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Article

Auditing, Revealing and Promoting Industry in the London Borough of Southwark

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Abstract
Renewed enthusiasm surrounds the potential for urban industry and its contribution to the socioeconomic diversity of cities, despite concerns about the loss of industrial uses, land, and buildings in high-value, post-industrial cities. Yet, industry is often hidden and undervalued, and methodologies to change the culture around nurturing industry in cities have not been well explored. As a first step in moving this agenda forward, this article proposes effective ways to reveal industrial uses and to advocate for policy protections of the land they occupy. It examines how London Metropolitan University's School of Art, Architecture and Design (AAD) Cities action researchers applied their *Audit, Reveal and Promote* methodology to Southwark, a London borough with a high concentration of urban industry. There are key aspects to revealing industrial economies: collecting accurate data on the ground, showcasing local businesses, building stakeholder networks through mutual trust, and creating a space of possibilities between vertical hierarchical and grassroots power networks to enable stakeholders to participate in urban change. This article presents a methodology for cultural change towards valuing a mix of uses, including industry, to transform land development towards retention and densification of industry.

Keywords
action research; industrial economy; methodology; New Southwark Plan; participatory research; policy protection; Old Kent Road; stakeholder engagement; sustainable development; urban planning

Issue
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1. Introduction

After a period marked by the dispersal of large-scale manufacturing in London, a renewed enthusiasm has recently emerged for small-scale urban manufacturing in the context of "post-industrial" cities. Manufacturers leverage cutting-edge digital technologies while also gaining from their urban setting by exploiting proximity to networks of suppliers, services, and workforce (Grodach et al., 2017). City-centre locations facilitate links with consumers and markets, a pivotal attribute for firms emphasising design-driven approaches (Ferm & Jones, 2016), and industry is a core aspect of a city that works (Davis, 2019).

A threat to industry in London, however, is the scarcity of available land to accommodate it. The challenge is evident in the overshooting of industrial land loss targets since 2001. Three times the target loss occurred between 2011 and 2015 across the city, and nearly eight times in central London (Greater London Authority [GLA], 2016). Loss is fuelled by higher land values for other uses, rather than directly by deindustrialisation (Ferm & Jones, 2016). A widespread notion exists that manufacturing has no place in the post-industrial inner city, on account of its association with dirt, noise, and perceived land inefficiency. However, this perspective fails to acknowledge the nuanced industrial geographies and how new urban manufacturing endeavours tend to

cluster within remaining industrial pockets (Grodach & Martin, 2020).

1.1. Audit, Reveal and Promote

This article discusses a methodology—*Audit, Reveal and Promote*—designed by the London Metropolitan University's School of Art, Architecture and Design (AAD) Cities (Clossick & Brearley, 2021) to create the conditions for retaining and intensifying London's valuable urban industrial places. It is guided by a number of research questions: How can a city's industrial activities be effectively researched through "audits"? How can the findings be made accessible to stakeholders, both governance and grassroots? How can those stakeholders be empowered to utilise their knowledge to participate in urban change? What type of actions could influence decision-making by those in power towards densification of industry?

This article is one output of action research that was carried out from 2014 to the present day by the AAD Cities Research Group (including work by Masters students in the Cities Unit); primarily academic activist Dr. Jane Clossick, and Prof. Mark Brearley, an academic who owns a tray factory in Southwark, where these experiments were undertaken. The aim of the action research is a just and sustainable city, in line with The New Leipzig Charter. The Charter outlines a vision for urban development in promoting the common good, emphasising the need for sustainability in urban planning, addressing climate change, resource management, and the conservation of heritage (European Commission, 2020), all of which are potentially fulfilled by retaining industrial land and accommodation in cities. Methodological explorations in Southwark are documented in the hope that our experience will be of use to future urban activists.

The article draws on three theses which underpin the methodology. The first is that engagement in planning begins by revealing local value and empowering stakeholders. Using the theory of social movements as networks (Diani & McAdam, 2003, p. 78), stakeholders were mobilised to bring their attention to local industry. Southwark is a well-examined place in its industrial and post-industrial history and exemplifies broader spatial and political changes in London and elsewhere. Groups such as Pempeople (a community group aiming to empower local people) and the Southwark Planning Network (an informal network that assesses and acts upon planning policy change) have a long history of activism. They form part of a wider social and scholarly movement which sees industry as an essential component of city life (Chapple, 2014; Davis, 2019; Grodach et al., 2017) and recognises that, in order to keep it in the city, dominant market forces must be challenged.

The second thesis is that urban activism supports the growth of networks both inside and beyond industrial places, where urban learning is operationalised. The actors in the Southwark network include industrial businesses, as well as activists, developers and policymakers. Social movements can be understood as complex networks of interactions among individuals and organisations which shape the dynamics of change. Relationships between actors are crucial, affecting the mobilisation of resources. Appadurai (2002) discusses the importance of collaborative networks to achieve change, and uses the term "deep democracy" to describe how through the formation of networks, new ideas for development emerge, as well as modes of implementation. Similarly, according to Manzini (2015), grassroots innovation relies on enabling people to work together in novel ways. Activists and organisations within the network can pool their resources and expertise to achieve common goals. Our work seeks to facilitate network formation, with a view to retaining and intensifying industry.

Thirdly, by highlighting the diversity of existing industrial economies, policymakers can cross the socioeconomic divide, leading to decision-making that sufficiently accounts for the range of needs and rights of the people whose lives are affected by the loss of industry. Through action, a deeper democracy is fostered (Appadurai, 2002) by bridging gaps between stakeholders and middle-class "radical activists" (Mayer, 2013). In questioning the notion that industrial localities are expendable in the 21st-century city, action is a challenge to the dominant ideology (Gamson, 1975, p. 142), although the challenge is not confrontational, but participatory (Blundell-Jones et al., 2005). Ours is a mode of "academic activist" research (Chatterton et al., 2007) which acknowledges that to act within urban processes is to understand their social and political dimensions, which enables change.

2. Urban Industry in Southwark and Beyond

A wide mix of accommodation types, occupied by a varied mix of uses which includes "industrial," is valuable in the 21st-century city. "Industrial" includes the type of Industry 4.0 described but also construction, fabrication, logistics, waste handling, repairs, utilities infrastructure, and wholesale.

Industrial uses are significant to the economy in the UK, and the sector is growing. In Southwark, there are 18,320 businesses trading (London Councils, 2019, p. 6), of which "industrial" makes up around 10% (1,684), employing 16,000 people (Clossick & Brearley, n.d.). The UK's industrial base contributes four times more to gross value added (GVA) than its financial core (Lawlor et al., 2009) and in Lewisham and Southwark, GVA grew steadily in the period 1998–2017 (Office of National Statistics, 2017). Production, manufacturing, construction, distribution, and transport made up 20% of the borough's GVA in 2015, compared to information and communication at 14%, and public administration, education, and health at 17% (GLA Economics et al., 2015,

p. 58). Production-based and construction enterprises in Southwark both grew by over 150% in the period 2010–2018 (Office of National Statistics, 2019), and in 2019 44% of industrial businesses said they were growing (Clossick & Brearley, n.d.). Similarly, in 2016, 95% of industrial businesses said they would need either the same or more space in the coming year (AAD Cities, 2017, p. 39).

Industrial districts nurture creativity and entrepreneurialism because they host small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which are also a source of prosperity (Garcia-Martinez et al., 2023). Wood and Dovey (2015) revealed that a diverse structure associated with a multitude of functions played a pivotal role in generating the distinctive characteristics of a creative cluster. In Southwark, 88% of industrial organisations have 10 employees or fewer and 98% are SMEs (Clossick & Brearley, n.d.). Making accommodation available that is suitable for the wide range of potential industrial uses also fosters innovation and competitiveness (Curran, 2010), encouraging research and development. In Southwark in 2023, Monty Ravenscroft invented a folding toilet (Ramirez, 2023); such innovation will keep London at the forefront of global markets.

Mixed economic uses, including industry, are ecologically sustainable and economically resilient (Leigh & Hoelzel, 2012). In this diverse borough, across 22 sectors there are 1,684 industrial organisations (Clossick & Brearley, n.d.). Just-in-time activity meets the growing needs of cities without generating excessive trips and associated carbon emissions (Ferm & Jones, 2016) and the existence of local supply chains supports progress towards a circular economy. Eighty-three percent of Southwark's industrial businesses have customers mainly located inside the Greater London area and, when it comes to suppliers, only 14% of businesses rely on suppliers outside of the UK, whereas 60% rely on those in the Greater London area (Clossick & Brearley, n.d.). Clusters of industrial land and uses tend to be robust, and nurturing them in a 21st-century metropolitan UK context allows for a diverse economic ecology that is resilient to economic, technological, and social shocks (Chapple, 2014).

Industrial uses form part of local heritage and ecosystems, and are often considered to be part of local "cultural heritage" (Skoura, 2023); in Southwark, 47% of the industrial organisations were established before the year 2000 (Clossick & Brearley, n.d.) and many are tied to local cultural identity (AAD Cities, 2017). Collaboration and cooperation among firms is fundamental to the success of industrial districts, such as in the classically-studied Emilia Romagna region in Italy (see, e.g., Andreoni, 2018). Southwark's industry is characterised by a dense network of SMEs in related industries within a specific geographical area and has a high level of complementarity, with many contributing a unique product or service that enhances the activities of others in the network. In Emilia Romagna, companies in the same district often form horizontal networks to share knowledge, resources, and best practices, which fosters innovation and efficiency (Ferri & White, 1999); these networks also constitute heritage.

Industrial land in Southwark is being eroded, however, for a number of reasons. Industrial uses require space, and where overall accommodation is limited, higher-value uses will take over where no policy protection exists. When land values rise, industrial areas are often destroyed in favour of residential or services development (Davies et al., 2017, pp. 7–8; Roger Tym & Partners, 2011, p. 9). Southwark is on the periphery of central London with excellent transport links and a gentrifying local population, full of prime development sites. It also contains the Old Kent Road (OKR) Opportunity Area (OA), since 2016 named in the London Plan as one of London's "major sources of brownfield land" (GLA, 2020), where most of Southwark's industrial uses are concentrated. Urban development is driven by developers who seek profit, and the status quo assumption is that accommodating residential and service uses is more profitable than building industrial space (Ferm & Jones, 2016).

Existing high-level planning policy does not protect industrial land. In the Planning Use Classes system (Planning Portal, 2020) the wide net cast by industrial use classes means that, through permitted development, industrial uses can be lost easily. Policy E4 in the Draft New London Plan (GLA, 2018) protected existing industrial accommodation with an objective for "no net loss" across London, but this condition was removed as a result of central government pressure to prioritise housing delivery (GLA, 2021). The new London Plan (GLA, 2021) acknowledges the necessity of bolstering industrial capacity citywide, and encourages a more concentrated industrial presence.

The protection (or otherwise) of industrial land through policy designation is down to local policymakers, who might have conflicts of interest. The New Southwark Plan (NSP) removed much of the industrial-only land designation policy and replaced it with policy which allows for the development of "mixed use" (Southwark Council, 2022). Currently, 7,362 (48%) of industrial employees are working in locations that are site allocations in the NSP, while only 3,485 (22%) remain working in areas designated as locally significant industrial sites (LSIS) or strategic protected industrial land (SPIL) in the NSP. Regarding floorspace, 77% of the industrial floorspace in Southwark is outside areas designated for planning protection as LSIS or SPIL, and 38% of the floorspace is contained within an allocated site, some of which are owned by the council (Clossick & Brearley, n.d.). Moreover, before the NSP came into force in 2022, planning permissions were being granted which assumed the emerging policy was already in effect, resulting in loss of industrial accommodation in contravention of existing policy.

Once policy is in the pipeline, "planning blight" takes place in which businesses move in anticipation of future policy-led redevelopment (CAG Consultants, 2017), and this is happening in Southwark: the number

of businesses in the OKR area decreased by 4.5% in the period 2015–2019 (We Made That, 2019, p. 28). The term "brownfield" implies an empty or under-occupied industrial site, but industrial areas in Southwark cannot be characterised as such. As leases are reduced and landlords stop maintaining buildings in the hope of high-value land sales, formerly vibrant and busy areas become "brownfield." In the evolving, complex system of a locality such as Southwark, changes are taking place that need understanding prior to prescribing policy, yet local and national government are not engaging with the task of fine-grained and nuanced understanding. The consequence may be the policy-led destruction of a fragile but important set of industrial ecosystems.

Often the activities inside industrial buildings and land are invisible, because of the particularities of post-war modernist industrial buildings. There are large industrial estates dominating OKR, which emerged in the tradition of "rational" post-war urban planning, which consist of inward-looking block-scale buildings, with few entrances and even fewer outward-facing apertures. The activities within are concealed within "urban depth" (Clossick, 2017) and render OKR industrial activity relatively invisible and therefore easy to dismiss. According to Ferm et al. (2021), who compared OKR to the more resilient development pattern enabled by the mixed land use and small plot size of Hackney's Mare Street, the land uses of OKR can be better separated, and large plots can be developed, characteristics which have contributed to its large-scale redevelopment of industrial space.

3. Audit, Reveal and Promote in Southwark

OKR has historically been considered unremarkable—an ill-favoured route consisting of conventional manufacturing, retail depots, and a dilapidated high street (Cargill Thompson, 2018). This, coupled with its classification as strategic industrial land prior to the development of new policies in the NSP, resulted in OKR being perceived by artists and industrial occupants as one of the few inner London areas untouched by gentrification pressures (Cargill Thompson, 2018). Recently, however, Southwark and particularly the area around OKR have suffered a rapid loss of industrial land and uses, so this was where action research efforts were focussed.

The aims of action research in Southwark were determined by the situation at hand. The *Audit, Reveal and Promote* methodology discussed here developed in response to engagement with these on-the-ground problems, and associated policy, using the practice of architectural research to produce knowledge (Katoppo & Sudradjat, 2015). In Southwark, the objectives were: (a) to reveal the nature of the local industrial economy, its richness and diversity, and its multi-use and multicultural nature (qualities that are often invisible to policymakers; Ferm & Jones, 2016); (b) to produce evidence about industrial uses in the whole borough of Southwark to present to the Inquiry into the NSP in February 2022; (c) to empower stakeholders to participate in NSP consultations and other activities related to urban change; (d) to build networks between communities and policymakers around a common goal; and ultimately (e) to influence urban change in the OKR OA towards retention and densification of industrial land.

Our research combines activism, pedagogy, and old-fashioned doorstep social research. Each set of happenings described below developed through the establishment of strategic partnerships with 14 local stakeholder networks. In contested spaces, power relations are central to creating and occupying urban space (Conn, 2011) so the actions we took were deliberately non-confrontational. The *Audit, Reveal and Promote* methodology draws on ethnographic studies (Hall, 2015), visual ethnography (Pink, 2013), and the production of knowledge through drawing and design (Lucas, 2019; Martire, 2020). Images of a construction of reality were produced, highlighting the value of industrial locations; with these components, an anthropological approach meets a campaigning dimension. Four components were tested: auditing, revealing, capacity-building and promoting. The practical application of these strategies overlaps in an ongoing, reflexive process and the intention is that the methodological findings will be of use to urban action researchers coalescing around places of rapid urban change. For a detailed timeline and locations of all activities in Southwark, see Clossick and Brearley (2021).

3.1. Auditing Southwark

An "audit" involves finding out what exists: uses, jobs, and aspirations of local firms. It explores rich economic and civic life in defined localities, seeking to uncover what occurs in places that are typically overlooked. Audits use quantitative methods, such as counting jobs, people, floorspace, and yard space, as well as qualitative methods such as photographing, filming, sketching, engaging in participant observation, and interviewing people. An audit provides a snapshot of conditions at a single point in time, but multiple audits conducted over time allow changes taking place in the local economy to be recorded. This is useful particularly when these changes in the economy are occurring in response to policy changes.

Four audits were conducted in Southwark. The first two were carried out in collaboration with students in the Cities Unit at London Metropolitan University (AAD Cities, 2016, 2017) who determined the number of jobs and businesses in the OKR OA as well as interviewing and photographing businesses (Figure 1). The third audit, a collaboration with a photographer, brought to life the inside of industrial businesses which otherwise would have remained hidden from public view (AAD Cities, 2018). London Metropolitan University funded the final audit, which is in the analysis phase and is a comprehensive look at every industrial property in the borough as well as a photographic survey, many of which were published in the book *Made in London* (Brearley et al., 2022).

Figure 1. AAD Cities' model of the OKR OA, with different economic sectors in various colours, shown at the Livesey Exchange Exhibition as part of the London Festival of Architecture (LFA), 2017.

The findings of all the audits are reported elsewhere (AAD Cities, 2016, 2017, 2018; Clossick & Brearley, n.d.).

3.2. Revealing the Audit Findings

The "Reveal" phase involves bringing to light the audit findings through the production and dissemination of easy-to-understand documents such as maps, models, and photographs, and exploring the opportunities they expose with stakeholders and policymakers.

Audit findings were shown at three exhibitions as part of the LFA (shown in Figures 1 and 2), in community spaces, and published in the "OKR Manufactures" broadsheet (AAD Cities, 2018), a photographic catalogue. Design research was shown, with examples of co-location of industry and other activities, convincing photographs, and curated guided walks through localities. The aim was to demonstrate the value of industry to the local economy, as well as to argue against displacing industry in favour of other development. The exhibitions communicated the needs and qualities of industrial uses, so they could be accommodated appropriately in local urban strategies. All stakeholders were invited to these events, and they were held in convenient, accessible locations in which networks could form and grow.

Figure 2. AAD Cities' exhibitions of OKR Audit findings at Asylum Chapel, Southwark, 2016 (left) and at Central House, Tower Hamlets, 2017 (right).

3.3. Capacity-Building

Community "capacity-building" aims to empower all the stakeholders involved in urban change. Dissemination activities are held in collaboration with grassroots groups, public agencies, developers, and policymakers. The targets of capacity-building are local communities, civic groups, industrial business owners, and workers. The aim is to create links between public agencies, community groups, and developers; build networks among stakeholders at all levels; and garner knowledge and enthusiasm amongst them, so that all involved come to share common goals. Capacity-building activities are designed to pique people's interest and to offer them the tools to engage in urban transformation.

In a few examples of capacity-building events (shown in Figure 3), two participatory design workshops were held as part of the LFA in 2018 and 2019, working with local stakeholders to demonstrate the potential impact of planning policy changes and to familiarise people with the documentation through interactive model-building, sketching, and discussions; making and exploring design propositions collaboratively; and helping people to engage in consultations. Collaboration took place with local groups on the Urban Room OKR (231 OKR) campaign to establish a "room" in a shop on the OKR as a place for local people to gather urban knowledge, and the second LFA workshop took place there. It involved building a large-scale model of the locality with granted planning permissions. Continuing the theme of empowerment, in 2018 the team collaborated with the Southwark Planning Network on the Shaping Southwark Community Hustings, where local people could ask candidates about the built environment.

A key achievement was the establishment of the Vital OKR business association in 2017, to give voice to the OKR industrial economy. During the audits of OKR, student surveyors handed out Vital OKR flyers to build a network of local businesses, as shown in Figure 9. Around 75% of the businesses in the OKR OA have joined Vital OKR (Vital OKR, n.d.), and as a group have submitted responses to consultations on the NSP.

3.4. Promoting

"Promoting" makes use of audit materials and design propositions, as well as personal contacts which come into being because of network formation. It seeks to share these materials and to foster a commitment at all levels—from residents to Government—to retain and densify industry. Promoting aims to influence stakeholder networks, especially those with power in urban space, planning, policy, and governance, both locally and city-wide. Such activities include individual and small group meetings, policy advice, and engagement with policymakers via written communication. Like the other stages of the methodology, promoting is collaborative and emerges from participatory action, steering away from confrontational activism and instead working to build robust relationships of mutual trust.

In this action research, promoting took many forms, shown in Figure 4. One such form was meetings between action researchers and policymakers: meetings were held with Southwark Council Cabinet Members, and, at London-wide governance level, with GLA officers and London Assembly politicians. Mark Brearley also appeared on a panel at the NSP launch event and on the panel of the London Assembly Planning Committee on Industrial Land in London. Another form of promoting involved participation in academic and NGO events, such as the Southwark Planning Network Workshop on industrial land, workspace, high streets and employment. In addition to formal meetings and events, "walking and talking" guided tours were held around industrial zones in Southwark, for the public, policymakers, grassroots groups, urban design professionals and NGOs including New London Architecture.

Promoting also came in the submission of consultation responses. Representations were made on behalf of the AAD Cities Research Group from London

Figure 3. Planning Action OKR workshop at the Treasure House OKR, 2018 (left, photo by Alexander Christie, used with permission); poster for LFA workshop at 231 OKR, 2019 (centre); and Shaping Southwark Hustings, 2018 (right).

Figure 4. Mark Brearley on the panel of the London Assembly Planning committee on Industrial Land in London, 2017 (left); walking and talking as part of the LFA OKR workshop 2018 (centre); and Open House weekend tours of Kaymet, Mark Brearley's factory on the OKR (right).

Metropolitan University and the business community in planning policy consultations on the NSP, including Vital OKR community representations at Southwark Council Assembly and on the draft OKR Area Action Plan (Vital OKR, 2019). In 2019, evidence was presented to Burgess Business Park Planning Appeal Inquiry and, in February 2021, initial findings from the Southwark Industrial Audit were used to give representations on the Examination in Public of the NSP.

4. Methodological Insights About Auditing, Revealing and Promoting

The testing of the *Audit, Reveal and Promote* methodology in Southwark led to several methodological insights. These concern how London's local industrial economies may best be revealed so stakeholders can appreciate their social and economic value; how best to persuade stakeholders at all levels of power to engage with urban change; what actions contribute to the emergence of new networks that represent the interests of all; and what actions influence decision-making by those in power.

4.1. Auditing: How Can a City's Industrial Activities and Economies Be Researched Through "Audits"?

Planning policy in Southwark and elsewhere cannot be underpinned by desktop studies because the data is not fine-grained enough. Uses are often interdependent and support major central London activities (e.g., AECOM et al., 2015; Cities of Making, 2020; Ferm & Jones, 2016; Gort Scott, 2013). Although studies can begin with available datasets, surveyors must visit the locations and speak to the people involved to ascertain the details of the interconnected metabolism of London's industrial places. In an example of how existing data underpinning desktop studies can be wrong, Ordnance Survey maps are often missing the spaces beneath railway lines. In Southwark that is a significant proportion of the available industrial floorspace: 5.2% (Clossick & Brearley, n.d.). Consequently, that space was missed from figures in GLA documents (AECOM et al., 2015; CAG Consultants, 2017), which affects projections. The inaccuracy is shown in a sample area in Figure 5.

As Southwark experiences urban development, one argument against retaining industrial land is that conflicts could occur between industrial zones and residential areas due to noise, pollution, and safety concerns. Only through detailed on-the-ground auditing is it possible to ascertain whether this is the case for specific industries. According to our research, 77% of industrial businesses in Southwark are undertaking activities that would not disturb residents (Clossick & Brearley, n.d.). However, where businesses produce noise made by the movement of vehicles and goods, it may cause conflict with residents, and these would be best situated amongst other industrial businesses rather than embedded in a mixed-use development.

Auditing is an effective method for reaching non-residential occupants in complex places like Southwark: The door-to-door survey allows a rapid depiction of a local economy, its organisations, and the nature of their accommodation. Our flexible auditing method grew from other work including Hall's (2015) ethnographic approach, as well as methods derived from Mark Brearley's GLA work (Cities of Making, 2020; Gort Scott, 2013). An audit has two stages. First, the research team must identify the area to be audited, prepare a survey, and collect data and photographs at every non-residential property. Afterwards, qualitative accounts are collected through follow-up interviews. The door-to-door survey identifies businesses that are not known or those that will not respond to written communications, reveals where multiple firms share a property, or identifies who is occupying in situations where property changes hands frequently.

Door-to-door collection of information leads to the building of trusted contact networks. During the audits in Southwark, student researchers met firms, gathered information about planning, and distributed information about them while collecting information from people they met, and this led to the formation of business group Vital OKR. Their status as students meant they were non-threatening, and they clarified that their intentions were benign. Similarly, photographing a business

Figure 5. Sample area analysis from the Southwark Industrial Audit, correcting the baseline used for the projections by AECOM et al. (2015) and CAG Consultants (2017).

is an intimate act which can lead to the development of deeper social connection and trust. Local communities may be more likely to engage in capacity-building when they build trust among one another and with the research team during auditing.

Auditing reveals social and cultural value which is not immediately apparent. Quantitative methods used by others included calculating collective business rates of Rye Lane (Hall, 2015) and measuring employment, the number and range of independent businesses, and the range and cost of goods produced or sold in the area (New Economics Foundation, 2006). However, value may also mean non-monetary things, such as social contributions to local economies. As Ferm et al. (2017, p. 27) argue, "particular activities might be cherished by communities, firms might contribute to local economic diversity, and more broadly underpin the human vitality that characterises local economies." The action research reveals this non-monetary value effectively by producing interview books, stories, and narratives, which capture the human element (AAD Cities, 2016, 2017, 2018), shown in Figure 6.

There are, however, inherent challenges auditing in a culturally- and socially-diverse place like Southwark: people may not be honest in their responses, and the findings may be skewed by the interpretations of the

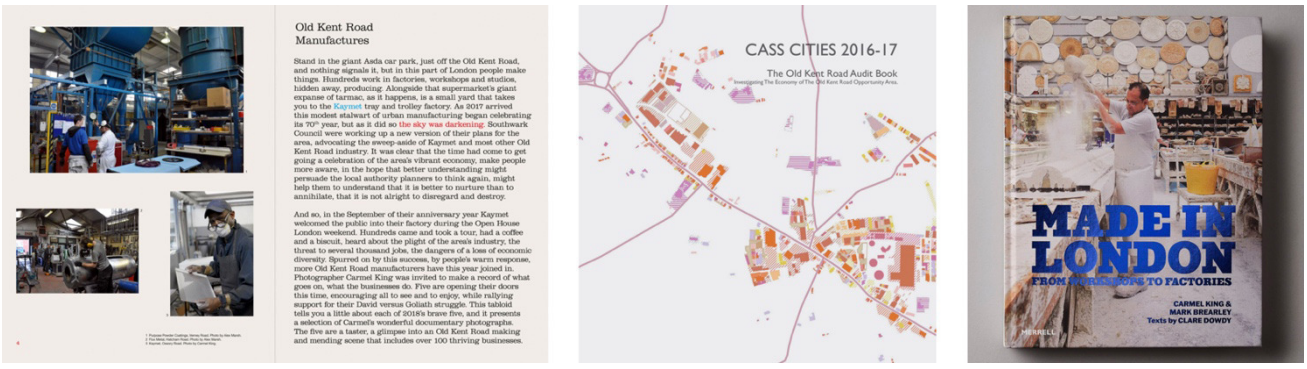

Figure 6. Audit publications from AAD Cities: OKR Manufacturers broadsheet, 2018 (left); Cities Unit Audit, 2017 (centre); and *Made in London* by Mark Brearley and Carmel King (right).

researchers undertaking the audit, based on their own biases. So, reflexive engagement with the questions of researcher positionality is essential.

4.2. Revealing: How Can the Findings Be Made Accessible to Stakeholders?

During the "revealing" events, the map with key sectors boldly marked was an effective tool. People could see the extent of the land coverage for a single industry, such as construction-related activities which might include logistics, builders' merchants, and scaffolders. Mapping is a political and activist endeavour (Monmonier, 2018), and the division of categories impacts how a diverse economy is represented. The standard industrial classification (SIC) codes divide businesses by their primary product, but many produce multiple products, so SIC codes are not fit for purpose for understanding the nuances of local industrial economies (Ferm & Jones, 2016). Since the framing of diversity within industrial economies could influence decision-making, there are risks of essentialising certain industries and "revealing" must take place without oversimplifying key nuances.

Based on logical groupings of ecosystems of industrial businesses, we proposed our own categories for mapping. They indicate which nuanced sectors are present: printing, construction, and arts-related logistics. In 2016, 13 businesses related to stage and set production were in the OKR OA, including scenery fabrication in various materials; scenery painting, storage and logistics; event production; and lighting. Many of these are mapped in Figure 7 in an extract from the Southwark Industrial Audit (Clossick & Brearley, n.d.) as "creative industrial" units in the context of allocated sites in the NSP, showing that much creative industrial is located where it is likely to experience extensive redevelopment. These businesses are involved in shows in central London, where they must install and uninstall sets quickly and carefully so proximity to town is important. If these diverse activities were mapped with SIC codes, the relationships would become invisible. The visual representation of the multiplicity of economic uses allows stakeholders to understand the value of retaining specific sectors locally.

Another useful tool is photography, showing people in their businesses along with short interviews, key quotes, and their ambitions and imaginaries. The OKR Manufactures broadsheet (AAD Cities, 2018) put an individual face and story to the local economy, humanising it. Similarly, *Made in London* (Brearley et al., 2022) was a collection of intimate photographs and interviews. At present, a catalogue of photographs by Carmel King is being developed to accompany the Southwark Industrial Audit (2024). An example of some of the photographs from the photographic audit of industrial businesses is in Figure 8.

Revealing counteracts the typological problem of "inward-looking" industrial urban form, which hides what is within. Local industrial economies tend to be undervalued, as they are situated in "urban depth" (Clossick, 2017), and in the OKR in particular there are often inward-looking industrial estates that are not integrated with their surrounding urban fabric (Ferm et al., 2021). Physically concealed from view, ways must be

Figure 7. Creative industrial units around OKR in the context of allocated sites in The Southwark Plan (2022) and the outlines of the OAs.

Figure 8. Car Repairs, Bolina Road (upper left); Petriiski Fashion, Tanner Place (upper right); Mons Cheesemonger, Lordship Lane (lower left); and McCollin Bryan, Urlwin Street (lower right). Photos by Carmel King, used with permission.

sought to make them visible. Displaying audit findings in a persuasive manner could help stakeholders to appreciate industry's civic and social value, even when it does not form part of their everyday city experience.

4.3. Capacity-Building: How Can Stakeholders Be Empowered to Participate in Urban Change?

Bringing people together to form effective networks is at the core of the methodology. Providing accessible information and expertise at events, and facilitating discussion between stakeholders, is likely to be fundamental to creating and assisting the development of those networks. Centre for Local Economic Strategies (the national organisation for local economies) and New Economics Foundation identified that co-produced local economic development is a core feature of a good city economy (Friends Provident Foundation, 2016, p. 36). When community stakeholders and governmental bodies tasked with urban space development collaborate, it can give rise to intricate webs of interactions among individuals, groups, and organisations. These interactions, in turn, play a pivotal role in moulding the configuration, dynamics, and efficacy of urban transformation.

Placement in the city and visibility of capacity-building events matters. Local stakeholders play a significant role in activism (Taylor, 2020) and for events to succeed they must involve the right people, so they need to be accessible to those people. Yet local stakeholders are often busy and need a short cut to participation in planning. The events we hosted with what if: projects for Planning Action OKR were placed in highly visible locations such as in shops on the OKR, and held over several days to maximise the possibility of participation (Clossick, 2021).

Trust must be built before the events through face-to-face interactions. Audits and interviews function as both data collection and resource distribution tools, which build trust. Vital OKR came into being thanks to auditing, which allowed researchers to meet stakeholders and assist in network formation amongst local people (the first meeting of Vital OKR is shown in Figure 9); the Southwark Planning Network was consolidated by others in the same manner.

Consideration should be extended to meaningful and sustained engagement of the networks formed beyond the initial phases, especially when the priorities of network members may shift over time. Power imbalances amongst stakeholders could impact the effectiveness of engagement efforts, and there are instances where activism might be seen as confrontational or disruptive by policymakers.

Figure 9. Flyers handed out by student researchers during audits (left) and first meeting of Vital OKR (right).

4.4. Promoting: What Types of Actions Could Influence Decision-Making by Those in Power?

The same events which engage grassroots stakeholders can also serve to persuade policymakers. Conn (2011) describes the "vertical hierarchical" world of planning policy, the "horizontal grassroots" system of networked local stakeholders, and the "space of possibilities" where the two types of network intersect. As with horizontal grassroots systems, stakeholder networks where people know one another are of great significance in the vertical hierarchical world of planning policy. A particularly effective technique was "walking and talking," a guided walk around a locality with a high proportion of industrial occupation so that powerful stakeholders could encounter for themselves the reality of the people and places they make policy decisions about. Many myths about industrial occupation are busted in this way, e.g., that industry is noisy or dirty. Much as showing the photographs and interviews puts a human face to a situation, seeing industrial areas in person, led by a knowledgeable professional, can change hearts and minds about the social and civic value of industry.

Mark Brearley's simultaneous position as both a factory owner on OKR and a planning professional and architect with a long history of urban activism meant he was in an ideal position to create and maintain a space of possibilities between these two types of networks. The space of possibilities was a literal space, where we held events that brought together disparate groups, such as the Planning Action OKR workshops, the Shaping Southwark Hustings, and exhibitions in the Upper Lea Valley and Southwark. Establishing a position of influence and power ourselves, we represented the interests of community groups at meetings, on walks, and during political participation opportunities, speaking at NGO events and undertaking policy advice, often in places where we were granted access because of our privileged position. These were significant activities for maximising the impact of our work on policy but raises the question of the abuse of power by academic activists. Action researchers must be mindful to ensure that networks represent a diverse range of voices and interests, rather than becoming echo chambers or reinforcing existing power structures.

5. Conclusions

Despite the demands on industrial land and its rapid loss due to economic and cultural pressures, a movement is growing to reintegrate industry and production into the urban fabric of 21st-century cities (Davis, 2019). It is increasingly recognised that cities such as London need a variety of accommodation types, including industrial. Yet, if industrial policy protection is lacking, higher-value uses will move in where space is limited. In Southwark, where land is at a premium and there is political pressure to build housing, high-level policy is insufficient to prevent the repurposing of industrial land and it is local policymakers who decide whether industrial land should be protected or not, depending on their interests.

This article discusses a methodology for revealing the multi-faceted value of industrial localities; empowering and building the capacity of stakeholders through the formation of networks in both the grassroots and vertical-hierarchical systems of power; and delivering urban change around densification and development of industry which is inclusive, just, and representative of the needs of all. It draws on Diani and McAdam's (2003) theory of social movements as networks and is based on the idea that "deep democracy" (Appadurai, 2002) can be achieved through deliberate intervention and "academic activism" (Chatterton et al., 2007) using the *Audit, Reveal and Promote* methodology. The contribution is methodological, exploring how to audit industrial activities, how to make the findings accessible, ways to empower stakeholders to participate in urban planning, and actions that may influence those in power.

In Southwark, the lack of available fine-grained data meant on-the-ground, door-to-door audits could reveal the makeup of industrial areas that desktop studies could not. As Southwark develops, conflicts may arise between

industrial uses and residential areas, but only auditing can determine whether this is the case for specific places and industries. Through the audit, firms and their accommodation were quickly identified and could then be mapped with key sectors clearly categorised. Alongside photography, short interviews, and key quotes, mapping is an effective tool during the "revealing" phase, to show the interconnected nature of local industrial ecosystems. Exposing industrial places in these ways counteracts the morphological and typological problem of modernist, inward-looking, industrial urban form. The face-to-face nature of auditing leads to the development of both contact networks and mutual trust, and co-locating stakeholders at events and providing them with information and expertise makes it easier for them to discuss and collaborate.

There may be no reconciliation between the different priorities and objectives of policymakers and industrial stakeholders when considering industrial land use. Cultural change towards valuing a mix of uses, including industry, at both grassroots and governance levels, is essential for transforming the way land is developed, to serve the interests of a wide range of stakeholders. There is a research agenda emerging in this area, in which a variety of methodologies are tested to work out how best to shift perception. Even though this methodology is intended for industrial localities, it can also be applied to a variety of urban situations requiring knowledge-based activism. *Audit, Reveal and Promote* and similar activist endeavours could potentially act as catalysts for building social equity through new community-based networks and, in turn, institutions, to produce a deeper, more ethical, democratic process around planning.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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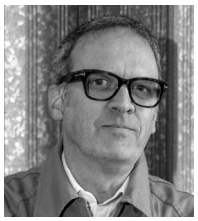

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