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Dublin neighbourhoods**

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Privatising Public Housing Redevelopment: grassroots resistance, co-operation and devastation in three Dublin neighbourhoods

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Abstract: This paper examines variations in residents' responses to proposals to redevelop three public housing neighbourhoods in Dublin using Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) and the outcomes their resistance achieved. In two of these neighbourhoods community representative structures were strong and although one community co-operated with the PPP plans and the other opposed them, both were broadly successful in achieving their campaign objectives. Community structures in the third case-study area were weak however and the imposition of PPP redevelopment devastated this neighbourhood which is now almost entirely vacant. This case study is employed to critique the literature on grassroots resistance to urban redevelopment and welfare state restructuring and social housing development policy in Ireland. The paper concludes that, contrary to many researchers' assumptions, residents' political action and resistance can significantly influence on public housing redevelopment strategies despite the dominance of neoliberal and entrepreneurial governance regimes. However, for vulnerable communities where representative structures are weak, the over-emphasis on gentrification/ social mixing and refurbishing the built environment in Irish public housing development policy can have devastating consequences. Indeed, demolition and rebuilding programmes in particular can destabilise target neighbourhoods to the extent that the residents who ultimately enjoy the benefits of public housing redevelopment are largely or entirely different from those who campaigned for its instigation.

Keywords: Social housing, redevelopment, privatization, gentrification, resistance, neighbourhood, Ireland.

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Introduction

This paper examines plans to redevelop run down public housing neighbourhoods in Dublin in conjunction with private developers which were initiated and partially implemented during Ireland's 'celtic tiger' economic boom in the early 2000s but collapsed at the end of the decade when this country experienced one of the most severe busts of the global financial crisis (Norris and Coates, 2014). It focuses on the experiences of the residents of three case-study neighbourhoods responding to public-private partnership (PPPs) redevelopment programmes. The neighbourhoods share a common socio-economic profile (very disadvantaged), location (in Dublin's inner-city), design (low-rise apartment blocks built in the 1950s and 1960s) and landlord (the municipal government – Dublin City Council). However, they differ significantly in terms of the strength of community structures, their views on the PPP plans, the campaign strategies they adopted in response and outcomes experienced.

On the basis of these case studies the paper firstly examines the politics and effectiveness of different community responses to public housing redevelopment programmes (outright resistance, unequal co-operation and co-operation on more equal terms with the state and business interests) in different contexts (deeply embedded and resilient community structures in two neighbourhoods much weaker structures in the third). In addition, these cases are employed to critique the treatment of grass roots resistance to public housing redevelopment, housing privatisation and poverty deconcentration policies in the urban studies literature and key features of public housing redevelopment policy in Ireland, namely its strong emphasis on partial privatisation and gentrification/social mixing and on refurbishing the built environment rather than establishing social programmes. The emergence of community resistance emerged as a response to this state policy which placed little value on sustaining these disadvantaged communities is also explored. The analysis of these issues presented here is organised into seven further sections. The first and second of these of these summarise the relevant themes in the literature and features of the case-study neighbourhoods and research methods employed to examine them. The next three examine: the process of devising and implementing redevelopment plans for the three neighbourhoods; policy makers' rationales for choosing these strategies, residents'

responses and outcomes achieved. The conclusions set out the findings of the case-study research and reflect on their implications for the literature on residents' resistance to public housing redevelopment and for neighbourhood regeneration policy in Ireland.

Grassroots Resistance, Privatisation and Poverty Deconcentration

The cases examined here are relevant to some of the oldest themes in the urban studies literature and some of the newest. Of most direct relevance is the large literature on grassroots resistance to urban redevelopment which emerged during the 1970s and 1980s among which Manuel Castells' (1983) landmark study *The City and the Grassroots* was particularly influential. His analysis emphasised the agency and the impact of grassroots movements, while also acknowledging their limits. Although unable to transform social structures, he argued that these movements have the potential to transform 'urban meanings', by undermining the social hierarchies which structure urban life and working to create cities organised on the basis of autonomous local cultures and decentralized participatory democracy. However, later research in this genre placed less emphasis on the agency of urban grass roots movements and more on their limits, for instance of their local focus, which prevents them from challenging the wider social structures which shape their problems and on the co-option of these movements by state and other powerful interests (e.g. Mollenkopf, 1983; Kramer, 1981).

This use of PPPs to redevelop public housing is also relevant to the extensive literature on neo-liberalism and welfare state privatisation, particularly privatisation of the government owned social housing sector (called public or council housing) which is concentrated in English speaking countries. Writers on public housing privatisation do discuss resistance but they concentrate on conflict between (different layers of) government and political parties rather than resistance by the occupants of these dwellings (e.g. Malpass, 2005).

Also of relevance to the cases examined here is the fashion for efforts to 'deconcentrate' poor households. Governments in many developed countries, including Ireland have

tried to achieve this by subsidizing low income residents to move to wealthier neighbourhoods ('person centred' measures such as Moving to Opportunity in the USA) or 'demolishing existing public housing and replacing it with mixed tenure housing ('property centred measures' such as the US HOPE IV scheme and the PPP schemes under examination here). Reflecting the studies of the negative 'neighbourhood effects' of poverty concentrations which (in part at least) inspired these policies, many evaluations of their effectiveness uncritically assume that deconcentrating poverty will deliver neighbourhood sustainability. What is lost in terms of public housing units, community history and networks and bonds between neighbourhoods has received less attention (Popkin, 2006 is an exception). The US research on the politics of neighbourhood deconcentration has also concentrated on opposition from middle class communities to disadvantaged incomers and largely neglected resistance from already resident poor households (Glaster, *et al*, 2003). However, recent, mainly British, research on 'state-led' urban gentrification has adopted a more critical perspective (Hackwood and Smith, 2001). In this vein, Watt (2009) highlights the working class displacement commonly generated by gentrification, the role public housing has often played as a buffer against this process and the contribution of redevelopment focussed on tenure mixing to undermine this role.

Cases and Methods

The three neighbourhoods examined here - Fatima Mansions, Dolphin House and O'Devaney Gardens are all located in Dublin's inner-city, one to three miles from the main downtown shopping and business district. Fatima Mansions and Dolphin House are on adjacent sites, in the south inner-city, whereas O'Devaney Gardens is in the north inner-city. The neighbourhood's characteristics are summarised in Table 1 which explains that all were built between 1949 and 1956 as part of a slum clearance drive and, reflecting architectural fashions and the methods of social housing provision common at the time, all are low-rise apartment complexes (called flats in Ireland), owned and managed directly by the municipal government (Dublin City Council). Each neighbourhood is small (originally between 278 and 436 dwellings) and largely mono-ethnic (white, Irish) but the districts surrounding them contain a mix of housing

tenures, commercial and residential development and (particularly in recent years) income and ethnic groups.

Table 1: Characteristics of Case-study Estates

	Dolphin House	Fatima Mansions	O'Devaney Gardens
Year of construction	1956	1949	1956
Location	Rialto district in Dublin's south inner-city	Rialto district in Dublin's south inner-city	Stoneybatter district in Dublin's North Inner-city.
Original Design	Six apartment blocks, all four storeys high and two storey blocks for older people	Four storey apartment blocks.	13 apartment blocks all four storeys high.
Current Design	Same as above.	Mix of four storey apartments, terraced houses and maisonettes and also retail, offices and a sports and community centre.	All except four apartment blocks have been demolished and most of the site is currently a vacant lot.
Number and tenure of dwellings originally provided	392 family sized dwellings and 44 units for older people, all public rented	394 dwellings all public rented	278 dwellings all public rented.
Number and tenure of dwellings currently provided	Same as above.	Rebuilt in 2007 to include 180 public rented dwellings, 70 'affordable' dwellings for sale at below market value and 396 private dwellings for sale on the open market.	Most dwellings are empty only 44 residents currently remain in situ, but will soon be rehoused elsewhere

During the decades following their construction the case-study neighbourhoods enjoyed a period of stability. This ended in the 1970s when deindustrialisation and economic stagnation precipitated a dramatic increase in unemployment, particularly in inner cities. These neighbourhoods were further destabilised by heroin use and associated drugs markets which emerged in Dublin in the early 1980s, by poor quality housing management and maintenance by Dublin City Council and the fact that, unlike residents of public rented *houses*, residents of flats were not eligible to purchase their home (at a substantial discount from market value) which encouraged some to move to houses to avail of this opportunity.

In response to these problems government began to fund community development and establish other spatially targeted social programmes from the early 1980s and also set up a separate 'Remedial Works Scheme' which funded the physical development of public housing estates. The former programmes had a positive impact on Fatima Mansions and Dolphin House in particular (see: Punch, 2009), but research conducted by the authors in 1997-98 found that the Remedial Works Scheme funded redevelopment of Fatima Mansions in the late 1980s was less successful:

Residents now widely assert that the refurbishment was a complete failure and a waste of money. [Dublin City Council] officials tacitly agree...Within a few years of the refurbishment, some of the blocks had a more derelict appearance than they had before the refurbishment took place (Norris, 1999: 117-118).

This research links the failure of this redevelopment to the lack of consultation with residents regarding its design and the lack of integration between social investment and the physical redevelopment programme.

Despite the continuing problems of the case-study neighbourhoods however, the districts surrounding them gentrified significantly during Ireland's economic boom of the 1990s and early 2000s, reversing a two century long pattern of population decline and residualisation. According to Hasse (2009) inner-city Dublin saw the largest fall in deprivation of any Irish region between 1991 and 2006.

The analysis of these redevelopment programmes which is presented in this paper draws on four separate studies of these neighbourhoods conducted by the authors in 1997-98, 2004-07, 2007-09 and 2012-13, the results of which are set out in three books (Fahey (ed), 1999; Hearne, 2011, Norris (ed) 2013) and numerous articles. Each study was operationalised using a mixed methods approach which employed: documentary analysis (of policy statements and redevelopment plans); statistical analysis (of socio-economic, housing and public spending survey and administrative data); observation of relevant committee and public meetings and in-depth group and individual interviews with residents, landlord's representatives and social service providers (80 respondents

were interviewed in all). These studies have yielded a particularly strong evidence base on Fatima Mansions which was included in all four rounds of research. Dolphin House and O'Devaney Gardens were included in the studies conducted in 2007-09 and 2012-13. Thus less data are available on the long term trajectories of these neighbourhoods but the PPP scheme proposed to redevelop them was studied in significant depth.

Redevelopment Planning and Implementation

Fatima Mansions

Residents of Fatima Mansions commenced lobbying for a full redevelopment of their neighbourhood in the mid-1980s and this campaign intensified in the 1990s following the failure of the Remedial Works Scheme project. This second phase of agitation was organised by Fatima Groups United (FGU) which was established in 1995 to co-ordinate the numerous community and social service organisations which were established here during the preceding decade.

Following inconclusive redevelopment negotiations with Dublin City Council in the late 1990s, FGU developed an alternative redevelopment plan - *Eleven Acres, Ten Steps* – that emphasised the need for an holistic social, economic and physical redevelopment programme; devised in consultation with residents and overseen by an independent management board made up of representatives of the landlord, other relevant agencies and residents (Fatima Groups United, 2000). Dublin City Council responded with its own plan which incorporated many of FGU's ideas but placed more emphasis on physical refurbishment and less on social interventions (Dublin City Council, 2002). Further negotiations between the Council and residents in 2001, resulted in a compromise plan which provided for: demolition of the flats and their replacement by public housing; dwellings for sale at below market value to low income households (called affordable housing in Ireland), commercial and community facilities, funding for a social regeneration plan and the establishment of an independent redevelopment management board.

In recent decades almost all grant aid for social house building and redevelopment in Ireland has come from central government. Throughout 2002, Dublin City Council

negotiated with the housing ministry to secure funding for Fatima Mansions but in early 2003 the Council began to explore using a Public Private Partnership (PPP) instead. Following negotiations with residents in 2003 tenders were invited from private developers interested in participating in the PPP. Later that year the Council agreed that the successful bidder would demolish the existing neighbourhood and replace it with 150 public housing and 70 affordable housing units, a community and sports centre and small business units (all owned by Dublin City Council) and provide a €6.5 million grant for social regeneration projects (see: Whyte, 2005). In return the developer could construct 396 private dwellings on the site for sale on the open market. The development process started soon after and the public housing was partially demolished and replacement public housing completed in 2004. The private apartments and commercial, community and sports facilities were built in 2005-06 and implementation of the social regeneration plan was completed in 2010.

O'Devaney Gardens

O'Devaney Gardens' residents started lobbying for improvements to their neighbourhood in the late 1990s when an *ad hoc* group came together for this purpose. This campaign focused on provision of better community facilities, because social problems were less serious here than in Fatima Mansions and residents felt that combatting them did not require redevelopment.

However, Dublin City Council revealed plans for a PPP redevelopment to surprised residents' representatives in 2003. In response, residents established representative structures to try lobby to influence the plans. Work on implementing the PPP moved quickly. Expressions of interest from private developers were sought for this redevelopment and four other areas and in 2006 a consortium of two large Irish property development companies was identified as the preferred bidder for all five PPP schemes. Contracts were signed in 2007. Following negotiations with O'Devaney residents the Council agreed that the rebuilt neighbourhood would maintain the public housing at 2008 levels (280 dwellings). In addition, the redevelopment plan provided for 250 affordable and 287 private dwellings, together with community and commercial facilities.

These plans were never implemented because in summer 2008, following Ireland's economic and property market collapse, the developer withdrew citing the PPP's lack of economic viability (he subsequently filed for bankruptcy). In August of that year Dublin City Council appointed a team to work with residents on revised redevelopment plans, but no plans were finalised. In 2013 the Council announced that the redevelopment plans were being abandoned and the remaining residents of O'Devaney Gardens would be relocated elsewhere.

Dolphin House

Dolphin House residents lobbied the Council in the early 2000s for an upgrading of their defective sewage system, damp proofing their flats and to address issues of anti-social behaviour. Dublin City Council insisted that the only way forward was to demolish and rebuild the estate using a PPP. The Dolphin House residents' representatives opposed this and sought alternative potential redevelopment models (Hearne, 2011). Despite community opposition the Council commissioned a PPP feasibility study in 2006 which proposed the demolition and replacement of all 436 existing public housing units, but that commercial development 600 private dwellings should also be built on the site (MCO Projects, 2007).

Concerned by their minimal input into the feasibility plan and lack of resources for community support staff and expert advice to enable their informed input the residents' association began to mobilise more effective opposition. They halted negotiations, refused to allow any decanting of residents, and pressured Dublin City Council to provide grant aid to enable the appointment of independent architects and other professionals to work with residents to develop an alternative community-based model of redevelopment and then facilitate the entire community to vote on which model they wanted – that proposed in the PPP feasibility study or the alternative. This lobbying was successful. In 2008 a development board was established, the residents secured finance from the Council to hire planning and architectural advisors and commenced a further process of consultation with residents on the various development proposals. The resultant report *Dolphin Decides* revealed that most residents supported the demolition and rebuilding plans and the introduction of private housing, but only a small majority supported the PPP implementation model and a large majority opposed

any reduction in public housing numbers and high-rise development (Dolphin House Community Development Association, 2008).

However, following the collapse of PPP schemes in O'Devaney Gardens and four other neighbourhoods in 2008, Dublin City Council decided that a PPP was no longer feasible for the Dolphin House redevelopment and, in the context of the concurrent economic crisis, neither was a traditional publicly funded redevelopment. In response residents stepped up the intensity and focus of their resistance. They adopted a 'human rights approach' which involved collecting evidence on the negative health implications of poor living conditions there and holding a series of public 'hearings' with the Irish Government's Human Rights Commission and other international human rights experts to give evidence that these conditions breached residents' human rights (Hearne and Kenna, 2014). This agitation has reaped benefits. In 2010, the Dolphin House residents and the Council commenced negotiations on a new redevelopment plan which would be implemented using public funding rather than a PPP. Central government announced in 2013 that the requisite finance would be provided.

Redevelopment Rationales

The general reasons why policy makers in Ireland adopted the PPP model and applied to it more and more policy fields during the 1990s and 2000s reflected the factors which inspired the same development internationally. Policy makers' stated rationales centred on PPP's 'practical' benefits as a method of increasing public spending but without raising up-front costs to government or exchequer borrowing; enabling the private sector to take on board some of the risks (and of course profit) associated with public infrastructure and service provision and leveraging private companies' expertise. Thus, in addition to critiquing the validity of these claims, academic debate on PPPs has focused on locating this policy within the wider neo liberal agenda of rolling back government involvement in the economy and privatisation (see: Greeve and Hodge (eds) 2013 for a cross-country analysis and Hearne, 2010 for an Irish focussed discussion).

In the context of redeveloping public housing in Dublin, Redmond and Russell (2008) suggest that PPPs' attractions were amplified by their relevance to other important urban and housing policy agendas. Chief among these was policy makers' concern to create 'sustainable neighbourhoods' and view that better urban design (based on densification of urban development) and 'mixing' of tenures and land uses were key to achieving this (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2007: 28). Furthermore, PPPs complement the thrust of Irish urban policy since the 1980s which has relied primarily on encouraging the private sector to refurbish and build (privately owned) dwellings in run down urban neighbourhoods. However, interviews with Dublin City Council staff indicate they played a leading role in initiating the PPP experiment. In an interview conducted during the 2004-07 research, a senior Council manager claimed that prior to the Fatima Mansions' redevelopment: "I don't think anybody ever contemplated that PPPs would be used for the regeneration of social housing because it had never been used before". It was after the establishment of this the Fatima pathfinder project that the housing ministry began to promote this model for application elsewhere (Hearne, 2011).

Council staff offered several rationales for taking this initiative. They repeatedly claimed to residents and to the authors that they didn't "have the money" to pay for redevelopment and therefore asked, "What are we going to do? Leave fifty-year old housing there and just do patch-up work?" However, this claim is difficult to square with the concurrent expansion in gross Irish government expenditure and public housing investment which increased by 61.5 and 74.3 per cent respectively between 2000 and 2007. Furthermore, Dublin City Council was the only urban municipality in Ireland which used PPPs for public housing redevelopment during this period (Government of Ireland, various years). Council staff also explained, unlike traditional government funded redevelopment, that PPP finance enabled them implement the redevelopment quickly and provide community facilities at a greater speed. Treadwell Shine and Norris (2006) support this rationale as they conclude the separate government funding streams for social and physical interventions have impeded the implementation of holistic neighbourhood redevelopment and a government review of directly exchequer funded redevelopment raises concerns about slow progress (Comptroller and Auditor General, 2008).

In addition to these financial drivers, Dublin City Council's fondness for PPPs reflected its particularly strong record of working with the private sector to regenerate the inner-city (McGuirk and Maclaran 2001 highlight the 'entrepreneurial culture' which developed in this municipality during the 1990s) and the viability of PPPs in the Dublin context. The very strong property price appreciation in Inner-Dublin in the early 2000s generated significant investor interest, whereas weaker property markets in other Irish cities rendered such investment financially unattractive. Council staff interviewed also strongly supported the view that tenure mixing is vital for neighbourhood sustainability and identified PPP's ability to enable tenure mixing as a key benefit of using this model to redevelop the case-study neighbourhoods. However small size these neighbourhoods (and the associated concentration of disadvantaged households) and their location in mixed income (and increasingly affluent) neighbourhoods indicates that the neighbourhood effects thesis is of limited relevance to the Dublin's inner-city and indeed to most poor neighbourhoods in a country such as Ireland where the population is small and highly dispersed (Norris 2008 makes this point).

Redevelopment Responses

As mentioned above grass roots responses to the PPP redevelopments varied significantly between the neighbourhoods under examination in terms of residents' analyses of these plans, the sophistication of their strategy for conveying these views to Dublin City Council, the media and other stakeholders and the duration and intensity of their resistance.

The lobbying process was lengthiest in the most troubled case-study neighbourhood – Fatima Mansions. Here campaigning for redevelopment started in the 1980s and the related community activity resulted in the establishment of community run addiction, childcare and education services. The staff and volunteers who provided these services subsequently formed the core of the PPP redevelopment campaign group in the late 1990s. A leader of this campaign interviewed during the 2004-07 research explained that their lobbying strategy encompassed:

- in-depth and ongoing consultation with residents to clarify their objectives for the redevelopment
- researching the requirements of successful regeneration, training residents' representatives and hiring professional advisors to inform responses to the Council's proposals and securing funding for this
- publishing written reports which detailed residents' views and formed a basis for negotiations and crucially because the residents' set out their redevelopment proposals first (*Eleven Acres, Ten Steps* was published in 2000) set the agenda for negotiations by forcing the Council to respond to their proposals rather than *vice versa*
- an extensive media and political lobbying strategy
- insisting on formal meetings between the Council and residents and the establishment of an independent board to oversee the redevelopment

This community leader also argued that this was the most sophisticated of the public housing redevelopment campaigns which took place in Dublin at this time and consequently, Fatima Mansions' residents negotiated with Dublin City Council on relatively equal terms and achieved the majority of their campaign objectives. His analysis is supported by the fact that this was the only PPP neighbourhood where Dublin City Council agreed to legally underpin the independent regeneration board and provide a large grant for social regeneration and particularly generous funding to enable residents participate in redevelopment negotiations including office space, support staff, professional advice and training. Although this neighbourhood's 'pathfinder' status may have also encouraged the Council to grant community concessions in order to convince other candidates for PPP redevelopment of the merits of this model.

The same community leader attributed residents' ability to mount a campaign of this sophistication to its duration, the strength of the local community development project and the continuity of the key actors involved. He argued that due to the lengthy process of growing campaigning and community activity, by the 1990s community services in Fatima Mansions employed a large number of paid staff who have "built-up great skills" and good relationships with Council managers. In addition, he emphasized the

importance of activists' willingness to devote time and thought to devising a campaign strategy:

... our approach is like two pages of a book. On the one page you have all the day-to-day work you need to do to keep your show on the road, you know, your services running... on the other you have the bigger picture, your plan for what you want to achieve in the long run. But you have to think about both, that's the key (interview with Fatima Mansions community leader, conducted in 2004-07).

As well as a sophisticated lobbying strategy, the Fatima Mansions' redevelopment campaign was distinguished by activists' decision to co-operate with the PPP plans, in contrast with their neighbours in Dolphin House. One Fatima Mansions activist explained during the 2004-07 research that this stance was politically challenging because he and fellow activists were politically left wing and therefore ideologically committed to preserving public housing and also because their support for the PPP attracted criticism from community activists in other public housing neighbourhoods: "Like really to some degree it was very tough because... Tenants First had been established and we were part of that...and there was a bit of a debate, some people were saying, well it [the PPP] is not public housing". Despite these concerns the interviewee explained that Fatima Mansions' activists concluded that in their case the benefits of the PPP outweighed the disadvantages - "from our perspective...my job... is to represent the [Fatima Mansions] residents first and foremost, it isn't to represent the interests of the world" (interview with Fatima Mansions community activist, conducted in 2004-07). In addition, unlike their counterparts in the other case-study neighbourhoods, Fatima Mansions' residents supported the construction of private housing and the removal of 70 public housing units. A community worker explained their reasons during the 2004-07 research:

Some of the families that were in those 70 [suffered severe social problems].... the projects here and all the services and make it a credible impact on the quality of the [remaining] families' lives now and the jobs and opportunities, self-esteem, confidence. I honestly believe had it been 220 [resident households] we'd have been struggling [to achieve that]... (interview with Fatima Mansions community worker, conducted in 2004-07).

O'Devaney Gardens residents' analysis of and response to the PPP proposed for their neighbourhood were very different. A local community worker explained during the

2007-09 research that inadequate community structures significantly weakened residents' hands in negotiations with Dublin City Council:

O'Devaney Gardens wasn't ready for this sort of thing [PPP negotiations] at all in regards of community structures. There wasn't really any proper tenants associations, none of that... There was just one development worker dealing with the residents... The main problem we have here is that we're not highly organised (interview with O'Devaney Gardens community worker, conducted in 2007-09).

During the PPP negotiations community structures were further weakened by the decanting of a large proportion of dwellings to facilitate their demolition and resultant population decline. In addition, unlike their counterparts in Fatima Mansions, O'Devaney Gardens residents decided that were unwilling to accept any diminution in public housing numbers (Hearne, 2011). Despite this situation residents felt that they had no option but to co-operate with the PPP redevelopment. One resident explained why during the 2007-09 research:

Residents were saying: 'can you not just build a housing scheme for everyone in O'Devaney? There is enough room.' Dublin City Council said they don't have the money for that and what you have to understand is if we don't go down this road [PPP], there is no money for O'Devaney. So it meant we had no choice – it was a case of the estate gets worse or go for a PPP (interview with O'Devaney Gardens resident, conducted in 2007-09).

Residents' representatives did reach agreement with Dublin City Council that all public housing would be replaced in the redeveloped neighbourhood but they were informed by the Council that the resultant reduction in private housing and therefore the developer's profits would mean that no cash grant would be provided to fund social regeneration. Furthermore, the Council provided very limited funding to support residents' participation in the negotiation process and as the population declined during the decanting process, only a small, disempowered, community remained to negotiate with. Thus, following the collapse of the O'Devaney Gardens PPP in 2008 the Council faced limited resistance to emptying dwellings and demolishing the neighbourhood (Hearne, 2011).

In contrast, community development and resident structures in Dolphin House were strong before the redevelopment discussions commenced and residents here decided to oppose both the reduction in public housing numbers and (initially at least) the PPP redevelopment proposals. Like Fatima Mansions, several community run-social services were established in Dolphin House during the 1980s and 1990s and their staff and volunteers formed the core of the redevelopment campaign. Dublin City Council staff insisted that no funding would be provided to support community consultation prior to Dolphin House residents' representatives agreeing to support the PPP and that this model was the only redevelopment option available. However, Dolphin House residents continued to insist that other redevelopment options be examined and that no dwelling would be emptied prior to the Council agreeing redevelopment plans with residents. These stances were informed by O'Devaney Gardens residents' negative experiences of decanting of dwellings (revealed following a visit by Dolphin House residents in 2006) and by the Tenants First (2009: 5) campaign which argued that the Council's real agenda in promoting PPPs was to:

allow estates to deteriorate so people had no choice to leave so that local authorities can get access to prime development that these estates are located on to sell for private development and the issue of these 'problem' estates is permanently removed (Tenants First, 2009).

Dolphin House residents' strategy was high risk and in the short term just appeared to delay badly needed redevelopment but it paid dividends in the long term. In 2007 the Council capitulated to some residents' demands for grant aid to community consultation, this investment further strengthened community structures which had not been undermined by decanting of residents. When the PPP schemes proposed for five neighbourhoods collapsed the following year, Dublin City Council was forced to treat Dolphin House residents differently from their counterparts in O'Devaney Gardens because the former neighbourhood contained a large, cohesive population which had strong campaigning skills and therefore could not be ignored. When the Council still refused to directly fund redevelopment in 2008, the Dolphin House residents decided to change their campaign focus and strategy. They bypassed the municipality and established the human rights campaign described above which focussed on national and international 'duty bearers', such as the housing ministry and the Irish and European human rights authorities (Hearne and Kenna, 2014). Following this pioneering

campaign, residents achieved their goals and Dublin City Council announced that public funds would be provided to redevelop Dolphin House.

Redevelopment Outcomes

The outcomes of the redevelopment and resistance processes described above varied significantly between the case-study neighbourhoods. Fatima Mansions was demolished and rebuilt between 2004 and 2006 and the social regeneration project completed five years later. The consensus among the Council staff and residents interviewed by the authors is that this redevelopment has been largely but not entirely successful. The rebuilt public housing is of very high quality and the social regeneration has had a positive impact but poverty and hard drug dealing remain problematic and some new private dwellings failed to sell following the Irish property market collapse and were bought by a housing association (i.e. a non-profit sector social housing provider) instead. Therefore, the tenure mixing elements of the redevelopment was only partially successful and ironically social housing numbers remain at 1990s levels. The state funded redevelopment of Dolphin House was about to commence at the time of writing and the community remains resilient. In contrast the unsuccessful efforts to employ a PPP to redevelop O'Devaney Gardens devastated this community and led ultimately to its break-up. By 2008, 100 of the 278 dwellings in the neighbourhood had been decanted and a resident interviewed during the 2007-09 research predicted that this would set off a spiral of decline:

I am worried about the displacement of the community. By giving people who want to move off the site attractive housing elsewhere... the more stable, less vulnerable, will move away and those left are the ones with most difficulties (interview with O'Devaney Gardens community worker, conducted in 2007-09).

Unfortunately this prediction proved correct and the vacant apartment blocks attracted significant anti-social behaviour. Not surprisingly this increased residents' willingness to move out of the estate and by 2014 only 44 households remain occupied.

Conclusions

This paper has examined residents' varying responses to proposals to redevelop three public housing neighbourhoods in Dublin using PPPs and the contrasting outcomes their resistance achieved. In two of these neighbourhoods, residents' representative structures and community cohesion were strong and lobbying strategies sophisticated, but while one co-operated with the PPP proposal, the other campaigned against it. Despite their different analysis of the redevelopment proposals, residents of both neighbourhoods achieved most of their campaigning objectives and both communities remain strong and successful. In contrast, community structures in the other case-study neighbourhood were weak and residents were made to feel that they had no option but to co-operate with the PPP. Furthermore, the decanting of residents to free up space to build private housing led to the devastation of this community. The neighbourhood was almost vacant at the time of writing and earmarked for demolition.

These neighbourhoods highlight the key role in which variations in the intensity and sophistication of community agitation, lobbying and resistance played in shaping their landlord's redevelopment plans. In two of the three cases, the well organised communities proved very influential which reveals that the power and agency of residents of working class neighbourhoods is incorrectly ignored or underestimated in much of the literature on urban social movements and public housing privatisation. It also points to an undervaluing of the strengths of such working class, deprived, public housing communities and the importance of their local networks of solidarity and community services in reproducing cohesive and resilience communities among researchers and policy makers. The cases of Fatima Mansions and Dolphin House demonstrate that contrary to the dominant 'post-political' consensus, resistance is *not* futile. In the right circumstances and with the right strategy and supports, disadvantaged urban communities can play a central role in shaping the environments in which they live.

At the same time, the other neighbourhood examined here, O'Devaney Gardens highlights the vulnerability of disadvantaged communities in the face of powerful forces and potential for redevelopment to increase rather than diminish this vulnerability. This case challenges policy makers and researchers to ask 'redevelopment for whom?' It

illustrates how public housing redevelopment programmes often primarily reflect the interests of governments, landlords and (in the case of PPPs), business, rather than those of residents and communities of target neighbourhoods. It also raises questions about the centrality of development based on social 'mixing' gentrification, property redevelopment and demolition and rebuilding in Irish public housing regeneration policy. Treadwell Shine and Norris (2006) and Hearne (2011) argue that such intervention is overused and offered as the solution to public housing neighbourhoods' problems irrespective of what is their cause. The recent history of O'Devaney Gardens reveals the extent to which these policies rely on a destruction of communities through dislocation, with the result that the community which campaigns for development does not remain *in situ* to enjoy its benefits.

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