End, particularly in their connection to a local church. The interviewee from Ryhope spotted the Holy Trinity for the first time, mistook the church for a castle, when visiting Hendon as a teenager to buy tar for his father's pigeon cree. He has watched over Holy Trinity Church, in Church Street East, Sunderland, from his nearby East End flat for 35 years (Interview notes, 2022; Sunderland Echo 27 February 2020, p.11). When he went in to the church for the first time with his neighbour for a service after moving to the East End, where he has been living for 35 years. He described his first encounter as "it was not a congregation of people it was congregation of spiders." Driven by childhood memories and a profound sense of care, he wanted to voluntarily take on the responsibility of looking after the church. A retired schoolmaster was the looking after the church at the time. He wrote to the owner to ask to take the custodian role.

> I am not religious. I only liked the building and what it stood for. (Interviewee N2, Volunteer)

Despite being offered payment for his role as caretaker and keyholder, he consistently returned the checks as donations. His connection to the church was not rooted in religious sentiments but rather in an appreciation for the building's historical significance. Notably, his commitment to conservation did not translate into a claim of ownership, revealing a perspective that heritage is to be safeguarded for the broader community. Interestingly, the former Ryhope resident's reluctance to assert ownership mirrored the views of newly

recruited volunteers of Seventeen Nineteen (former Holy Trinity), establishing a commonality of approach among locals with strong familial ties to the area. This diversity of perspectives within the local community—spanning life-long residents, long-term residents, local and non-local volunteers —the complexity sense of ownership dynamics in heritage projects.

Despite his dedication, he did not express a sense of ownership but rather a deep connection and commitment to conservation, similar two volunteers conducting heritage walks. His hesitation to claim ownership became apparent during the interview, where he sought approval even for participating in the interview. His discomfort with decisions made by the management team, such as selling the pews and organ, was apparent. However, he did not voice his opinions. This hesitancy might be attributed to the perceived authority of heritage professionals and institutional bodies, leading to a deference to their decisions. What is more, all the volunteers interacted during the research, seemed to align their sense of responsibility with heritage professionals and showcased a collaborative approach rooted in a shared commitment to conventional heritage management strategies. This alignment suggests a level of trust in the expertise and decision-making authority of heritage professionals. The volunteers appeared to perceive themselves as stewards working within established frameworks, embracing the guidance and direction provided by professionals in the preservation and conservation efforts, which reflected a more conventional and top-down model of heritage ownership.

The caretaker became more open with me after the third time we met. During a casual chat about the pews, he expressed a wish that they would have kept all the pews instead of selling them, believing they could have been used. This reminded me of a local who owned a church pew; I never asked how he acquired it. He proudly showed the pew while mentioning how the CCT sold the pews and organ. The custodian was quite uncomfortable with this unexpected news. The custodian felt compelled to warn me about the pew owner, subtly hinting that he might have illicitly acquired the pew and other items from the church. The rest of our discussion clearly suggested that his perception was that the heritage was there to be safe-kept, not for him to use. He also was not happy with the regeneration process; however, it was clear that if it was going to keep the church safe, he would accept it. In contrast, the pew owner felt that it was his heritage and that strangers could not just

decide what to do with it. After all, “he rescued the pew” from being sold to some affluent stranger.

In contrast to the caretaker, the local, who possessed the church pew, took a more assertive stance on ownership. For him, heritage is not a distant artefact but a personal connection, encapsulated in the poignant question, ‘My house or our national monument?’ (Herzfeld, 1991) This sentiment reflects the broader challenge of negotiating ownership within heritage, highlighting the tension between external entities making decisions about cultural treasures and locals who view these assets as integral to their personal and communal identity. Waterton (2010) contend that heritage is not a fixed and universally agreed-upon concept; rather, it is a dynamic, socially constructed phenomenon. The pew owner's claim reflected a sense of possessiveness rooted in personal connection and challenged the traditional top-down approach often adopted by heritage professionals. It is important to clarify that while I am not defending any illegal actions, it is crucial to understand the emotional aspect of the situation. The pew owner's reaction, driven by a sense of having his heritage taken away, highlighting the emotional and personal connections people may feel towards cultural artefacts. This emotional response speaks to the broader issue of how individuals perceive and connect with their heritage. It suggests that, regardless of the legality of the acquisition, the pew owner felt a strong personal connection to the heritage items, and the thought of them being sold without his involvement triggered a defensive reaction. This emotional aspect adds complexity to the understanding of heritage ownership and the need to consider both legal and emotional dimensions in managing cultural assets.

> I suppose during my days of the NDC, I have acted as one of the four residents across the country that met open the House of Commons and met with ministers to discuss how things move and how community can become involved. Often being completely ignored. Sorry, it's lip service a lot of times. I don't know what else to say. On the negative side if you become very active in your community, you become neither one nor the other. So you're in no man's land because the community that you feel part of, your heart is part of, start to see you as on the other side. (Interviewee N1, Community Member/Volunteer)

Another perspective was somewhere in between, as a life-long resident on the board of various non-profit organizations, who has been serving the area for a while, expressed her displeasure about being ignored. She also made it very clear that this was their heritage,

pointing out the lack of locals' attendance to events in interviews. She was also quite cynical about heritage professionals and their tendency to cut off locals if things got more complicated and less practical. In this process, "they" were being sidelined and excluded from decision-making. This sentiment was echoed by other local volunteers involved in heritage-related projects. She not only expressed displeasure about being ignored but also demanded a stake. Her long-term involvement in the community, service on various non-profit organizations, and consultation during the regeneration process emphasized her deep connection to the heritage. This demand aligned with a growing recognition that the communities intimately linked to a heritage site should have a meaningful role and ownership in shaping its future.

The narratives of the individuals contribute to the broader discourse on heritage ownership, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of the issue. The contrasting perspectives presented by the caretaker, the pew owner, and other community members offered valuable insights into the complexities of heritage conservation and management.

The caretaker's role in preserving Holy Trinity Church, the current Seventeen Nineteen, provided an illuminating case study for exploring the concept of stewardship within the realm of heritage ownership. Stewardship, deeply ingrained in archaeological discourse, embodies the responsible custodianship of cultural heritage, emphasizing protection, interpretation, and preservation (Pantazatos, 2015). While stewardship emphasizes the responsible management and care of cultural heritage, ownership reflects the legal rights, personal connections, and sense of entitlement individuals may feel towards heritage assets (ibid). The caretaker's voluntary commitment to the church reflected a sense of ownership rooted not in legal title but in a profound connection to the historical significance embodied within the building, intertwined with his memories. This aligns with scholarly discussions on heritage ownership, which extend beyond mere legal ownership to encompass emotional and cultural attachment to heritage sites. Drawing upon literature in heritage studies, we can contextualize the caretaker's actions within broader debates surrounding ownership and stewardship of cultural heritage. Scholars have explored the notion of "emotional ownership," whereby individuals feel a sense of belonging and responsibility towards heritage sites, transcending legal frameworks. This analysis contributed to a nuanced understanding of stewardship as a multifaceted concept that extends beyond legal

ownership to encompass broader notions of care, belonging, and community engagement in heritage preservation.

In contrast, the pew owner's behaviour and attitudes towards the church pew reflected a strong sense of entitlement. His assertion of ownership was rooted in a traditional understanding of heritage ownership, where legal rights and personal connections play significant roles. His possessiveness over the church pew and defensive reaction to the sale of other pews without his involvement illustrate the complexities of heritage ownership, where individuals feel a strong sense of attachment and entitlement to cultural artefacts based on personal connections or legal claims (Pantazatos, 2015). His entitlement stemmed from a perceived sense of ownership based on familial ties, community traditions, and historical associations with the artefacts and the site. Such a belief led the individual to assert his rights over heritage assets and resist decisions made by external entities that he perceived as encroaching upon his ownership. Moreover, the pew owner's entitlement extends beyond personal connections to encompass broader societal perspectives. His belief in his right to control or make decisions about the church pew aligns with a societal sense of entitlement, where certain individuals or groups feel empowered to assert control over heritage assets based on factors such as socioeconomic status, political power, or cultural influence. This broader sense of entitlement can lead to the marginalization or exclusion of other stakeholders, particularly local communities with historical or cultural ties to the heritage site but lacking formal ownership rights. In the case of Sunderland, hints of such dynamics were evident in some interviews. The lack of friendliness towards different groups suggested underlying tensions and perceptions of exclusion or marginalization among community members. The pew owner's entitlement highlights the complexities of heritage ownership, where personal connections, legal rights, and societal dynamics intersect. His actions and attitudes exemplified how entitlement can manifest at both individual and societal levels, leading to conflicts and tensions within heritage management contexts.

The perspectives of community members, such as Interviewee N1, a lifelong resident involved in non-profit organizations, further complicate the discussion of stewardship and ownership. Her frustration at being ignored in decision-making processes highlighted the

tension between external entities, such as heritage professionals or governing bodies, and local communities who view heritage sites as integral to their identity and wellbeing.

The ownership of heritage is a complex issue that involves questions of power, representation, and decision-making. The ownership of heritage refers to the question of who has the right to control and manage cultural heritage resources such as monuments, artefacts, and buildings, and how this ownership is determined. This can be a contentious issue, particularly when there is tension between professionals who are trained to manage and conserve heritage resources and laypeople who may have a personal or cultural connection to these resources. One issue that has risen is who has the right to decide what should happen to heritage resources. Professional heritage practitioners believe that they are best placed to make decisions about the management of heritage sites. The inherent authority vested in heritage practitioners, stemming from their specialized training and expertise, shapes the discourse around what constitutes proper preservation and management. This perspective emphasizes the rights of professionals to exercise authority in matters concerning heritage conservation, highlighting their responsibility to uphold standards of preservation.

Conversely, local communities assert their rights to have a say in the management of their cultural treasures, emphasizing their personal or cultural connection to these resources. Some laypeople argue that they have a more direct connection to heritage, which can have a particular cultural significance to a community, particularly the members of the community who are involved with the organizations. They complained about often finding themselves navigating an imbalance, wherein decisions about their cultural treasures are made by external entities. This led to conflict over decision-making because these people feel that their views are not being taken into account, which raised questions around representation, professionals prioritized the preservation of heritage aspects that are seen as historically significant, while locals are more interested in the preservation of heritage that represent their own cultural heritage and they feel that their cultural heritage is not being adequately represented or valued by heritage practitioners. For instance, the statement emerged from the interviewee L6 who asserted a right to her heritage, demanding a say in decision-making and expressing frustration at feeling robbed of both

heritage and authority highlighted the deeply personal and emotional connection that individuals have to heritage resources.

In contrast, the former church caretaker embodies a different protective stance. His perspective aligns more closely with the concept of stewardship, which is often associated with heritage professionals. This individual's protective stance reflects a strong sense of responsibility towards heritage resources, emphasizing the duty to safeguard them from harm and preserve them for future generations. In many ways, this parallels the ethos of heritage professionals. It is crucial to highlight here the caretaker's perspective was likely constrained by various factors, including limitations on what he could do and the extent to which he was allowed to be involved. Structural barriers, such as organizational policies or cultural norms, may have restricted his ability to fully participate in decision-making processes or take on more active roles in the management.

The spectrum of ownership became a battleground where differing views on how to preserve and utilize heritage clash. The complexity of heritage ownership dynamics becomes even more pronounced when considering the unique socio-economic and demographic composition of the community in Old Sunderland. The challenge in defining who constitutes the community in Old Sunderland complicated ownership dynamics. The traditional boundaries of community, often defined by geographic proximity or shared history, is an elusive in a context where immigrants and diverse socio-economic groups coexist. The lack of a clear definition challenges heritage professionals to adopt a more nuanced understanding of community dynamics, acknowledging that community identity is fluid and multifaceted. The vagueness surrounding the composition of the community added a layer of cultural diversity that contributes to the intricacy of ownership dynamics. Immigrants bring with them their unique cultural perspectives, practices, and connections to heritage that may not align with conventional heritage management approaches. This diversity challenges heritage professionals to adopt more inclusive strategies that recognize and respect the varied cultural identities within the community. The spectrum of ownership dynamics, therefore, becomes a mosaic reflecting the rich cultural tapestry of Old Sunderland.

The acknowledgment of the complexity surrounding representation and heritage interpretation exposed the need for a nuanced approach in heritage management, a need to navigate the delicate balance between presenting a cohesive narrative that resonates with the broader community while acknowledging and respecting the diversity of individual experiences. The personal connection individuals feel towards their heritage becomes a catalyst for the creation of common narratives (Albert, 2012). The narratives of community members helped analysing sense of belonging, ownership, and the role of heritage. The personal dimension acts as a unifying force, enabling individuals to see themselves as integral participants in the ongoing heritage narrative, as observed in the pub community. The exploration also extends to individuals who tend to exhibit an overly possessive attitude towards heritage surpassing the boundaries of stewardship. The possessiveness can manifest as an unwavering control over decisions, reluctance to entertain alternative perspectives, or a refusal to acknowledge the evolving nature of heritage. This extreme possessiveness, at times, can impede collaborative efforts and hinder adaptive approaches necessary for the sustainable preservation and regeneration of heritage sites. Drawing on literature, Smith (2006) suggests that heritage is often seen as a dynamic, socially constructed phenomenon, challenging the notion of fixed ownership. The dichotomy between those hesitant to embrace ownership and those exhibiting an exaggerated sense of possession emphasizes the need for a balanced and inclusive approach in heritage management. Labadi (2018) highlights that heritage is not solely an object or site but a social construct that encompasses meanings, values, and attachments. The struggle for ownership, whether cautious or possessive, reflects a negotiation of identity, memory, and cultural significance within local communities.

7.4 Summary

From the outset, the chapter unravelled the presence of barriers that subtly or explicitly shape the landscape of heritage preservation, complicating the dynamics of community engagement and ownership. The intricate layers of Sunderland's heritage tapestry provided not only a descriptive account but also critical insights into the complexities of heritage and community. The East End history revealed a consistent pattern of needs being overlooked, voices marginalized, and homes treated as expendable for broader societal objectives. This historical perspective unveiled a complex tapestry of representation and decision-making

authority, emphasizing the urgent need for recalibration and a more inclusive approach to decision-making within heritage projects. The exploration next delved into the multifaceted challenge of heritage ownership. Some locals struggle with embracing ownership of heritage projects, while others exhibit an overtly possessive stance. The dichotomy underscored the complexity of ownership dynamics. Throughout the exploration of multiple barriers within the Sunderland HAZ, it was revealed that these barriers persistently influence perceptions and interactions within the community, manifesting as assumptions, mistrust, and fears of external intervention. The presence of these barriers complicates the landscape further, adding an additional layer of complexity to conservation and regeneration efforts.

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Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1 Tying the Threads: Concluding Sunderland's Heritage Tapestry

This thesis explored contemporary heritage engagement within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone (HAZ), focusing on how community perceptions of heritage intersect with the city's post-industrial transformation. It explores how these perceptions not only inform but are also influenced by regeneration efforts, emphasizing the dynamic relationship between heritage conservation, community identity, and urban revitalization. Sunderland, a city that has undergone post-industrial transformation, has seen numerous regeneration efforts aimed at revitalising its cultural and historical landscape. With numerous regeneration initiatives aimed at revitalising the city's cultural and historical landscape, the focus of this research was directed towards the Historic High Streets Sunderland Heritage Action Zone, using it as a case study to investigate how heritage-led regeneration is navigated and understood by the local community. By examining the diverse values, experiences, and collective memories of residents regarding heritage, this research sheds light on the complexities of community engagement in heritage-led regeneration initiatives. Through an analysis of transformation and engagement processes, it offers insights into the multifaceted dimensions of heritage perception and community involvement. The study focuses on sites such as Hutchinson Buildings, 170-175 High Street West, Holy Trinity Church, Phoenix Lodge, and Holy Trinity Church within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone, viewing them as representative of broader trends of post-industrial urban regeneration.

This chapter revisits the research questions, also outlined in Chapters 1 and 3, with each question drawing upon the empirical material and theoretical discussions presented in the preceding chapters. The overarching Research Question (RQ) is designed to explore how community values, experiences, and collective memories shape perceptions of heritage and interact with officially recognized heritage frameworks. The Subsidiary Research Questions (SRQs) are mobilized to address specific facets of the overarching questions, diving deeper into motivations, emotional attachments, and community engagement dynamics. Each SRQ is aligned with one or more of the objectives, which collectively provide a structured

approach to unravelling the heritage perception and engagement within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone.

Research Questions

MRQ: How are perceptions of heritage within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone influenced by the values, experiences, and collective memories of its communities, as well as their understanding of officially recognized discourses?

Subsidiary Research Questions

SRQ1: What are the motivations driving heritage-led regeneration initiatives in Sunderland, particularly within the context of the Heritage Action Zone?

This question sought to elucidate the driving forces behind heritage-led regeneration efforts within the HAZ, exploring the rationales, objectives, and priorities of various partners involved in heritage conservation and urban revitalisation.

This question aligns with objectives 1, 2, and 3. It addresses the motivations of heritage professionals (objective 1), explores community engagement dynamics (objective 2), and delves into how heritage is repurposed and reinterpreted (objective 3) within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone.

SRQ2: What is the role of emotional and experiential attachments to heritage in fostering a sense of place and belonging within the Sunderland HAZ communities?

This question corresponds with objective 4. This investigated the emotional dimensions of heritage and place attachment, exploring how personal connections, lived experiences, and nostalgic sentiments contribute to residents' sense of identity, attachment to place, and social cohesion within the Sunderland community.

SRQ3: Does the local community's understanding of formal heritage narratives contribute to feelings of exclusion within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone?

This question links closely with objective 5. By focusing on community-driven initiatives and grassroots engagements within the HAZ, this question examined the role of participatory practices, cultural events, and collective experiences in influencing residents' perceptions of heritage and fostering a sense of ownership and belonging.

8.2 Review of Research Objectives

The research journey began with a set of objectives aimed at unravelling the intricate layers of heritage perception and engagement within the Sunderland HAZ. Drawing upon the multifaceted themes that have emerged from my investigation, I have pursued several objectives:

1. Understanding the motivations of heritage professionals driving heritage-led regeneration initiatives and the structural framework.
2. Exploring the dynamics of community engagement within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone.
3. Investigating how heritage is repurposed and reinterpreted to meet contemporary needs while retaining historical integrity.
4. Exploring community perspectives on heritage and the emotional and experiential attachments that shape perceptions and definitions of heritage within particular communities.
5. Conducting an examination of the barriers and complexities surrounding sense of ownership and analysing their impact on meaningful community engagement and heritage conservation efforts.

Through an interdisciplinary approach, I addressed each objective, discovering valuable insights into the evolving narratives of heritage within the Sunderland community and traversed a nuanced exploration of the interplay between community-held perceptions of heritage and officially designated facets upheld by authoritative bodies.

The following section addresses the research objectives, with each question and objective drawing upon the empirical material and theoretical discussions presented in the preceding chapters.

8.3 Reflecting on the Research Journey

This section addresses my findings in relation to the research questions and objectives of the fundamental aspects of engagement dynamics within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone (HAZ). Drawing upon the examination of grey literature, engagement policies, HAZ delivery reports, insightful interviews, and observations, I aim to address research objectives.

1. *Understanding the motivations of heritage professionals driving heritage-led regeneration initiatives and the structural framework.*
2. *Exploring the dynamics of community engagement within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone.*
3. *Investigating how heritage is repurposed and reinterpreted to meet contemporary needs while retaining historical integrity.*

Chapter 5 marks the beginning of empirical exploration within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone (HAZ), delving into the conducted research. It scrutinizes the impetuses propelling heritage-driven revitalization endeavours and the dynamics of community involvement. The chapter also provides a foundation for understanding the subsequent empirical exploration in Chapters 6, 7, and 8 by examining the Sunderland HAZ from overarching initiatives like the Heritage Action Zones to conservation projects within the designated area. Notable conservation efforts, such as those at 170-175 High Street, Hutchinson Building (Mackie's Corner), and Holy Trinity Church, reveal layers of significance and meaning embedded within these sites. Furthermore, Chapter 5 inquiries into community engagement within the Sunderland HAZ framework and explores initiatives designed to bridge the gap between heritage professionals and the broader community, examining events such as Heritage Open Days and localized initiatives in the East End. Through nuanced exploration, I seek to understand the complex relationship between preservation and progress, highlighting successes and challenges in community involvement. The chapter serves as a lens through which I could discern the mechanisms through which regeneration and its engagement strand operated, thus facilitating a deeper understanding of the dynamics at play within the Sunderland HAZ. I endeavour to formulate a nuanced understanding of how engagement interventions shaped the trajectory of activities within the Sunderland HAZ. Through this detailed exploration, I aspire to contribute to a deeper understanding of the structural framework and engagement dynamics within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone, enriching scholarly discourse and informing practice in heritage conservation efforts.

Upon reviewing the Delivery Plan Version 4 (Sunderland City Council, 2020) for Sunderland's HAZ and interviews with heritage professionals, several insights emerge regarding the motivations of heritage professionals driving heritage-led regeneration initiatives and the

underlying structural framework guiding their actions (Objective 1). The HAZ delivery plan reveals a strong commitment among heritage professionals to preserve Sunderland's cultural heritage while addressing urgent economic and social needs. Initiatives such as the restoration of iconic buildings such as Holy Trinity Church, Phoenix Lodge, and Mackie's Corner demonstrate a dedication to safeguarding historic assets and revitalizing the local economy. Additionally, partnerships with organizations like Sunderland Culture and Newcastle University underscore a broader motivation to promote Sunderland as a heritage destination and attract visitors to the area.

The structural framework outlined in the delivery plan emphasizes collaboration, capacity building, and community engagement as key pillars of the HAZ program. The establishment of partnerships, sub-groups, and grant schemes reflects a coordinated approach to heritage-led regeneration, with a focus on leveraging resources and expertise from diverse stakeholders. Furthermore, the emphasis on capacity building initiatives such as the Heritage Skills Programme highlights a commitment to empowering local residents and preserving traditional skills within the community. While the delivery plan highlights several successes achieved by July 2020, including the commencement of restoration projects and community engagement activities, they also acknowledge ongoing challenges such as building maintenance issues and the need for improved heritage documentation.

Going beyond document analysis, interviews conducted with heritage professionals shed light on the challenges encountered in engaging with communities. (Objective 2) Heritage professionals interviewed revealed a diverse range of motivations underpinning their involvement in heritage-led regeneration initiatives. For many, a deep-seated passion for preserving cultural heritage and historical significance drives their work, serving as a catalyst for their commitment to revitalizing historic buildings and neighbourhoods. In addition to this, some professionals aimed to empower communities by imparting practical skills, fostering active participation in the revitalization process. Specifically, initiatives such as teaching practical skills at the Holy Trinity Church restoration site exemplify this approach, where community members are equipped to play an active role in preserving and revitalizing their heritage. The organization undertaking the Holy Trinity restoration recognizes that sustainable revitalization requires active participation and ownership from local residents, and teaching skills serves as a means of empowering communities to be

integral contributors to the revitalization process. However, the prevailing perspective among most professionals involved in the fieldwork suggests a concerning trend regarding community engagement within the Sunderland HAZ. Rather than viewing community engagement as an essential component woven throughout the planning and implementation phases of heritage-led regeneration initiatives, there exists a tendency to treat it as an afterthought, typically following the restoration of buildings. This ad hoc approach to community engagement raises questions about the underlying motivations and priorities driving the project.

Investigating how heritage is repurposed and reinterpreted aligns with the broader objective of understanding the motivations of heritage professionals driving heritage-led regeneration initiatives and the structural framework. By intertwining these objectives, the aim is to discover not only the reasons behind the adoption of new uses for heritage sites but also to understand how these decisions reflect the motivations and priorities of heritage professionals. This investigation also acknowledges the importance of community engagement in the repurposing of historical structures process. (Objective 3) Communities are not passive recipients of these changes but active stakeholders whose reactions and feedback should shape the trajectory of heritage-led regeneration. By considering the community's response to new uses, we not only gauge the success of these initiatives but also ensure that they are inclusive, culturally sensitive, and responsive to local needs and aspirations.

These findings underscore broader questions about the project's priorities and the potential marginalisation of community voices if engagement is solely seen as a means to an end. The risk of prioritising physical restoration over meaningful community participation may undermine the long-term sustainability and inclusivity of the project. This discussion links back to the core purpose of the Sunderland HAZ as a driver of urban regeneration. At its core, the HAZ is a driver of urban regeneration, catalysing investment, infrastructure development, and physical revitalisation within designated areas. By leveraging heritage assets as catalysts for economic growth and community development, the HAZ contributes to the revitalisation of neighbourhoods and the enhancement of public spaces. By showcasing the city's heritage assets, events, and attractions, the HAZ contributes to the growth of the economy. However, this lack of regard for the input and needs of the

community residing in these areas raises questions about the long-term sustainability and social impact of the regeneration projects.

The insights from interviews with residents further highlight the need for more structured planning in community engagement within the Sunderland HAZ framework. This implies a divergence between project objectives and the genuine needs and aspirations of local residents. Moreover, the sequential nature of community engagement, occurring after building restoration, suggests a perception of meaningful community participation being secondary to the primary goal of economic revitalisation.

4. *Exploring the emotional and experiential attachments that shape perceptions and definitions of heritage within particular communities.*

In Chapter 6, the focus shifts towards exploring the emotional and experiential attachments that shape perceptions and definitions of heritage within specific communities. Chapter 6 investigates the link between material practices, remembrance, and heritage conservation within the context of urban regeneration in Sunderland's East End. By comprehensively exploring Sunderland's heritage landscape, I unravel an interplay between individual experiences, communal sentiments, and the broader context of urban regeneration. Immersing myself in the lived realities of local residents provide invaluable insights into the multifaceted dimensions of heritage perception. Through ethnographic studies, community testimonials, and engagement events, I witness first-hand the deep emotional connections forged between individuals and heritage sites, each imbued with personal narratives and collective significance. The chapter highlights the integral role of value in the act of conservation, emphasising that the cultural, economic, political, and social significance attributed to heritage is constructed rather than intrinsic. The profound significance of heritage in fostering a sense of belonging, identity, and continuity within communities becomes apparent throughout this journey. Through interviews and observations, I see how individuals weave their own stories into the fabric of Sunderland's heritage, contributing to a rich tapestry of memories and meanings.

This journey reveals individuals' deeply rooted emotional connections with heritage sites, each carrying personal narratives and collective significance. These connections serve as conduits for fostering a sense of belonging, identity, and continuity within

communities. Furthermore, the research unearths distinct patterns in the ways various community members interact with heritage, unveiling a spectrum of perspectives and experiences that mold their comprehension of cultural heritage. While some visitors perceive heritage sites as destinations to explore and enjoy, residents view them as repositories of personal memories, intertwined with the challenges of the present day. For these individuals, heritage sites represent not just historical landmarks, but also cherished homes woven with memories of the past and the realities of today.

Additionally, the exploration of engagement events and ethnographic studies unveils the role of heritage in bridging generational divides and fostering intercommunity dialogue. Through community testimonials, it becomes visible how heritage served as a catalyst for social cohesion and collective action, uniting residents around shared histories and aspirations for the future.

One pivotal insight gleans from the analysis is the varied construction of historical narratives among different actors. While heritage professionals engaged in deliberate curation, laypeople's approach often involve a selective process, underscoring the nuanced ways in which societies construct cultural identities.

Through my exploration, I discovered how individuals and communities articulate their relationships with heritage objects and sites. The discussions in Chapter 6 highlights the significance of material culture in shaping collective memory and community identity. By examining how people engage with historical objects, I gained insights into the ways in which tangible artefacts serve as conduits for storytelling and remembrance. This process of engagement not only conserves the physical remnants of the past but also breathes life into shared narratives that bind communities together.

Moreover, the analysis highlights the embeddedness of value within the act of conservation. As Pendlebury and Brown (2021) assert, the cultural, economic, political, and social value attributed to heritage sites is not intrinsic but rather socially constructed. The research reveals the profound influence of community values and place-based identities on heritage perception. These perceptions often deviated from the rigid categories and definitions imposed by governmental or authoritative bodies, revealing a more nuanced understanding of heritage grounded in lived experiences and collective memory. Through fieldwork, it

becomes evident that individuals are driven to conserve heritage assets to which they attach value, shaping perceptions and definitions of heritage within specific contexts. As individuals and communities invest meaning and significance into heritage sites, they imbue them with a sense of identity, belonging, and continuity. However, it is crucial to acknowledge the dynamic and evolving nature of value, shaped by diverse perspectives, experiences, and historical narratives. The interplay between official discourses and local perceptions underscores the complexity inherent in heritage conservation efforts. While heritage professionals engage in deliberate curation, community members often bring their own selective processes. Concrete examples provided by the empirical fieldwork, such as the sale of church organ and pews, exemplify this phenomenon. They illustrate how community values and place-based identities shape heritage perception, diverging from authoritative definitions.

Interestingly, the empirical data reveals instances where the local community attempted to conform to authorized heritage discourse or felt intimidated by it. For example, in the case of the sale of the church organ, there are indications that the community members felt pressured to adhere to official narratives surrounding heritage conservation even if it did not align with their own values or desires. This highlights the complex dynamics at play between local perceptions and authoritative discourses in shaping heritage practices. Additionally, the data suggests that locals internalized an understanding of the official discourse, influencing their attitudes and behaviours towards heritage conservation efforts. These examples underscore a deeper, more nuanced understanding of heritage rooted in lived experiences and collective memory, while also indicating an internalized grasp of official discourse by community members. Recognizing this underscored the necessity of integrating alternative perspectives into heritage conservation endeavours to enhance their relevance and efficacy.

Through ethnographic studies and observation of engagement events, the deep emotional connections individuals forge with heritage sites becomes evident, highlighting the integral role of value in conservation efforts. The chapter unveils distinct patterns in community interactions with heritage, illustrating how residents perceive these sites as repositories of personal memories intertwined with present-day challenges. Additionally, the research

showcases heritage's role in bridging generational divides and fostering intercommunity dialogue, serving as a catalyst for social cohesion and collective action.

The analysis emphasizes the constructed nature of value in heritage conservation, revealing the profound influence of community values and place-based identities on heritage perception. Ultimately, the chapter highlights the importance of integrating alternative perspectives into heritage conservation endeavours to enhance their relevance and efficacy. By recognising the diverse ways in which individuals and communities engage with heritage and practitioners can develop more inclusive and responsive approaches to heritage conservation and urban regeneration, ensuring that the benefits of heritage are accessible and meaningful to all members of society.

5. *Conducting an examination of the barriers and complexities surrounding ownership and analysing their impact on community engagement and heritage conservation efforts*

Chapter 7 provides an exploration of the barriers within the context of heritage conservation and regeneration in Old Sunderland. Building upon earlier chapters, which laid the groundwork for understanding the broader heritage landscape and the value attribution by locals to their surroundings. Chapter 7 looks into the layered landscape of heritage-led regeneration within the Sunderland HAZ, identifying a myriad of barriers that impact community ownership and engagement. The exploration of physical divisions, historical neglect, digital exclusion, and the intricate dynamics of ownership highlights the complexities inherent in heritage conservation efforts. By providing a detailed examination of the barriers surrounding ownership dynamics and their impact on community engagement and heritage conservation efforts, the chapter explores various aspects contributing to the notion of ownership and revealed how these barriers hinder meaningful community involvement and collaboration, exacerbating feelings of marginalisation and disempowerment among residents. The chapter highlights the profound implications of sense of ownership on heritage management strategies within the Sunderland HAZ.

Through an extensive examination of physical, social, and digital dimensions, I have discovered the multifaceted nature of these barriers and their profound implications for the conservation and interpretation of cultural heritage.

One of the central barriers identified is the presence of physical divisions, such as roads and infrastructure, which fragment communities and impede movement between heritage sites. These divisions not only create tangible barriers to access but also exacerbate feelings of neglect and disconnection among residents. Furthermore, historical neglect and perceived exploitation emerge as significant barriers, particularly within communities where certain heritage sites are prioritised over others. Residents frequently express feelings of marginalization and exclusion when their cultural heritage is exploited for financial gain without leading to tangible benefits for the community. This sentiment is driven by a deep-seated resentment among residents who perceive their heritage as being commodified for external profit, all while witnessing no discernible improvements in their quality of life. From the residents' standpoint, this exploitation of their cultural identity underscores a troubling disconnect between the economic gains derived from their heritage and the lack of meaningful reinvestment or support within their own community.

In addition to physical and social barriers, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities, particularly in terms of digital exclusion. As society increasingly relies on digital platforms for communication and engagement, those who need access to reliable internet connectivity and digital resources are further marginalised. Interestingly, this disparity has led to a situation where international participants engage while individuals residing nearby are unable to participate. This highlights the widening gap in access to digital opportunities and its impact on local engagement and community involvement.

The chapter also unearths another barrier, the perceived ‘unnaturalness of preservation’, echoing discussions on the mediation of cultural significance through conservation efforts. This unnaturalness may arise from the imposition of rigid frameworks that fail to capture the dynamic and layered nature of cultural landscapes, sometimes at the expense of others. While conservation efforts are driven by noble intentions to protect and celebrate shared heritage, they often risk oversimplification, reducing rich and diverse histories into neat, predefined narratives. What is more, the concept of the ‘unnaturalness’ of preservation emphasises how formal narratives and conservation practices impose static interpretations on inherently dynamic cultural landscapes. By prioritising certain perspectives over others, conservation efforts risk oversimplifying the rich nature of heritage, failing to fully capture the diverse layers of cultural significance present within a community. The voices of locals

expressing a disconnect with sites portray as community hubs or the inquiry from a long-term resident about the exclusion of certain places stand out as poignant reminders of the complexities inherent in conservation endeavours. This selective representation leads to a sense of exclusion among local communities whose experiences and perspectives diverge from the dominant narrative promoted through conservation efforts in Sunderland HAZ. Several local residents express feelings of intimidation or disempowerment, perceiving heritage conservation as the exclusive domain of experts or specialists, inaccessible to ordinary individuals. This sentiment is echoed by volunteers engaged in the projects conducted by partner organisations, who similarly shared feelings of being either intimidated or disregarded. This perception creates barriers to active participation in conservation initiatives, as community members doubted their own expertise or authority to contribute meaningfully.

In light of the findings presented, it becomes evident that the locals' understanding of new narratives within heritage discourse holds profound implications for community engagement and empowerment. Throughout my investigation, the barrier of feeling excluded due to narrative understanding emerged as a central theme, intricately intertwined with broader challenges of heritage conservation and regeneration efforts. The introduction of new narratives, whether through heritage conservation initiatives or urban regeneration projects, evoked a sense of anxiety or apprehension among local residents, particularly when they perceived these narratives as a threat to their cultural heritage or sense of place. This fear of change or loss further exacerbated feelings of exclusion and resistance to embracing alternative perspectives. Moreover, the chapter emphasises the importance of recognising the existing world within urban regeneration initiatives. The insights from the fieldwork underscores the importance of understanding the lived experiences and perceptions of local communities in heritage conservation efforts. The feeling of intimidation or disempowerment among locals reveals a significant barrier to active engagement. Addressing this perception of inaccessibility and exclusivity is crucial for building trust and fostering meaningful collaboration between heritage professionals and local communities. A nuanced understanding is essential for developing initiatives that respect and integrate with the cultural fabric of Sunderland.

One of the key takeaways from this chapter is the interconnectedness of the built environment and the community, echoing O'Brien and Matthews' (2016) assertion that the two cannot be separated. Through interviews and observations, the research portrayed the impact of regeneration programs on the community, highlighting the physical restructuring of spaces and the emotional toll of displacement. Furthermore, I discovered the presence of barriers that shape the landscape of heritage conservation, complicating the dynamics of community engagement and ownership. From overlooked needs to marginalised voices, the exploration reveals a complex tapestry of representation and decision-making authority within heritage projects. The dichotomy of heritage ownership dynamics underscores the complexity of community engagement. Navigating ownership dynamics presents a formidable barrier to inclusive community engagement. When community members perceive professionals as holding disproportionate power and authority, it leads to feelings of intimidation and exclusion. It reveals how residents' reluctance to embrace ownership of heritage projects reflects underlying historical tensions and disparities, complicating efforts to develop inclusive and equitable conservation initiatives.

The exploration of the perspectives of individuals directly involved in heritage conservation, such as the former church caretaker and their protective stance towards heritage resources highlights the constraints and challenges they face within existing heritage management frameworks. As a result, the chapter emphasises the urgent need for stakeholders to recognise and address the underlying issues perpetuating ownership barriers. By doing so, they can foster greater community ownership and empowerment, ultimately paving the way for more inclusive and sustainable heritage conservation practices within the Sunderland HAZ. Chapter 7 highlights the need for recalibration and a more inclusive approach to decision-making within heritage projects. By addressing the persistent barriers that influence perceptions and interactions within the community, heritage conservation and regeneration efforts can become more responsive to the needs and aspirations of all residents.

8.4 Conclusion: Impediments in Engagement

As I reflect on the research process and the findings gleaned from each chapter, several key themes emerge, underscoring the multifaceted nature of heritage dynamics and the interconnectedness of theory, practice, and lived experience. Each chapter of this thesis has

offered unique insights and revelations, contributing to a deeper understanding of heritage perception, community engagement, and urban regeneration within the Sunderland HAZ. In synthesizing the findings from my research, I offered a detailed analysis of heritage perception within local communities. Additionally, I highlight how official structures can inadvertently create invisible barriers that impact community engagement and heritage conservation efforts.

The synthesis of themes derived from the empirical data:

Influence of Community Values and Experiences

The research delved into how community values, experiences, and collective memories significantly influence heritage perceptions. It revealed the interplay between these factors and officially designated facets of heritage. This understanding highlighted the importance of recognising and integrating community perspectives into heritage conservation efforts. This nuanced understanding highlights the imperative of recognizing and integrating community perspectives into heritage conservation efforts. Communities are not passive observers but active participants in the construction and conservation of their heritage. Their lived experiences, cultural traditions, and emotional connections to heritage sites imbue these spaces with layers of meaning and significance that extend beyond traditional conservation metrics.

Barriers to Effective Heritage Management

Throughout the investigation, several barriers to effective heritage management and community engagement are identified. Some of these barriers stem from disparities between community-held perceptions and official designations of heritage. The disconnect between official designations and community-held perceptions led to a lack of trust, legitimacy, and buy-in from local residents, hindering collaborative efforts to preserve and celebrate Sunderland's heritage. Such disparities created invisible barriers that impact community involvement and hinder collaborative efforts towards heritage conservation. By acknowledging the complexity of these interactions within the broader socio-cultural context, the study provided valuable insights into the negotiation of meanings in heritage conservation and community engagement initiatives.

Complexity of Heritage Conservation

Chapters exploring motivations behind heritage-led regeneration initiatives, the subjective meanings attributed by locals to their surroundings, and the discord between heritage professionals and the local community provided nuanced insights into these complexities. As I explored the motivations of heritage professionals, I delved into their passion for preserving cultural heritage and their commitment to revitalizing historic buildings and neighbourhoods. However, the synthesis of empirical data reminds that these efforts cannot occur in isolation from the communities they serve. Instead, they must be rooted in an understanding of the diverse values, experiences, and collective memories that shape the community's perception of heritage.

Empowering Community Engagement in Conservation Practice

An overarching theme that emerges is the significance of community engagement in heritage conservation efforts. The study emphasises the interconnectedness of the built environment and community identity, emphasising the importance of fostering meaningful community involvement in decision-making processes related to heritage projects.

Delving deeper into the disparities between community-held perceptions and official designations of heritage revealed not just a mere misalignment, but a fundamental tension between top-down institutional frameworks and bottom-up grassroots understandings of heritage. This tension highlighted broader issues of power, representation, and legitimacy within heritage management processes.

On the one hand, official heritage designations often reflect dominant narratives and expert-driven criteria that may not fully capture the diverse and complex meanings heritage holds for local communities. In Sunderland, this resulted in a sense of alienation or marginalisation among community members who feel that their voices and experiences are not adequately acknowledged or valued in heritage decision-making processes. Furthermore, the imposition of external definitions and classifications of heritage risks erasing or marginalising alternative narratives and heritage values that exist within communities, perpetuating a hierarchical and exclusionary approach to heritage management (Smith, 2006). This pressure for local narratives to conform to authorized discourse can stem from various sources. For instance, in Sunderland example, some of the

locals felt compelled to adapt their narratives to fit within institutional frameworks in order to gain recognition, funding, or legitimacy for their heritage initiatives. It is important to note the internalized pressure can be rooted in the understanding or interpretation of the locals themselves, rather than being explicitly requested or demanded by heritage professionals.

On the other hand, grassroots understandings of heritage are inherently diverse, dynamic, and context-specific, rooted in lived experiences, memories, and cultural practices. These community-held perceptions often challenge or subvert dominant narratives of heritage by highlighting overlooked histories, marginalised voices, and everyday practices that may not conform to conventional notions of heritage significance. However, despite their richness and complexity, these grassroots perspectives are often sidelined or dismissed within formal heritage management processes, reinforcing existing power imbalances and perpetuating a sense of disempowerment among communities (Waterton & Smith, 2009).

In addition, the challenges in bridging the gap between heritage professionals and local communities highlight deeper issues of trust, communication, and representation within heritage governance structures. The differing interpretations of heritage significance and value between these two groups reflect broader socio-cultural and epistemological divides that need to be addressed through more inclusive and participatory approaches to heritage management (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996).

Ultimately, addressing these disparities requires critical reflection on the structural inequalities that shape heritage management practices. It calls for a reevaluation of existing frameworks and methodologies to better accommodate the diverse perspectives and voices of local communities, fostering more inclusive, equitable, and democratic approaches to heritage conservation and management.

Upon further contemplation, it becomes evident that the differing interpretations of heritage significance and value between heritage professionals and local communities represent more than just a clash of perspectives; they reflect deeper philosophical and methodological divergences in how heritage is understood and approached. Heritage professionals often operate within a framework that prioritises objective criteria such as architectural significance, historical authenticity, and tangible materiality. This approach,

rooted in academic disciplines such as archaeology, architecture, and history, tends to emphasise the conservation of physical structures and artefacts as tangible representations of the past. However, this focus on materiality can overlook the intangible, subjective, and relational aspects of heritage that hold profound meaning for local communities (Ashworth & Graham, 2005).

In contrast, local communities tend to view heritage through a more holistic and contextual lens, valuing the social, cultural, and emotional connections they have with heritage sites and landscapes. For them, heritage is not just about preserving buildings or artefacts; it is about safeguarding collective memories, sustaining cultural practices, and fostering a sense of identity and belonging (Smith & Akagawa, 2009). This community-centred approach to heritage emphasises the lived experiences, traditions, and narratives that give meaning and significance to places, often transcending traditional disciplinary boundaries.

The tension between these divergent perspectives can give rise to misunderstandings and conflicts between heritage professionals and local communities, as each group advocates for their own vision of heritage conservation. Heritage professionals may struggle to understand or appreciate the subjective values and emotional attachments that local communities attribute to heritage sites, while communities may feel marginalised or excluded from decision-making processes that prioritise expert-driven criteria over their own lived experiences (Waterton & Smith, 2009).

Addressing these challenges requires a more inclusive and dialogic approach to heritage management that recognises and respects the diverse values and perspectives of all stakeholders involved. This means moving beyond traditional disciplinary silos and adopting interdisciplinary and participatory methodologies that integrate expert knowledge with community voices, fostering mutual understanding, collaboration, and shared ownership of heritage conservation efforts (UNESCO, 2011). While general guidelines and inclusive frameworks are useful, it is important to recognize both its adaptable elements and the need for customization in each unique context. These frameworks tend to risk oversimplifying or overlooking the nuances that each community brings to heritage conservation. Tailoring heritage management to the specific needs of a place involves understanding and integrating the unique social, cultural, historical, and environmental aspects that define it. Rather than applying one-size-fits-all solutions, place-based heritage

management encourages approaches that are as distinctive as the heritage itself. The significance of this approach extends beyond major cities, providing critical insights for the study of so-called 'third-tier cities.'[29] These often overlooked areas hold valuable lessons about community-driven heritage conservation that contribute to a broader understanding of the diverse ways heritage is experienced, understood, and preserved globally. Only through such collaborative and reflexive approaches can heritage professionals and local communities bridge the gap and work together towards a more inclusive and sustainable future for heritage conservation.

8.5 Personal Reflection

Reflecting on my research journey within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone (HAZ), I am reminded of the poignant encounter in Turkey that served as a catalyst for deeper introspection. Seated amidst traditional stone houses, engaged in conversations with locals, I was struck by the richness of their perspectives on their city. Their narratives transcended mere aesthetics, delving into the political, geographical, and social dimensions that shape their daily lives. As I listened to their stories, I could not help but draw parallels to the locals' perception of heritage and engagement that I encountered within the Sunderland HAZ.

Just as the locals in Turkey shared their intimate experiences and cultural practices, the residents of Sunderland revealed their deep emotional connections to heritage sites, each imbued with personal narratives and collective significance. Through my research, I explored the interplay between individual experiences, communal sentiments, and the broader context of urban regeneration, unveiling the multifaceted dimensions of heritage perception.

Moreover, my exploration of community engagement initiatives within the Sunderland HAZ echoed the importance of recognizing and integrating community perspectives into heritage conservation efforts. I discovered that disparities between community-held perceptions and official designations of heritage often create invisible barriers that hinder collaborative efforts towards heritage conservation. This resonates with the tension I observed between top-down institutional frameworks and bottom-up grassroots understandings of heritage in

[29] A term used to describe urban areas that, while not prominent on a national or global scale, have distinctive local dynamics. For further details see [Short, M. & Fundingsland Tetlow, M. (2012) 'Sunderland', *Cities*, 29(4), pp. 278–288].

Turkey, where the imposition of external definitions of heritage risked erasing alternative narratives and values within communities.

In conclusion, my research journey has underscored the interconnectedness of theory, practice, and lived experience in shaping heritage dynamics. By delving into the nuances of heritage perception, community engagement, and urban regeneration, I aspire to inspire further exploration and facilitate informed decision-making in heritage conservation efforts within Sunderland and beyond. Just as my encounter in Turkey prompted me to set aside my expert glasses and ponder the question of what heritage means for local residents, my research journey has deepened my understanding of the profound significance of heritage in fostering a sense of belonging, identity, and continuity within communities.

This thesis serves as a testament to the richness and complexity of heritage dynamics within the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone. I hope to contribute to ongoing dialogue and action aimed at fostering greater understanding, appreciation, and stewardship of heritage within communities.

8.6 Contributions and Further Research

The insights generated from this research have significant implications for theory, practice, and policy in the fields of heritage conservation, urban regeneration, and community development. By acknowledging the diverse values and perspectives within communities, I highlight the importance of adopting inclusive and participatory approaches to heritage management. Collaborative decision-making processes can foster a sense of ownership and empowerment among stakeholders, leading to more sustainable and socially equitable regeneration initiatives. Reflecting on the implications of our research, I recognize the need for further exploration and informed decision-making in the realms of heritage conservation and community engagement. By acknowledging the complexity of heritage dynamics within the broader socio-cultural context, it can be better understood the challenges and opportunities inherent in heritage-led regeneration efforts.

My investigation into heritage conservation and community involvement in regeneration efforts within the Sunderland HAZ has not only revealed the challenges and opportunities but has also highlighted a critical gap in the existing literature. While there is a wealth of theoretical work on community heritage, the gap lies in understanding how these

theoretical constructs translate into practical strategies for revitalizing post-industrial landscapes. The theoretical frameworks explored in this research have provided valuable insights into dynamics in heritage conservation, but there remains a need for practical applications of these theories in real-world contexts.

In conclusion, this research has provided valuable insights into heritage perception, community engagement, and urban regeneration within the Sunderland HAZ. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of how community values, experiences, and collective memories influence heritage perceptions and intersect with or diverge from officially designated facets of heritage.

8.6.1 Recommendations for Further Research

Moving forward, there are several avenues for future research that warrant exploration. While there is ample theoretical work on community heritage, the gap lies in understanding how these theoretical constructs translate into practical strategies. Addressing this gap could involve conducting further research to explore case studies where theoretical frameworks have been successfully implemented in practice. Additionally, fostering collaboration between academic researchers, community organizations, and urban planners could facilitate the co-creation of innovative strategies tailored to the specific needs and contexts of post-industrial communities. Ultimately, by bridging the gap between theory and practice, we can develop more effective approaches for revitalizing post-industrial landscapes and promoting sustainable heritage conservation and community development initiatives in Sunderland and beyond.

Further investigation into the nuances of community engagement within heritage-led regeneration projects could provide valuable insights into effective strategies for fostering inclusive participation. Additionally, longitudinal studies examining the long-term impacts of heritage conservation initiatives on community well-being and socio-economic development would contribute to a deeper understanding of the broader impacts of heritage-led regeneration.

Given the insights provided in the preceding chapters, where it was highlighted that there is a lack of knowledge regarding the communities involved in heritage-led regeneration projects, along with the presence of a high population of immigrants and individuals who

have been released from incarceration and are being reintegrated into society through various programs or housing assistance provided by the local authority. Future research should delve deeper into understanding the dynamics of community engagement within such contexts.

Investigating methods for identifying and defining the communities within heritage-led regeneration areas, particularly those that are marginalized or underrepresented. This could involve community mapping exercises, demographic analysis, and stakeholder consultations.

Examining the specific barriers that immigrants and other marginalized groups face in engaging with heritage conservation and regeneration initiatives. This could include language barriers, lack of trust in institutions, and socioeconomic challenges.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Newcastle University

Consent Form

Title of Study: Unpacking Heritage-Led Urban Regeneration and Community Engagement in Sunderland

Thank you for your interest in taking part in this research. Please complete this form after you have listened to an explanation about the research study. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form.

		Please initial box to confirm consent
1.	I confirm that I have read the information sheet dated 19.03.2021 for the above study, I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and I have had any questions answered satisfactorily.	
2.	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. I understand that if I decide to withdraw, any data that I have provided up to that point will be be omitted.	
3.	I consent to the processing of my personal information *[contact, occupation and age]* for the purposes of this research study.	
4.	I consent to my anonymized research data being stored and used by others for future research.	
5.	I understand that my research data may be published as a report.	
6.	I consent to the retention of my personal information *[contact, occupation and age]* for the purpose of being re- contacted.	
7.	I understand that my research data may be looked at by individuals from Newcastle University where it is relevant to my taking part in this research.	
8.	I consent to being audio and video recorded and understand that the recordings will be stored anonymously on password-protected software and used for research purposes only.	
9.	I agree to take part in this research project.	
	Participant _____ _____ _____ *Name of participant* *Signature* *Date*	
	Researcher Gulnur Cengiz _____ *Name of researcher* *Signature* *Date*	

Consent Form / Date 07/05/2021
1

Appendix 2

Information Sheet

Title of Study: Unpacking Heritage-Led Urban Regeneration and Community Engagement in SunderlandThank

Invitation and Brief Summary
You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether or not you wish to take part it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read this information carefully. If you do decide to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the purpose of the research?
The research project focusing on understanding heritage and the connections locals form with them in Sunderland.

What does taking part involve?
You will be asked to answer interview questions and share your opinions about the ongoing projects in Sunderland.

What information will be collected and who will have access to the information collected?
All the interviews will be anonymous and only used for research purposes. All the data from the interview will be audio recorded, providing that you agree with the process. A copy of a recording can be made available to you upon request. Quotations from the interview may be included in the PhD thesis and published.

Has this study received ethical approval?
This study has received ethical approval from the University Ethics Committee on 17/12/2019.

Who should I contact for further information relating to the research?
Principal Investigator Name, Gulnur Cengiz
g.cengiz2@ncl.ac.uk