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Defining ‘Urban Character’ and its Influence on the Physical Outcomes of Cities

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**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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Abstract

This thesis examines how urban character and the components which formulate the overall concept are characterised and perceived by architectural designers, planners, policy advisers and makers. In doing this the study categorises the components of urban character into the tangible and intangible. The tangible components are, for example, architectural styles, building materials, scale and urban design form and pattern. Intangible components are those orientated towards the socio-cultural and economic, and the interactions between people and place. Furthermore, the thesis analyses the ways in which interplay between these tangible and intangible components can result in architectural outcomes which give a uniqueness to cities, such as the ways in which feel and ambience, or spirit of place, are physicalised in built environments. The thesis also examines the factors impacting on urban character. These factors include globalised attitudes and approaches to place and architectural production by multinational corporations and how these impact urban character, including how these affect the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of the concept. In line with the literature, it uses the term urban character interchangeably with urban identity, place identity and urban and place distinctiveness, as well as the sense and spirit of place and its Roman equivalent *genius loci*.

Within the literature there is a great deal of debate concerning urban character and the threats posed to this from contemporary approaches to architectural production, in particular the forces of globalisation. The literature is rich in exploring the complexities in defining urban character, with the constant, rapid, evolution of cities making the tethering of such definitions ever more difficult. The effects of globalisation on cities, and the ways in which this affects place identity, is also closely debated, with much written about the influence of multinational corporations and their dominance over built environments. The literature is often polarised (El-Husseiny 2004) between viewing globalisation as either the natural evolution of society bringing progress and diversity, or as a driver for an unpalatable homogenisation of architecture and urban design.

Further research is therefore needed to identify how an approach to understanding urban character which reduces the dichotomy between its tangible and intangible components, can influence built environment processes and outcomes. Crucially this understanding needs to capture the interplay between these components. This allows for a more inclusive definition of urban character, reflective of wider society's urban needs and aspirations, and less dominated and driven by the demands of multinational corporations and the fulfilment of neoliberal agendas.

A qualitative methodology was adopted using the city of Glasgow, Scotland, as the overarching case study. Within Glasgow, the research focused on study areas or sub-case studies - one in the city centre, the other in a former shipbuilding district now repurposed as a media and entertainment hub. Semi-structured desk and walking interviews with built environment professionals - architects, planners, policy advisers and makers - were undertaken.

The findings indicate that the case study's tangible urban character is inherent in features that go beyond buildings and architecture. The evidence of the research is that the case study's physical urban character derives more from the broader contextual components of urban design - such as scale and street layout. The research also suggests that the intangible and more socially orientated components of urban character are particularly important to Glasgow. The city's identity is argued as '*non-physical*' to an extent, and particularly reliant on the interplay and relationships between people and place. These ideas point to a hierarchy in the importance of the components of urban character, and that it is derived as much from how the built environment facilitates the interactions of people, as it does from architectural styles *per se*. Furthermore, the study highlights the influence of the interplay between the concept's tangible and intangible components to the unique identity of a city's built environment. A particularly elusive aspect of urban character is that of the identifying and physicalising of a place's feel and ambience, or *genius loci*. Here, design frameworks are suggested as central to the architectural physicalising of the spirit of place. The research identified these frameworks as providing a set of design guidelines that encourage intangible components of

urban character related to feel and ambience. This is via built environments which promote and facilitate the congregation and lingering of people, found by the research as essential to the *genius loci* of place.

In relation to the forces acting on urban character, the study found that globalisation, and the attitude of multinational corporations, impacts significantly on the urban character of built environments. The crucial role of the interplay between the components of urban character in relation to globalisation was analysed. The suggestion is that, in the face of such forces, there is a particular need for design and planning to be cognisant of all the tangible and intangible components of urban character found in the case study's 'DNA'. This is so as to defend and create built environments which express and contain the particular characteristics of place. Furthermore, the findings suggest that a holistic approach to the identification and role of urban character is essential in preventing a disconnect between people and place. This disconnect is seen as resulting from attempts to replicate the DNA of other cities, rather than understand and use that which is inherent. The study also highlights the often parasitical nature of globalised approaches to the built environment. These approaches ignore a place's existing tangible and intangible attributes and cause what is described as an erosion of urban character and its components, as well as the undermining or destruction of the very elements which attract multinational corporations in the first place. Conversely however, the identification of the case study's tangible urban character is based on the historical appropriation of international styles. The largely Victorian approach to the hybridisation and embedding of these styles led to what can be seen as a globalised approach to the built environment, and to the resultant architecture becoming a core component of the case study's tangible urban character. The study therefore draws out the dichotomy in the globalised forces acting on the built environment, as these forces can act as both destructive, and creative, in the urban character and identity of cities.

This thesis contributes to knowledge by analysing if, how, and to what extent, the intangible components of urban character - such as the interaction between people and place and the particular feel and ambience of a place - are recognised and find a role in built environments. The examination considers how

these intangible components are incorporated into the tangible built environment processes of design, planning and policy making. These processes are considered, in particular, within the context of globalised approaches to the built environment. Moreover, this thesis demonstrates that it is a holistic approach to the identification and role of urban character which leads cities to being able to retain and create built environments that are inclusive, reflective, and expressive of the diverse needs and aspirations of citizens. It shows that such built environments that express inclusivity contribute to and enrich the cultural, commercial, and social life of cities. The thesis therefore calls for better cognisance and use of the design and planning role that the interplay between tangible and intangible components of urban character offers, and for this to be particularly the case in relation to globalised approaches to built environments.

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Author's Declaration

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, this thesis is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Printed name: John Cox

Signature:

Abbreviations

CABE	Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment
CAA	Conservation Area Appraisals
CCG	Corporation of the City of Glasgow
CDA	Comprehensive Development Area
CDP	City Development Plan
CVRP	Clyde Valley Regional Plan
ECOC	European City of Culture
GCC	Glasgow City Council
GDC	Glasgow District Council
GIC	Global Intelligence Corporations
IFSD	International Financial Services District
OOP	Object-Orientated Philosophy
SEC	Scottish Event Campus
SRC	Strathclyde Regional Council

1: Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Origins of the Research

Although growing up in a small Argyllshire town 140 miles away on the west coast of Scotland, Glasgow was very much a part of my childhood. With family in various areas of the city it was a place where many wider journeys began, often staying with relatives before flights to other cities in Europe. The anticipation and expectation of seeing new places was heightened by these pre-flight stopovers and made me wonder what people arriving from other countries and cities would think and feel about Glasgow. When I visited an unfamiliar city, I sensed so many elements contributing to the uniqueness of being in that particular place, not just architectural styles or cuisine or language, but other harder to define elements which created the unique physical and atmospheric identity.

For me, Glasgow was a city of grand European stone architecture that crackled with cinematic atmosphere and energy but was nevertheless imbued with a melancholic, sometimes desolate feel, no doubt due in part to its social and economic troubles as well as the monochromatic weather. But did others experience the city in the same way? Would they see what I saw and feel what I felt? What images would they take home? Would they be the Victorian sandstone buildings or the modernist towers and offices? Perhaps of the juxtaposition of all the elements creating the city, along with the atmosphere this generated? Later, as a teenager living in the city, the Glasgow Garden Festival¹ re-ignited my fascination with this fusion of architecture and atmosphere. From my bedsit outpost in the bohemian creative-cool of the city's West End (well, that was how I saw it), cosseted from the wider post-industrial blight and dereliction affecting many other parts, the event generated the sense of the city's re-birth following years of neglect, decline and growing obsolescence.

¹ The Glasgow Garden Festival was held between 26 April and 26 September 1988. The temporary event took place on the south bank of the river Clyde (in sub-case Study Area 2) and was a mix of gardens, pavilions, traditional transport, and exhibitions. Over 4.3 million people visited over 152 days. The event was designed to, and credited with, starting the city's urban regeneration following years of post-industrial decline.

That year I left the city to go to university. After graduating, work opportunities meant an extended absence away in other countries, with time spent in both the south of France and England. After sixteen years I returned to live in Glasgow again. The city was still in post-industrial renewal physically, socially, and economically. While elements remained of the 1980s and 90s, Glasgow was updating itself and appeared to now be much more influenced by, and reflective of, the architectural and demographic aspects of the globalised age. Not only was this evident in the city's buildings, itself an indication of the economic shifts taking place, but in the sense of atmosphere generated by the changes. There was, from my personal perspective, still a very recognisable and strong sense of identity which pervaded, but that this now sat with a sense of place imbued with the wider global dynamic. However, while the city was clearly benefitting from the positives of globalisation and the socio-cultural and economic enrichment this can bring, I wondered if, on a built environment level, there might be a tipping point where Glasgow's physical character and identity could be diluted and the essence of what defines its architectural sense of place lost.

Therefore, the origins of this thesis lie with my general interest in the city of Glasgow and deeper fascination of exactly how, and in what specific ways, these physical and atmospheric changes in a city can be deconstructed and identified to understand how built environments create and reflect the uniqueness of place (see - for example, Lynch 1960; Cullen 1961; Neill 2004; Sepe and Pitt 2014; Sanders and Baker 2016). For example, why do buildings look the way they do and what design and planning decisions influence this?

As part of this deconstruction, I also wanted to examine the more elusive and difficult to tether aspects of how a city feels and what emotions people experience, as well as whether these are shared or individual. What the thesis terms the 'interplay' between the tangible architectural and intangible socio-cultural and economic components of a place, are of particular interest. This interplay will be initially introduced in section 2.2.3, and discussed throughout this research, particularly in Chapters Two and Seven.

It seems to me that it is this interplay between what I term the tangible components of urban character, like, for example, the architectural style of buildings and the materiality, scale and so on, and the intangible components, such as what happens in a city - economically and socio-culturally, as well as how people interact with, perceive and sense place, that is essential to creating and defining the uniqueness of cities. It is what Healey (2010) argues as being the meaning that people give to places which extends beyond the physicality of buildings and streets and comes from a particular ambience or *genius loci*. It is this which I feel makes a place different, distinctive, and identifiable through more than just the form of concrete, stone, steel, and glass. As Latham argues, if place is solely functional and without aura and ambience: *the world becomes estranged from the human, from society. It becomes reduced to that which is useful for humanity; it is endowed with an instrumental existence but none of its own*' (1999, cited in Karrholm 2014).

So, returning to live in Glasgow following a first career in journalism, initially in Toulouse and then in media relations, policy and campaign management in London, and now in a second career as an architectural designer, I wanted to pursue this fascination with how cities can be dynamic and embrace change while retaining the essence of their character. My training and experience in the architectural field, including with the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE),² had given me practical insight into the tensions and forces at play in urban policy and architecture, for example between creating sense of place and distinct environments and the constrictions, and opportunities, imposed by finance, client briefs and urban policy. Working in the architectural field had shown me that while there were many architects cognisant and wholly immersed in the various aspects of a place which goes towards design embedded in character and meaning, there were practises where the primary concern was with just 'getting the job done' and ensuring a successful business operation. These, often larger companies, demonstrated little awareness, or consideration of, the important role the built environment has in expressing the uniqueness of place and the potential benefits this yields to society.

² CABE was a non-departmental public body responsible for advising the Westminster government in England on architecture and urban design. It merged into the Design Council in 2011. Source: www.gov.uk N/D.

It is therefore the pursuit of how this essence is identified and physically expressed via urban policy and design, along with the understanding of the main contemporary factors which impact on this essence and unique character of cities, which forms the basis and rationale of this thesis. The study is underpinned by the belief that the global exchange of people, culture and ideas is hugely positive for places, and that cities benefit from the evolving of new senses of identity which reflect this rich global interplay and allow this to be expressed in equally unique built environments. For me, the importance of cities and built environments goes well beyond functionality, efficiency, and the facilitation of economic goals, often achieved via a standardised and homogeneous approach to architecture (see, for example, discussions by Adam 2008; Sepe and Pitt 2014; El Zeini 2017) and is profoundly important in enhancing people's lives and society more widely. This is rather than what often looks like the adoption of design templates which replicate a built form and anywhere architecture (Adam 2008; El Zeini 2017; Ziyae 2017) which actually fails to celebrate and express this socio-cultural and economic richness. Thus, this thesis is rooted in a desire to excavate and deconstruct the factors and components at play in making a city look and feel the way it does - and, as is the specific focus of this thesis, what actually makes Glasgow, Glasgow.

1.2 Academic Rationale

1.2.1 Identifying Urban Character

Urban character is an elusive term suffused with ambiguity and complexity (Relph 1974; Dovey *et al* 2009; Southworth and Ruggeri 2010; Sepe and Pitt 2014). Used loosely within urban design and policy, its identification is often restricted and narrow and fails to consider together the tangible and intangible components of place, particularly the complex nature of the relationships and interplay between these (Relph 1974; Neill 2004; Dovey *et al* 2009; Sepe and Pitt 2014). Furthermore, the concept is not static and is influenced and impacted by the dynamic nature of cities and the changes this dynamic brings about, both to the perception and its definition, and how these change over time. Urban character is therefore an amalgam of varying factors such as architectural

styles, function, demographics, climate and so on, and is subject to the influence of such drivers as historic, political, and economic events and trends (Southworth and Ruggeri, 2010). As a result, a city's urban character is fluid and changes through time as a '*synthesis of a series of values*' and embodiment of the '*collective imagination*' (Rossi, 1984 cited in Sepe and Pitt 2014: 217). Establishing a clearer identification and understanding of the concept, its components and -essentially - their interplay, to examine its contemporary use in policy and design processes, is vital in interrogating how the elements of place contribute to the practical creation of cities and their distinctiveness (see also Neill 2004; Sepe and Pitt 2014). Indeed, it is through the profound engagement with place in all its facets: social, economic, cultural, and so on, and by implication the interplay between these, that cities evolve and adapt to change while still retaining their essence (Ziyae 2017; Cheshmehzangi 2020). This thesis therefore analyses such essence as identified via its tangible and intangible components and the ways in which these are interpreted and incorporated by professional stakeholders into design, policy and planning.

Academic literature is rich in providing a general theoretical framework for the understanding of urban character (Nairn 1965; Ellul 1967; Relph 1974; Norberg-Shultz 1993). However, a detailed consideration of the tangible and intangible components and critically the potential interplay between these, along with how this interplay finds a practical application in urban planning, policy and architectural design at a local level, needs greater elucidation. By analysing urban character as an ensemble of tangible and intangible components this thesis adds depth and dimension to the identification of the concept holistically, and therefore its potential role as a design and planning tool (Neill 2004). Such analysis also has the potential to establish if, and the extent to which, interplay between these components can result in identifiable architectural outcomes that can be considered as forming an integral contribution to a city's unique identity (Neill 2004; Sepe and Pitt 2014). This research therefore contributes to, and builds on, existing theory concerning the identification and role of urban character through empirical research focused on the examination of the concept's holistic composition.

Further to this, extant research has tended to focus on the physical and non-physical aspects of place identity without detailed investigation of how the interplay between these components both occurs in, and affects, built environment processes, outcomes, and ultimately relationships between people and place (Relph 1976. Sepe and Pitt 2014). This research is therefore concerned primarily with the perceptions of built environment professionals of architectural outcomes resulting from the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character. The focus of the thesis is on understanding how this interplay influences the built environment.

In setting up an analytical discussion of urban character, it is useful to distinguish or categorise components as either tangible or intangible. However, the concepts and their categorisation are considered more critically in Chapters Two and Three. The key focus of the thesis is, however, on the practical application of these concepts and of the outcomes of the interplay between them. It is not on if and how they should be categorised.

1.2.2 The Role of Urban Character

As cities are reflective of the shifting economic, political, cultural, social, and technological aspects of society and, also, synthesise these values, urban character and its practical application must also be subject to the impact of these factors (Rossi 1984; Adam 2008). With globalisation a key driver in contemporary society and the international competition between cities for the economic investment it engenders, the phenomenon is a particularly powerful influence on policy and design processes and outcomes, as examined by, for example, King 2004; Sklair 2006; Smith 2008; Eldemery 2009; Faulconbridge 2009; Rapoport 2013. This is discussed at length in the literature review of this thesis. Debates are often polarised concerning the phenomenon's impacts, with architectural theorists seeing it as either a useful and natural evolution of society and a phenomenon bringing progress and diversity, or, alternatively as a driver for an unpalatable homogenisation of architecture and urban design (El-Husseiny 2004). Indeed, globalisation is extensively cited as having negative outcomes on the built environment and undermining urban distinctiveness through the production of homogenous and generic architecture - discussed by

scholars such as, Arefi 1999; Sklair 2006; Adam 2008; Eldemery 2009; Verbes 2015. Those driving this globalised competition are seen as: ‘...*the agents and institutions of the transnational capitalist class [that] have increasingly come to define the times, places and audiences that make buildings, spaces, and architecture...*’ (Sklair 2006: 21). This is through the pursuit of an iconic brand of globalised design which is universally applicable, but which is argued as being devoid of local cultural identity (Sklair 2006; Eldemery 2009). These accusations have brought the consideration of the distinctiveness of the built environment into sharp focus, as urban policy and design seek solutions to halt and protect against the perception of homogeneity and ‘placelessness’ and the economic and cultural impacts (Carmona *et al* 2003; Jarratt *et al* 2019; Scottish Gov’t 2011, 2013; GCC 2017a). However, as El Hussein (2004) highlights, globalisation is also seen as a positive force on built environments, and one which can provide opportunities via global creative input for new urban identities via a respectful interaction between old and new forms which contextually coexist (El Zeini 2017; Majerska-Paubicka 2020).

Much of the motivation in policy for addressing accusations and perceptions of a lack of place distinctiveness is underpinned by the desire to sustain and maximise the economic benefits brought through such globalised urban competition, with ‘*placemaking...regarded as [an] important means of achieving...[the] central purpose of ‘sustainable economic growth’*’ (GCC 2017b: 10). The potential benefits from this internationally competitive environment act as a potent driving force for cities and ensure that the economic aspects of urban policy continue to enjoy primacy (Clark and Kearns, 2016). However, it is also suggested that these forces act to conserve, regenerate, and augment the distinctive urban character of cities, particularly through the repurposing of historic buildings and the desire for business to establish in distinctive places. Here the thesis examines this type of interplay between what can be termed tangible, i.e., the physical architectural repurposing of buildings, and the more intangible desired business image that this yields. Such forces project the desired corporate brand, and act as magnets to attract the required skilled, and mobile, workforce (SRC 1979; Anholt 2010; Jarret *et al* 2019). Additionally, without the corporate sector, Sklair (2006) argues that it is unlikely that many large-scale architectural projects could be realised given the finances involved.

This is especially the case as such projects are often aimed at attracting cultural and business tourism through the conservation of existing built heritage, as well as with the creation of contemporary architecture cited as modern interpretations of the unique qualities of particular places (Jarratt *et al* 2019).

The extant research within the field offers general theoretical expositions of the ways in which built environments and their character are impacted by various factors. For example, it analyses in a general way the architectural expression of success taking place through the projection of a '*globally competitive display of economic virility and political power*' (Jacobs, 2006: 6). It also examines the desire for an international style architecture symbolising this corporate prowess (Sklair 2006; Faulconbridge 2009). Further nuanced and balanced analysis of the main factors impacting on urban character's practical inclusion, as a holistically defined concept, in the policy and design processes is needed to assess the perceived positive and negative outcomes of forces like globalisation on the built environment, including the impact on the interplay between people and place. This is particularly the case through examples which provide a detailed interrogation and deconstruction of the specific outcomes of the interplay between such factors at a local level. For example, the ways in which the interplay between the architectural global branding and image transferability of multinational companies influences, and is potentially influenced by, local factors; these factors being the more intangible socio-cultural and economic (Faulconbridge 2009).

1.2.3 Definitions and Clarifications

Urban Character and Interchangeable Terminology

It is important to clarify particular conceptual terms used throughout this thesis. Firstly, as noted above, and will be discussed in more depth in Chapter Two, the term urban character is used loosely within the field of urban design and policy (see, for example, discussions by Relph 1974; Dovey *et al* 2009; Sepe and Pitt 2014). This thesis therefore uses the term urban character interchangeably with terms such as urban or place identity; urban distinctiveness; and *genius loci*. This interchangeability is done within a general context of referring to the overall identity of place, and captures the language and terminology used in

academic literature, planning policy, and of the research participants interviewed in the empirical part of this study. The term urban character is therefore used to mean the same as these other terms, which could equally have been used as the main term of the thesis. In making distinctions between the physical and non-physical elements of place, the term urban character remains interchangeable with the other terms mentioned. The groupings of tangible and intangible components are used as a way of unpacking and deconstructing the constituent parts of urban character for the purposes of addressing the overall aim of the research in analysing the built environment outcomes of the interplay between these components. The focus of the thesis is not on examining this categorisation in itself.

Tangible and Intangible components of urban character

As detailed above, this thesis is concerned with a holistic analysis of urban character via the examination of the architectural outcomes related to the interplay between the components which constitute the concept. Therefore, for the purpose of analysis, the thesis categorises the concept's components into those which are 'tangible' and those which are 'intangible' (see section 2.2 for more detail. Tangible components can be, for example, architectural materials, scale, massing, urban layout, design style, natural topography and so on. Intangible components relate to the non-physical, like social and experiential aspects of the built environment and are orientated towards people's use of and interaction with built environments, and can be considered on, for example, an economic and socio-cultural level (Healey 2010; Campelo *et al* 2014; Ziyae 2017; Rushton *et al* 2018). The interplay is a causal effect between these components, such as physical architectural outcomes like offices resulting from, for example, a service-based economy, or theatres due to cultural activity. Furthermore, as the following chapters discuss in detail, the social, economic, cultural, and political components which constitute the tangible and intangible elements of, and influences on, the built environment, are critically examined via a lens trained on the architectural outcomes of the interplay between these.

Neoliberalism

The term neoliberalism is referred to within the context of the thesis to denote the nature of the forces impacting on components of urban character, and thereby the case study's overall identity. Within this context, neoliberal forces are defined as free-market economics which have led to an intensification of competition between places and people in the pursuit of employment and capital investment.

1.3 Aim, Research Questions and Objectives

The overall aim of this thesis is to:

Analyse the interplay between the components of urban character and how this interplay influences perceptions of built environment outcomes. Its focus is the perceptions of this interplay held by design, planning and associated professions, and their understanding of the ways in which key forces, such as globalisation, impact on urban character in Glasgow. There is a particular emphasis on the relationship between the tangible and intangible components of the concept of urban character.

This research examines the outcomes for built environments of the interplay between the components of urban character. It is therefore necessarily focused on the perspectives of those directly responsible for the design and planning of built environments. This will be achieved by examining the ways in which built environment professionals - namely, architectural designers, planners and policy advisers and makers - identify the tangible components of urban character, such as architectural styles, building scales and materials, urban design patterns and so on. The study is also interested in how they characterise the intangible, or non-physical, components of urban character. For example, it will explore their perceptions of the ways in which people interact with and perceive built environments, and how this influences and shapes the physical architectural outcomes of a city. Furthermore, the aim of this thesis will be achieved by examining what the key factors impacting on the components of urban character

and the concept overall are, for example commercial and globalised approaches to built environments. The research's design is that of a case study approach, using the city of Glasgow, Scotland to address the research questions and meet the research objectives. Within the case study, two sub-case study areas are considered in detail.

The research questions are:

RQ 1:

To what extent and in what ways are the tangible and intangible components of urban character characterised, and how does this create uniqueness in a city's built environment?

RQ2:

In what ways, and to what extent, is the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character important in the design and planning processes of built environment professionals seeking to create uniqueness in Glasgow's built environment?

RQ3:

What are the main factors, including globalisation, impacting on urban character, and how do these affect the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of the concept?

In order to answer these questions, the following objectives have been set:

1. To identify the components of the concept of 'urban character' as defined by built environment professionals and examine how they conceive of how the interplay between these lead to specific architectural outcomes, as well as contributes to the wider identity of cities
2. To examine how the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character inform the processes of design and

planning, as well as urban character's overall role in creating uniqueness in built environments.

- 3 Through the interrogation of professional design, planning and policy understanding of urban character and the concept's practical application, analyse how Glasgow is imbued with a unique urban character.
- 4 To identify the main socio-political and economic factors impacting on the components of urban character and the ways in which these affect the uniqueness of built environments

This thesis adopted a qualitative methodological approach. Firstly, a detailed review of academic literature and planning policy was undertaken, which was followed by 28 semi-structured interviews with architectural designers, planning officials, and policy makers and advisers. 24 of the interviews took a traditional desk-based approach. These were followed by four walking interviews from selected participants in the traditional interviews. These walking interviews took place within a sub-case study area of the overall Glasgow case study (detailed in Chapter Five).

1.4 Structure of Thesis

The structure of the thesis is as follows.

Chapter Two reviews the literature related to the identification and understanding of the concept of urban character, and its synonyms - for example, place and urban identity and distinctiveness, including *genius loci* or spirit of place. This establishes what is known about character and identity in built environments, as well as the components which constitute the overall concept of place identity. Chapter Two also examines literature concerning these components within the context of the tangible and intangible. This categorises tangible components, such as architectural style, materials, scale and urban design, and intangible components, for example the socio-cultural aspects of a city and how these contribute to the case study of Glasgow's urban character. As part of this examination of the components of urban character,

Chapter Two reviews the literature related to the interplay between the tangible and intangible components, and how this impacts the uniqueness of built environments.

Chapter Three reviews the literature which discusses the impact of the forces of globalisation and neoliberalism on built environment processes. The particular focus of this chapter is on the ways in which the commercial interests of multinational corporations are argued as dominating built environments, and the impact that this has on the tangible and intangible components of urban character, and thereby the overall identity of cities. Furthermore, Chapter Three analyses literature concerned with how built environment professions respond to these forces, and whether debates concerning the negative impact of globalised approaches on architectural production are solely detrimental to the urban character of cities.

Chapter Four is concerned with reviewing the case study's planning policy from 1945 to present. This analyses policy decisions, and the reasoning underpinning them, impacting on Glasgow's built environment following WWII. The chapter charts the city's journey from a post-war hierarchical planning approach to one embedded in rhetoric seeking to embody the wider needs and aspirations of the city through public consultation. The chapter also examines how this attitudinal shift saw the role of the built environment change from largely focused on the functional, to an approach which sought to harness the cultural and economic benefits that architecture and uniqueness of place could bring to Glasgow's repurposing and regeneration following post-industrial decline.

Chapter Five explains the methodology adopted to address the research aims, objectives and questions. It also introduces the overall case study of Glasgow and the two sub-case study areas within the city, as well as the built environment professions of participants.

Chapter Six is the first of the empirical chapters. Its focus is on participants' identification of the tangible and intangible components of urban character, and the hierarchy of importance within these. The chapter does this partly by contrasting the components identified in the two sub-case study areas.

Chapter Seven presents and analyses the empirical findings concerning the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character, and how this interplay can result in architectural outcomes which can be identified as being unique to the Glasgow case study. This relates to the thesis' aim of identifying a holistic definition and understanding of the concept of urban character, and its role in built environment processes. The chapter also examines how the feel and ambience of a place can be physicalised through design.

Chapter Eight focuses on the analysis of the forces impacting built environments. More specifically, it examines the ways in which globalised approaches to built environments affect the tangible architectural environment, and how these impact on the relationships between people and place. The ways in which built environment professions respond to globalisation, and the factors influencing this, are examined. Moreover, the extent to which globalisation and the commercial agendas of multinational companies impact the urban character of Glasgow is interrogated.

Chapter Nine concludes the thesis by summarising the empirical findings in relation to existing research concerning urban character and assesses the study's addressing of the aim, objectives, and research questions. The thesis' contribution to knowledge is presented, as is the study's limitations and the potential for further research.

2. Chapter Two: A Place for Urban Character in the Built Environment

2.1 Introduction

This is the first of two chapters reviewing the literature on urban character. This chapter's purpose is to establish the limitations of what is known about urban character and how it is identified as a holistic concept. It is followed by a chapter which examines the forces impacting a city's urban character, in particular that of globalisation. The fundamental aim of the thesis is to analyse the interplay between the components of urban character and how this influences perceptions of built environment outcomes held by design, planning and associated professions, and their understanding of the ways in which key forces, like globalisation, impact on urban character in Glasgow. While the categorisation of components as tangible and intangible is helpful for analytical purposes, it is not the aim of the thesis to develop this categorisation further. However, the chapter does engage critically with these important concepts (see section 2.2.2).

The chapter's importance is in examining the ways in which the interplay between the components³ of urban character play a role in forming the unique architectural identity of cities. This is via an analysis of the inclusion, or omission, of such components of urban character in built environment processes. The chapter problematises the apparent dichotomy between the tangible and intangible components of urban character. This is in order to identify the extent of knowledge concerning how the interplay between these components generate a holistic understanding of the concept of urban character, encapsulating both the physical and wider socio-cultural and experiential elements of urban identity. The chapter also analyses the factors which impact the incorporation and role of urban character in built environment processes, with the exception of globalisation, which is explored fully in Chapter Three.

³ See section: 1.2.3 for definition and clarification of tangible and intangible components, as well as urban character and the use of the term.

The chapter is designed to capture the debates which underpin the study's first and second research questions:

RQ 1:

To what extent, and in what ways, are the tangible and intangible components of urban character characterised, and how does this create uniqueness in a city's built environment?

RQ2:

In what ways, and to what extent, is the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character important in the design and planning processes of built environment professionals seeking to create uniqueness in Glasgow's built environment?

It also captures in part the ideas underpinning the third research question; with these explored fully in Chapter Three:

RQ3:

What are the main factors, including globalisation, impacting on urban character, and how do these affect the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of the concept?

Furthermore, this chapter contextualises and underpins the study's understanding of the importance of urban character and place identity in terms of the economic, social, and cultural success and wellbeing of cities, and citizens. More specifically, section 2.2 examines the debates concerning the defining of urban character in relation to the built environment. While the literature defining these components is rich, this thesis argues that the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of the concept need further interrogation. This is in order to identify and understand better the processes by which they interact, as well as the actual physical outcomes of these interactions, including as temporal signifiers of the shifts in the importance and

relevance of components to place identity (Juvancic and Verovsek 2018). Therefore, as well as an examination of the literature focused on the tangible and intangible components, the ways in which the interplay between these influences built environment outcomes and a place's unique identity is analysed. Furthermore, this interplay is given particularly close analysis to reduce the dichotomy in definitions between the components of urban character. This is so as to reach a more holistic understanding of the concept and its influence on the built environment, essential for this work.

In examining the tangible and intangible components together, section 2.3 looks at the ways in which people connect with place and debates centred on the importance of the physical environment expressing the human aspects of place interaction (Neill 2004; Southworth and Ruggeri 2010; Campelo *et al* 2014; Sepe and Pitt 2014). This will be important for guiding the research in analysing how the encapsulation of both tangible and intangible components potentially generate a more holistic physicalising of urban character.

Section 2.4 examines the literature detailing some of the key factors identified as having impacted on the concept and its role in built environment processes. This is therefore important in relation to the third research question. However, the impact of one factor - globalisation - is explored in Chapter Three as the phenomenon fundamentally underpins built environment processes and therefore needs a particularly close analysis. Within the literature there is broad acceptance that neoliberal agendas⁴ have played a particularly significant part in marginalising the role of urban character (Ellin 1996; King 2004; Adam 2008; Piotrowski 2008; Polat and Dostoglu 2017; Cheshmehzangi 2020). Therefore, an analysis of the ways in which these commercially focused drivers of the built environment have affected the identity of cities, both physically and relationally via human interaction, is examined in order to draw out how urban character's role, or lack of it, has affected and changed the identity of cities.

Section, 2.5, situated within architectural theory and practice, such as modernism and post-modernism, analyses the power relations at play amongst

⁴ See section 1.2.3 for definition of neoliberal

the various actors involved in the built environment. Here the literature review shapes the research by building on the examination of factors impacting built environment processes, often highlighting the dominance of commercial interests over the wider socio-cultural functions and wellbeing of cities (Cuff 1991; Ellin 1996; Piotrowski 2008; Polat and Dostoglu 2017; Sepe 2017).

Finally, this chapter examines the literature concerning the components of place identity which help to distinguish place through design attributed to functionality, symbolism, and contextualisation (Lynch 1960; Cullen 1961; Venturi 1972; Relph 1976; Rowe 1978; Caliskan and Marshal 2011; Sanders and Baker 2016). The literature identifies legibility and contextualisation arising from postmodernist thinking as particularly key to place identity and its distinctiveness. The section therefore examines the role that these play in urban identity, and the extent to which they can be interpreted as manifestations of urban character. As part of this analysis, debates around the deconstruction of the elements which facilitate legibility and contextualisation are examined, as are the ways in which these components go beyond the simple functionality of place and contribute to the visual distinctiveness and the emotional identity of a city (Lynch 1960; Carmona and Tiesdell 2007).

2.2 Defining Urban Character

2.2.1 The Complexity of Urban Character

The term urban character is '*not easily defined nor contained within the spatial field of urban planning regulation*' (Dovey *et al*, 2009: 1). Theorists offer explanations, such as a form of awareness and a product of the lived-world experience (Relph, 1976) and '*the extent of being distinct from other places*' (Lynch 1960: 6). Works by such authors as Nairn (1965), Ellul (1967), Relph (1976) and Norberg-Shultz (1993) concerning the creation and definition of place, existentially and physically, including studies on human desire and need for a sense of place and belonging, are valuable in understanding and informing how urban character can be translated into a physical environment.

Relph demonstrates the complexity of defining the identity of place by positing that such identity consists of three interrelated components: physical features and appearance, its observable functions and activities, and the symbolism or meaning of a place (1976). Within these components Relph argues that there is an endless range of content which can combine in numerous ways. He suggests that there can be no limit '*to the diversity of identities of places, and every identifiable place has unique content and patterns of relationship that are expressed and endure in the spirit of that place*' (ibid: 61).

Therefore, in seeking to expose and interrogate place identity and urban character it is not possible to define such a concept merely through a factual description, nor is it possible through absolute terms like 'real' or 'true' identity and character. Rather, the identity of place will take many forms and will depend on many factors, such as who is identifying a place, what their relationship with that place is, and so on. For example, within the context of urban character such definitions of place identity are likely to vary greatly depending on whether the definition is that of a built environment professional or of a local citizen or visitor to a city.

This is particularly important given this thesis' focus on the perceptions of built environment professionals. Within these groups there will again be numerous variants in the perception of a given place depending on an individual's experience, background, imagination, and so on (Tuan 1974; Hummon, 1992; Sepe and Pitt, 2014; Jarratt *et al* 2019.). It may be that someone seeking to define two very similar urban environments, but in two different cities, will deliver wholly different definitions depending on preconceived ideas of a place, perhaps as a result of media portrayal (Evans, *et al.* 2011) or because, as Migliorini and Venini point out: '*Place, unlike space, is described by objects which transmit specific cultural, historical or socially meaningful values which are different for each individual*' (2001: 129).

This individuality of experience can however be disputed to an extent through the concept of Harman's object-orientated philosophy (OOP) and Gibson's theory of affordance which posit the idea of objects, including architectural constructs, as having an '*autonomy, and singularity*' (cited in Karrholm 2014: 72). This affordance of an object '*does not change as the observer changes [it is] 'invariant [and] is always there to be perceived'*'" (ibid: 72-74). Therefore, these affordances '*seem somehow to reside in objects*' (ibid: 73). Furthermore, although not directly linked, the concept of '*social imageability*', as coined by Stokols and Shumaker to describe the shared meanings that can result from the relationship and involvement of individuals with a place (1981, cited in Sepe and Pitt 2014), as well as the similar concept of '*locational socialization*' developed by Milligan (1998, cited in Sepe and Pitt 2014), also direct this research's pursuit of the identity of place towards that borne out of shared experiences and thereby via the interplay between the physically tangible and socio-culturally intangible.

These influences on the interpretation of place identity based on the interpreter's relationship to the place, are crucial in the exposition of urban character and guide this study in recognising and understanding the spirit, or *genius loci*, of a place. It is this *genius loci* resulting from the interplay between the tangible and intangible components which is intrinsic to this thesis' examination of urban character's identity and role. As Healey (2010) argues,

aspects of place come from the meaning people give to their environment which goes beyond merely how objects are placed on a site as part of a cityscape. This is more than the physicality of streets and buildings, this element of place comes from a sense that we have arrived somewhere which has a particular ambience, as well as physicality (ibid). The *genius loci*, or atmosphere, of place provides us with a shared sense of the spirit of the place (Campelo *et al* 2014). It is this tension between what is seen to define a place through its tangible components and definitions more orientated towards the intangible social and experiential, which the study will seek to reduce so as to define urban character in a more holistic way and thereby address RQ 2 in particular.

2.2.2 Quantitative and Qualitative Aspects of Place

Berque (1999, cited in Sepe and Pitt 2014) offers tangible, or quantitative, components, and intangible, or qualitative, aspects of place to illustrate the dual component nature of place identity and its analysis. In quantitative terms place is physical, and therefore measurable against the attributes of other places, or what Aristotle described as the external limits of a physical element in universal space, known also as *topos* (Sepe and Pitt, 2014). However, in qualitative terms the concept of place is more intangible. Here place is immaterial, semantic, and non-measurable and can therefore not be compared with other places directly (ibid). It is unique in pertaining to a specific place's atmosphere, and in terms of architectural production could be seen as '*how a building comes to have presence*' (Jacobs 2006: 3). It is this combination, or interplay, of the *topos* of quantitative place and Plato's *khora* of qualitative place, and how the physical aspects contribute to the sense and atmosphere of a place which is an intrinsic part of this study's pursuit of holistically identifying urban character. Furthermore, it is, what Morgan *et al* call, '*the emotional power of a destination's tone*' (2011:12 - cited in Jarratt *et al* 2019) which informs this research's exploration of urban character as a concept encompassing the tangible and intangible components, including '*a place's ambience, its physical fabric and character [and] the attitude of its people, its heritage, and narratives*' (ibid).

Moreover, theories concerning interobjectivity as '*radiance*', which suggests a '*relation to the object produced through investment in a series of different*

relations to the objects' (Karrholm 2014: 73) and concepts of 'allure' and 'aura' as introduced by Harman (2005, cited in Karrholm 2014) and Benjamin (1967, cited in Karrholm 2014) respectively, provide approaches for the study to examine further this intangible aspect of urban character. The concepts allow objects in the built environment to be appreciated on a basis which goes beyond simply physical presences defined by their qualities and relations within certain networks, and that are not only viewed and given identity through a singular purpose. As will be seen in the empirical part of this thesis, these concepts help to identify a more holistic and less physically orientated or traditional definition of urban character with which to anchor an interrogation of how places attain uniqueness of character. For example, by comparing perceptions of globalised places, with those identified as locally traditional or historic, or at least pre-dating that deemed as international, it is possible to tether a qualitative urban character definition and explain why: *'Voided of aura the world becomes estranged from the human, from society. It becomes reduced to that which is useful for humanity; it is endowed with an instrumental existence but none of its own'* (Latham 1999, cited in Karrholm 2014: 73).

2.2.3 Interplay Between the Tangible and Intangible Components of Urban Character

Ziyae (2017: 21) states that the *'identity of a given place arises from a combination of social and cultural characteristics of the related community which [is] reincarnated in physical shapes and forms of the urban locality.'* Furthermore, Valera posits that the various dimensions of an environment, such as the traditional, temporal, behavioural, psychosocial, social, and ideological, can have an influence on place identity. These elements, according to Valera, *'mix to shape the physical characteristics of the place and approve a total meaning for the place identity from the social point of view'* (Valera 1997 cited in Ziyae, 2017: 22). It is the relationships between the tangible and intangible components of urban character, and how the interplay between these is physicalised in a place's urban character which is at the heart of this study. Rather than examining the tangible and intangible components which contribute to urban character in isolation or as unrelated elements, in terms of their impacts on the built environment, the thesis

approaches these components as also being interactive and thereby producing influences unique to a particular place. It is the reciprocal processes between the tangible and intangible components leading to the '*sense of place as a combination of social constructions interacting with physical settings*' (Campelo *et al*, 2014: 156) and where, as Walmsley says, '*the character of the local environment has a significant impact on behaviour*' (Walmsley 1988: 9, cited in Cheshmehzangi 2020: 246) which this research identifies and explicates.

2.2.4 The Globalisation of Place and Inauthentic Design

Although Chapter Three is dedicated to the analysis of the impact of globalisation on urban character, it is useful to mention here that a globalised approach to architectural production is another important angle from which to approach definitions and the identification of urban character. As the study's focus includes the impact globalisation has on place identity and architecture, and as the phenomenon underpins built environment processes, it needs particularly detailed examination. Arefi (1999, cited in Sepe and Pitt 2014) argues that globalisation has resulted in an increasing loss of meaning of place as was originally established through social customs and the interaction of these. Furthermore, Arefi sees a dilution of shared historical memory in certain places, perhaps most notably in world cities, resulting in places being created for provisional uses and are therefore focused on fulfilling the immediate needs of commerce and consumption, for example financial centres, rather than on '*sedimenting traces of culture*' (Arefi 1999, cited in Sepe and Pitt, 2014: 220). According to Auge, places can be defined as relational, historical, and concerned with their identity, therefore the absence of these aspects results in '*non-place*' (1995: 63). These non-places are seen from the globalisation of products, services and places replicated by multi-national companies. Such a generic approach to place helps the study's analysis of both the tangible and intangible components of urban character by deconstructing the design processes and wider thinking which led to their creation.

Furthermore, the creation of these non-places can be linked to the concept of authenticity, which is defined by Southworth and Ruggeri as '*the quality of a*

place being unique, distinctive, and rooted in the local' (2010, cited in Sepe and Pitt 2014: 222). An authentic approach to design involves an attempt to genuinely respond to the meaning and qualities of a place and engage with them on a personal level (ibid). An inauthentic approach to place and place-making represents a failure to engage in this way and is overly concerned with, what Jacques Ellul terms, '*technique*'; that is, an overriding focus on functionality, objective organisation and manipulative planning (Ellul, 1967). Analysis using '*authentic*' and '*inauthentic*' design therefore provides the study with an understanding of technique and motivation behind place creation, with this particularly aiding the analysis of places seen as displaying a globalised homogeneity.

2.3 Urban Character as a Design Tool: Putting People in Their Place

According to Neill, the role of place identity should be understood as an essential ingredient in transforming a city and with this identity seen as a design and planning tool (2004). Understanding how people connect with place and the processes involved in this, as well as the desire for place to reflect people's relationship and interaction with it, is important in this understanding of place identity as a design tool. Sepe and Pitt (2014) assert that it is essential that the role of place contains and expresses the life of that particular world; its value being to represent that local existence within a space that is reflective of that world's characteristics. The recognition of this allows such value to become a basis for reference which can inform design with the inclusive input of those who live and use the place on a social, economic, and cultural level (ibid). For such urban character and identity to be captured and embodied in the built environment, Sepe and Pitt (2014), and Southworth and Ruggeri (2010) argue there is need for profound engagement with place and its life in all its facets: social, economic, cultural, and so on, so that the evolution of city design is resilient and able to adapt to change, while nevertheless retaining its essence. This is particularly so given the acceptance within the field that '*place is a deceptively complex subject; considered a constantly evolving process rather than fixed*' (Jarratt et al 2019).

To therefore examine urban character as a concept encapsulating both the tangible and intangible components in the design process, the dichotomy between the physical and social definitions already highlighted in the literature (Relph 1976; Valera 1997; Berque 1999; Southworth and Ruggeri 2010; Campelo *et al* 2014; Sepe and Pitt 2014; Ziyae 2017) needs to be reduced. This study argues that in reducing this dichotomy a better understanding of the interactive relationships and influences between these physical and non-physical aspects of urban character can generate an understanding of the concept which encapsulates both the tangible aspects of the concept, as well as the intangible social and experiential. This is particularly related to the research's focus on the contemporary context of globalisation and the broad academic consensus within the field that the phenomenon has resulted in a homogenisation of architecture and dilution of urban distinctiveness (King 2004; Sklair 2006; Adam 2008; Eldemery 2009 Rapoport 2013; Verbes 2015).

Therefore, the literature which brings together the tangible and intangible components of urban character develops the study's examination of how the concept is identified and used within the practical considerations of contemporary urban planning, policy, and architectural design. This hones the research's understanding of place beyond solely the physical to include the atmospheric and experiential, and as being what Campelo *et al* describe as, '*the interaction of the tangible physical aspects, such as geographic location and physical landscape, as well as the less tangible though equally significant elements of the social and cultural capital*' (2014).

2.4 Key Factors Impacting Urban Character

2.4.1 Urban Character and its Shifting Role in the 20th and 21st Centuries

A range of authors agree that the concept of urban character has been marginalised as the neoliberal economics of inter-city competition, nationally and internationally, have been asserted as the dominant influence on urban design in many regions of the world. This has resulted in an approach of

corporate globalised architectural branding emerging through the modernist and postmodernist eras (King 2004; Sklair 2006; Smith 2008; Verbes 2015). The arrival of the modernist architectural movement and its international style in the early part of the 20th century, saw building design ignoring regional or national architectural traditions and largely removed or marginalised urban character as a consideration in the urban design process (Ellin 1996). Kenneth Frampton's essay *Towards Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance* (1983) criticised modernism as deeply inappropriate as it ignored and negated the '*specificities of differentiated architectural identity and character*' and has contributed to cities becoming overly repetitious and homogeneous (Verbes 2015: 26).

Therefore, gaining an understanding of why cities look the way they do through an examination of these key forces and drivers (political, cultural, economic, technological, historical) shaping the built environment from the 20th century onwards, is important in informing this study as to how cities have the form they do, and in highlighting how urban character's definition and role has shifted over time. More specifically, debates within the literature guide and refine the research's understanding and analysis of the ways in which such key forces have affected and shaped the concept's contemporary definition and role within built environment processes. This is achieved through the analysis of discussions related to political agendas, and social and architectural fashion and theories which have influenced what cities are for and how this is realised architecturally.

For example, the repetition and homogeneity, highlighted by, for example Frampton (see Verbes 2015), resulted in a backlash against modernism. This was expressed by those within the built environment sector through a propensity for nostalgia and Romanticism to create built environments seen as more harmonious and sympathetic to the aesthetic, community, and scale needs of citizens (Ellin 1996). This nostalgia was a postmodern reaction to the challenges and accusations of cities being seen as repetitive and lacking in urban distinctiveness, particularly in response to globalisation and its early architectural manifestations in modernism and the '*international style*' (ibid). A particular disaffection with post-war urban design and architecture,

and the often-wholesale destruction of older environments to make way for these, was a key driver in this retrospective nostalgia for pre-industrial urban environments (Ellin 1996). Debates within the literature are therefore useful in understanding how elements like urban character are identified within built environment processes. This assists this research in interrogating whether the concept is perceived as merely a contemporary tool for nostalgia and the recreation of pre-globalisation times, or if it is identified in a more dynamic way to reflect and express local contemporary society culturally, socially, economically, and so on.

Frampton argued that Critical Regionalism was '*that bridge that attempts to connect identity with a global vision.*' Its strategy being to '*mediate the impact of universal civilization with elements derived indirectly from the particularities of a particular place*' (1983). Therefore, the examination of debates surrounding the impacts of historical architectural movements lead the research to question whether the theoretical consideration and practical application of the components of urban character are identified as architectural retreats to nostalgia or can be viewed as similar to Critical Regionalism. Additionally, such literature directs the study to consider urban character's role in what Majerska-Paubicka (2020) describes as, the '*transformations of the existing tissue resulting from the implementation of new building development often aimed at the creation of specific and unique character of the architecture of a given place.*' This therefore steers the research to address the shifts in how urban character's tangible and intangible components are identified, and ultimately how these influence architectural outcomes over time.

2.4.2 The Art of Relationship in Urban Character

Postmodernism's reaction to this increasing lack of urban distinctiveness resulting from modernism's disinterest in the specificities of cities (Frampton 1983), saw contextual theory become prevalent, such as with the Townscape Movement. This movement emphasised the '*art of relationship*' (Cullen 1961: 10) and the creation of urban character through a contextually holistic approach between buildings and their wider environments. This sought to go beyond the modernist obsession with individual buildings as objects and demonstrate the benefits of bringing buildings together so that, '*...collectively they can give*

visual pleasure which none can give separately' (ibid: 9). This saw '*...the quest for local color, the endeavour to reconstruct in imagination the distinctive lives of peoples remote in space, time or cultural tradition...*' (Cahnman 1964, cited in Ellin:18). The aim became not to dictate the shape of urban environments but to '*manipulate within the tolerances*' (Cullen 1961: 10) and nuance elements like scale and style, texture and colour, character and individuality and the juxtaposing of these (ibid).

This contextual perspective saw modernism's approach of the individualism of buildings rebuffed, urging instead that architects rediscover the importance of the street as the axis, and of the role of building mass as a definer in urban space (Jacobs 1961. Rowe 1978). It is therefore with theorists like Jacobs and Cullen that the role of urban character emerges, or re-emerges, in the postmodernist era. This is important to the study as the concept is considered as an important element in creating distinctive urban design and architecture. This is valuable as post-modernism's advocacy and application provides the research with insight into the consideration and identification of the components of urban character, and how these impacted the built environment.

2.4.3 Postmodernism and the Neoliberal Agenda

Although postmodernism does move to a more holistic approach and become more open to urban character as an ingredient in the design processes, it is nevertheless criticised over its preoccupation with nostalgia and the facilitation of neo-liberal economic agendas, which, if anything, increased architectural homogeneity (Ellin 1996). Furthermore, Ellin argues that there was a tendency for postmodernism to overlook fundamental changes which occurred in society resulting from the industrial revolution (ibid). Of particular interest to the study is the charge that postmodernism gave form to negative aspects of neoliberal society in allowing design to follow fear and finance (ibid). For example, the decline and compartmentalisation of public space, stemming from a rise in its privatisation, both by individuals and corporations, and the aesthetic decline of cities due to a pandering to security and privacy concerns. Ellin argues that this resulted in an increase in negative physical design in city centres which ignored the opportunity to physically express the uniqueness of cities (1996).

Therefore, the accusation that postmodernism took refuge in nostalgia and pre-industrial landscapes, and that it acquiesced to neoliberal economic drivers, is useful in informing the research as to what postmodernism understands as urban character. This develops the study's examination of urban character, and highlights that it is not a static or absolute concept. Rather, it is one which shifts and evolves as cities evolve, but which nevertheless provides underlying elements for the distinctiveness of local built environments.

2.5 Power Relations in Built Environment Processes

2.5.1 Ignoring Postmodernism and Critical Thinking in Professional Architectural Practice

As discussed, the emergence of postmodernist architectural theory in the mid-twentieth century, championed by the likes of Jacobs, Rowe, and Lynch, saw a more holistic and democratic approach to built environment design. This looked beyond the individualism of buildings to incorporate architecture into its wider context to provide a more distinctive urban identity (Lynch 1960; Jacobs 1961; Rowe 1978). Postmodernists sought to problematise the theory and practice of urban planning, with the view that cities have the capability to provide for everybody, only when they are created by everybody (Jacobs 1961).

However, despite this more democratic perspective, commercial influence and control of the built environment remains the primary driver in contemporary design. Although some architects concern themselves with wider critical theory and analysis, many are still accused of failing to acknowledge that their products are largely commercially driven (Ellin 1996). Therefore, despite postmodernism's rhetoric criticising modernism's rejection of local influences and traditions, it is capitalism which still primarily defines the built form, rather than an expression of place identity derived from an analysis and understanding of the uniqueness of particular urban environments (Ellin 1996; Neill 2004; Sepe and Pitt 2014). Piotrowski argues that there is a fabrication of myths around the meaning of architectural products as a way of disguising commercialism with lip-service paid to design elements like *genius loci*, along

with the imbuing of a spiritual association and purpose to buildings, for example with phenomenologically heavy terms like '*dwelling*' (2008: 141). According to Spencer (2016), the reality is a spatial complement of the processes of neoliberalisation via architecture which is '*in thrall to the same notions of liberty as are propounded in neoliberal thought*' (ibid: 2). Indeed, urban design and architecture have pursued their own neoliberal narrative and justification promoting the free market process, whereby urban and architectural orders are subsumed into the will of the market (Spencer 2016).

The relationship between urban theory and architectural practice is strained under neoliberalism, with, for example, post-structuralism and deconstruction inconvenient and instrumentally difficult within the context of accommodating the needs of the '*managerial and entrepreneurial principles of neoliberalism*' (ibid: 50). As these principles are those which dominate client ambitions, they therefore exert the most influence on architecture and thereby further distance theory and practice (ibid).

Spencer further argues that it is architecture which has helped to design and build the expansion of neoliberalism in the fields of work, culture, education and consumerism. This neoliberalism of the built environment which, Lefebvre contended, resulted in a kind of overall colonization of space by "*decision-making centres*" (cited in Spencer 2016: 33) has increased its global colonialism, emanating from the West. Indeed, as noted later in this chapter, King (2004) highlights Western skyscraper design as informing and symbolising a public's economic and cultural vision of success and modernity, and even '*hope*', in Taipei.

Canter argues the need to mask the over commercialisation of their profession instils in architectural students a need to provide profound meaning to their work which is '*aimed at weaning [them] from their personal viewpoint and educating them in more remote, abstract orientation of their profession*' (1977: 178). This, along with a failure to engage in a cross-disciplinary exchange with social sciences in the way that postmodernism as a broader movement did (Non Arkaraprasertkul 2009) continued to discourage architects from critical thought and reflexivity; a legacy which Piotrowski (2008) argues is rooted in the

Victorian era. This 'weaning' process pushed an acceptance of the interpretations and tastes of educators, resulting in architects not being '*trained to be alert to significant relations of authority, economics, power, group decision-making processes, management, and so on*' (Cuff 1991: 45).

Examining these underlying power-based influences on architectural creativity and business management therefore aides the study in understanding how commercialism remains the major driver in built environment design. Of particular importance is the need for this research to further analyse the extent, and in what ways, commercial agendas confine, stifle and marginalise elements of architectural design, specifically that of urban character. Consequently, this steers the study to examining how built environment professions respond to these agendas within the context of the concept's role in contemporary architectural processes. Furthermore, this research interrogates architectural attitudes and commercial and planning requirements to what Moussavi (2009) argues is the contemporary challenge of architecture to use a market-based model of urban development to go beyond the market itself. As producers of culture, it is for architects to imbue form with a diversity of goals and causes broader than merely those of commercial considerations. The purpose of this diversity is to contribute to built environments which allow an equally diverse range of choices (ibid) and are thereby cognitive and facilitatory of the holistic potential of urban character reflective of the tangible and intangible components of the concept.

The commercial influences on the way in which built environment professionals are taught and practice poses broader and further questions for the study. Ellin (1996) argues that this overt commercial focus caused a crisis of confidence in the architectural profession. This crisis stemmed from formal education and extended to professional practice where financial business considerations and imperatives compromised architects' abilities to be responsive to the role of the built environment in society more generally (ibid). Ellin further argues that these factors resulted in the profession's mainstream falling into the corporate payroll, with this exacerbated by an overly commercial focus to their work. This often manifested in the old modernist approach of 'object' buildings rather than the holistic direction expounded by postmodernists (1996). The Commission for

Architecture and the Built Environment (Cabe) in England also highlights the corporate hold on the profession, stating that many architects require to *'bend to commercialism, feeding the market a pretence of creativity while actually not doing anything risky'* (Sklair 2006: 38).

According to Piotrowski (2008), this absence of critical thinking in the profession, along with the pursuit of commercialism, often sees a *'gimmicky'* style product emerge, heavy with symbolism, and with a building's *'skin'* used as a cosmetic cover up to substitute for the lack of architectural theory. This highlights that contemporary designs are often strongly conceptual and rarely study the *'fine grain or culture of the locality'* (Evans, *et al.* 2011: 40) needed to deliver built environments which express a strong sense of their uniqueness through a physical representation of their local urban character. Furthermore, Piotrowski (2008) argues that this post-theoretical mind-set continues to avoid dealing with the complexities of society at a cultural, political, and environmental level, often engaging with these purely as a series of technological problems to be solved. These educational, and particularly the commercial factors, are important in contemporary approaches to the built environment, and therefore direct this research to analyse the ways in which they impact urban character. This is especially so in the study's examination of the interplay between the concept's components and how this affects architectural outcomes, as well as the forces influencing the creation of such outcomes.

Furthermore, Giddings *et al* highlight the many studies emphasising the consequences of a decline in place identity, specifically in public open spaces, and that this *'causes many social, environmental, economic and health problems in cities'* (2011, cited in Polat and Dostoglu 2017). The impact of this failure to engage with the relationships between the built environment and the broader multi-faceted issues of society is important to the study's understanding of the prevalence of what the literature terms an inauthentic approach to urban design and place creation. This is particularly relevant to the research given the challenges to place-specific design by globalised approaches to built environments (Arefi 1999; King 2004; Sklair 2006; Sepe and Pitt, 2014; El Zeini 2017).

Additionally, the uniqueness of place identity expressed through urban character is also now recognised by urban policy and planning at a national and local level in Scotland as central to the economic and socio-cultural wellbeing of contemporary cities (Scottish Govt 2013a; Scottish Govt 2013b; GCC 2017a, b). Therefore, if policy seeks to use urban character as an integral design and planning tool, as Neill (2004) suggests should be the case, then the extent to which the physical appearance and experiential aspects of cities are considered as interrelated in defining urban character needs to be interrogated.

2.6 Ground Rules for Urban Character

2.6.1 Designing, Contextualising, and Interpreting Physical Urban Form and its Character

Postmodernism's attempts to steer architectural production away from the homogeneity resulting from an overly commercial focus is further highlighted through the importance of strong legibility and contextualisation in the urban form (Lynch 1960; Rowe 1978). These elements of the built environment direct the study's analysis regarding the ways in which design aspects like legibility and contextualisation physically express, and to what extent they can be interpreted as manifestations of urban character. Furthermore, an analysis of these elements gives the study insight into how urban character informs design practice and outcomes through professional responses to form and usability, as well as the practical and emotional impact such form can have on users (Lynch 1960; Carmona and Tiesdell 2007).

The literature recognises the importance of legibility and contextualisation in creating urban environments which are coherent and functional, as well as providing strong visual identities associated with that particular place. This legibility and visual distinctiveness go beyond solely facilitating the functionality of a city and is recognised as having a '*wide practical and emotional importance to the individual*' (Lynch 1960: 4). Furthermore, such clear physical urban identity provides a sense of home to citizens which is, '*strongest when home is not only familiar but distinctive as well*' (ibid: 5).

Further links between legibility and place identity can also be made regarding a person's familiarity with a place and the impact this has on their interpretation of the urban form and character (Lynch 1960; Relph 1976; Southworth and Ruggeri 2010; Sepe and Pitt 2014). Lynch in particular makes this connection by using city familiarity as an analytical tool to demonstrate a correlation between the degree of familiarity with a place, and how this affects an individual's reading of a city. This is in terms of its visibility, image strength and weakness and the connections, disconnections, and inter-related components of city districts (1960). Lynch argues that cities can be made more visually dramatic with forms that draw and '*entrance the eye*' (ibid: 92) and become '*symbols for urban life*' (ibid). From this a sense of community can be reflected, or '*made flesh*' (ibid: 92) in the urban landscape. If a city is distinctive, and therefore legible, then it can create an environment on which citizens can impose their own meanings and connections to make the city "*a true place, remarkable and unmistakable*" (ibid: 92). Key to this are the benefits brought by a holistic approach to design. Lynch posits that where individual designs in an urban environment are considered and informed by the intangible and tangible elements which constitute the city as a whole, including a city's urban character, the designs are more likely to enhance the built environment and sit appropriately within the wider functions and forms of a city (ibid). This is an approach echoed by theorists such as, Jacobs 1961; Cullen 1961; Southworth and Ruggeri 2010; Campelo *et al* 2014. Lynch's advocacy of a holistic design approach is central to this study, in particular in relation to the second research question. This aids the study through an examination of the relationships between people and place and the reciprocal ways in which these shape built environments, and how this is seen as integral to a city's unique identity.

This legibility, an important theme arising from postmodernism's reaction to modernism (Ellin 1996), is seen through the deconstruction of the fundamental physical design elements of cities, namely: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. These are used to examine how people identify a place through the physical characteristics of the urban form (Lynch 1960). The degree of familiarity with a place can also be seen as an analytical tool to determine how this affects an individual's reading of a city. For example, Lynch's study found

that those with the least knowledge of the city of Boston in the US tended to imagine and navigate the city in terms of its topography, large regions and generalised characteristics and broad directional relationships. Those more familiar with the city thought in terms of specific paths and their interrelationships, while those most familiar were more likely to rely on small landmarks and much less on specific paths (ibid). This is important in considering urban character and informs the study's research relating to perceptions of a city's character, and its wider impact on the complex relationships and attachments between cities and their users.

In answering research questions two and three relating to the identification of the components of urban character and the architectural outcomes of the interplay between these, the study will further test the role that city familiarity has in determining its legibility. This is done in order to examine how this helps in the process of identifying a city's urban character, both in terms of its tangible form, such as landmark buildings or buildings which typify what is identified as representing or contributing to a city's urban character, as well as in the intangible sense of a building or area emitting an 'aura' which 'speaks of' the city (Benjamin 1967). Equally, the study draws on this approach to identify the converse, that is, buildings and areas which do not do this and could therefore be seen as at odds with, or devoid of, the city's character. For example, as a result of being focused solely on the needs of commerce and consumption due to corporate globalisation of the built environment, as argued by Arefi (1999). This will assist the study's interrogation of the meaning of local urban character and understanding how it informs the design decision-making process. This is done by attaching *in situ* examples, via two sub-case study areas of the types of places and buildings viewed as particularly of the city, and thereby adding to the fusion of the tangible and intangible elements of urban character. Furthermore, this potentially provides a hierarchy of the socially orientated intangible, and physically orientated tangible aspects of what is perceived as urban character's components.

2.6.2 Urban Character Through Symbolism

Contextualisation and symbolism in urban design provide further insight into the understanding and deconstruction of character as expressed in the urban form.

This is through representations of a city's historical and shifting purposes. Venturi's *Learning from Las Vegas* uses the title city to analyse these architectural themes like commercial signage and architectural styles. He introduces the 'Duck' and 'Decorated Shed' analogy to explain approaches used to communicate and define the purpose and meaning of buildings. 'Duck' describes a building as a symbol and one which tends to submerge the building's architectural systems through its overall form. 'Decorated Sheds' are conventional shelters that apply symbols as ornament (Venturi 1972). The work looks at the thinking and reasoning behind why buildings look the way they do, and how the symbolism used reflects and communicates society, for example the technological aesthetic of modernism, or the ornamentation spawned by religion, commercialism, or political fashions.

This is relevant to the study's aims of examining the ways in which architectural production communicates society and how the symbolism in its design can lead to homogenisation, particularly due to factors such as the dominant commercial drivers of contemporary globalised society and the resultant branded design of '*Coca-Cola*' architecture (Hitchcock 1951, cited in Adam 2008: 75). Venturi's (1972) exploration of symbolism and style highlights that the conventional elements in architecture traditionally come from evocations of past experience. These are chosen and adapted from pre-existing vocabularies or standardised catalogues - that is, they are not uniquely created from original data and artistic tuition (Colquhoun 1969). Therefore, this design approach based on pre-existing and historical catalogues leads to accusations that designers lack creative theory at a contextual level, and therefore fail to engage with and express the physical and social urban character of the unique locations in which they are working (ibid). Furthermore, as architectural symbolism is generally used to evoke the past, an examination of the impact this has on urban character as a dynamic element involved in informing the modern evolution of cities is needed. Additionally, the study is directed to analyse symbolism within the context of how this evocation sits within the corporate globalisation of the built environment seeking a relatively international, rather than local, character to projects (King 2004; Jacobs 2006; Sklair 2006; Eldemery 2009; Faulconbridge 2009; Rapoport 2013). Venturi's (1972) work therefore helps this research by providing a framework for analysing how urban character is

identified and the ways, and extent to which, this identification process shifts over time. This guides the research in understanding that the identification of urban character can be intrinsically linked to the forces impacting on built environment processes, and how these shape the concept.

2.6.3 Urban Morphology's Contribution to Urban Character

Urban morphology, that is, how urban environments are created and change, is another important strand of the contextual approach related to distinctive urban character. Caliskan and Marshal 2011 posit that better linkage between urban morphology and design produces places with an understanding of the form and function of existing urban fabrics. This can help realise potential in placemaking by drawing out the physical elements defined as urban character. This therefore helps in particular to address the first research question regarding the identification of the concept's components. Urban morphology can demonstrate the value in testing methods concerning the way buildings relate to their existing surroundings and is an important aspect regarding the established approaches to contextual compatibility between old and new forms (Groat 1983, cited in Sanders and Baker 2016). Sanders and Baker state: '*The epistemological basis of urban design suggests the need to draw upon the evidence of urban morphology as a methodology of design that evidences the character of a place*' (Sanders 2013, cited in Sanders and Baker 2016: 214) through a clearer appreciation of the urban grain and built form (Tibbalds 1992, cited in Carmona and Tiesdell 2007: 10). It is the ways in which urban morphology understands how buildings relate to their existing surroundings which helps shape the study's approach to the examination of urban character. As well as informing the research's understanding of how urban character is identified through contextual relationship, urban morphology is valuable in contributing to the third research question related to the forces impacting the concept and is important to issues discussed in Chapter Three.

Furthermore, the concept of '*consonance in urban form*' (Sanders and Baker 2016: 214) addresses how specific architectural features as physical products of the economic, cultural, and political settings represented in particular urban forms can be mapped, measured and assessed, and ultimately applied to new architectural and urban designs (ibid). The concept of consonance in urban

form is therefore valuable to the study's aim of identifying and deconstructing the holistic components of urban character, and how it is considered and applied within design, planning and policy practices. This assists the research agenda by examining the ways in which interplay between urban character's tangible and intangible components effects architectural outcomes. As with urban morphology, the literature concerning consonance in urban form helps shape the study's analysis of the factors impacting urban character's role. This is particularly useful within the context of, what Sanders and Baker highlight as attitudes which disregard the '*interplay that is necessary between what exists and the demand of new urban development*' (2016: 214). Therefore, along with helping the identification and deconstruction of the components of urban character, consonance in urban form is also important in addressing RQ3 related to the factors impacting on urban character, such as globalisation.

Moreover, contextual compatibility within urban morphology examines issues concerning how the design and form of new buildings are made compatible with older existing ones through the understanding and practical application of urban character. Lynch (1960) argues that this need not be a conservative approach to urban design, in the sense that city form should and can evolve its character in contemporary ways which reflect its changing use and interpretation, and that a city's legibility and identity benefit from being distinctive and visually challenging. This is a key aspect in researching urban character and its physical expression within site specific contexts. In particular, consonance in urban form, as described by Sanders and Baker (2016) directs the study towards a concept concerned with the holistic encapsulation of a city's form, as influenced and reflected in its buildings via its multifaceted life (social, cultural, economic) and an appreciation and understanding of this so as to apply such elements and details to architectural production.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the literature related to key definitions of urban character and the complexities of the tangible and intangible components of the concept. It has highlighted the need for further research to examine the ways in

which the interplay between the tangible and intangible is important for generating a more holistic approach to the concept.

Key practical and theoretical forces which have impacted on the concept have been analysed. This has been done within the context of the ways in which urban character's definition and role have shifted due to such forces, particularly the dominant commercial drivers in the built environment. Furthermore, the chapter has argued that this commercial dominance has often marginalised urban character at the expense of the wider role and importance of the built environment in society, thereby creating an imbalance.

The chapter contended that if urban identity and distinctiveness is to be defended against purely corporate interests, such an imbalance needs to be addressed. This could be achieved by developing definitions of urban character which reduce the dichotomy between its tangible and intangible components. This in turn may achieve outcomes which express the broader aspects of society, culturally and socially, as well as economically. As a means to this, the chapter has highlighted debates concerned with the deconstruction of the components of urban character, such as analysis of contextualisation and symbolism, as well as the methodologies related to urban morphology and consonance of urban form which aid this deconstruction.

The chapter has assisted this essential aspect of the research agenda through an examination of the literature related to what the concept of place identity and urban character is, as well as the techniques used to deconstruct and identify its components. Literature concerning place legibility and familiarity, particularly Lynch (1960), and analysis of how society is architecturally represented through symbolism in design, as examined by Venturi (1972), help provide a framework with which the research can build an understanding of urban character's components. This facilitates an analysis of the processes by which they interact and ultimately contribute to a city's identity and character.

Furthermore, the chapter has highlighted the key forces impacting on urban character, and how these can shape and shift the concept's role in built environment processes. This assists the research's approach to the third

research question focused on the factors driving, constraining, and preventing urban character's role in built environment processes. The literature identifies the different architectural fashions and theories behind the built form, such as modernism and postmodernism. While these are in themselves important in influencing how a city looks and the ways in which people and place interact, the literature review draws out that it is finance and business interests and considerations which fundamentally dominate and drive built environment processes, and that such architectural theory and fashion are essentially tools of commerce (Ellin 1996; Piotrowski 2008).

Building on this examination of definitions of urban character and the key forces impacting on the concept's role in built environment processes, Chapter Three now turns to analyse the literature related to globalisation. This analysis serves to assess how the phenomenon - which is intrinsically linked to the built environment (Ellin 1996) - drives, constrains or prevents the incorporation of urban character within architectural processes.

3. Chapter Three: Globalisation and Urban Character

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will examine the ways in which a city's urban character is impacted by aspects of globalisation, and how these shape and influence built environment processes. As discussed in Chapter Two, the literature identifies key factors impacting the incorporation and role of urban character, and that these are essentially driven by commercial agendas. Underpinning these agendas is globalisation. The phenomenon therefore needs a particularly detailed examination to analyse how this influences and shapes the way that cities look. This examination of the literature concerning globalisation and the built environment develops and hones the study's approach to the third research question especially; this being focused on the main factors impacting urban character and the extent to which globalisation affects its role, as well as the relationship between people and place.

As with the components of urban character examined in Chapter Two, the discussion in the literature on globalisation is limited in relation to the tangible and intangible effects on cities, often treating these as separate, rather than holistically linked. Therefore, this study looks to contribute to the understanding of how globalisation impacts the built environment by bringing together the direct tangible architectural changes and the more intangible social and experiential shifts brought by the phenomenon. As part of this discussion, the political and economic forces driving contemporary urban development within this globalised context are examined.

To develop and hone this holistic understanding of the tangible and intangible components of urban character, section 3.2 focuses on literature which accuses globalisation of contributing to and exacerbating what Auge describes as 'non-place' (1995: 63). This is seen as particularly due to the rejection of traditional

regional and national architecture in favour of a standardised universal approach to design. The section also examines debates within the literature that an increased homogenisation of the built environment risks making '*all cities and towns look more and more alike*' (Sepe 2017) due to this globalised approach to architecture.

Section 3.3 analyses the sources and drivers of the globalisation of built environments. For example, authors such as Auge 1995, Ellin 1996, Arefi 1999, King 2004; and Rapoport 2013 contend that a standardisation of influences, via an internationalisation of design precedents and images, have facilitated a globalised approach to architecture and therefore the marginalisation of more local influences like urban character. In addition, King 2004 and Faulconbridge 2009 argue that this is compounded by methods like CAD (computer-aided design) software and designing at a distance. This globalised approach to architecture has also supercharged the commercial dominance of built environment processes, according to a broad consensus of literature (McLeod 2002; King 2004; Sklair 2006; Zanetti 2006; Piotrowski 2008; Eldemery 2009; El Zeini 2017). This section therefore briefly examines the political and economic factors dominating urban development within the globalisation paradigm, and the resulting outcomes on built environments.

The final section of the chapter, 3.4, looks at the counter arguments concerning charges that globalisation is solely a force acting to dilute or destroy unique place identity. Analysis is made of debates suggesting that the phenomenon can also contribute to the creation of new urban identities, potentially complimenting and augmenting existing and traditional (El Zeini 2017; Jarratt *et al* 2019; Majerska-Paubicka 2020).

The influence of post-construction use of globalised design by people is also examined to assess the extent to which the social production of place impacts on architecture; that is how the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character, discussed in Chapter Two, affect the built environment (Thrift 2000; Jacobs 2006; Faulconbridge 2009). Majerska-Paubicka (2020) argues that architectural design can assume new meaning due to the potential of a hybridisation of a mix of cultural influences, as well as a

detachment from a local context stemming from a globalised approach to the built environment. The debates surrounding this hybridisation and indigenisation are intrinsic to the examination of the interplay between tangible and intangible components of urban character, and therefore form the core of this study's analysis of, and research contribution to, the ways in which the perceptions of a city's identity are formed and impacted, and the processes by which this evolves. Moreover, an understanding of the evolutionary process of urban character aids the understanding which this thesis aims to develop of how the concept is identified and created in new built environments, potentially including, and resulting from a globalised approach to architecture.

3.2 The Loss of Meaning and Urban Identity in a Globalising World

3.2.1 The Globalisation of Architectural Production and the Loss of the Uniqueness of Cities

According to Ellin (1996), built environments are intrinsically linked to globalisation. Ley argues that the phenomenon has resulted in the importance of place being diminished with the flow of people, ideas and capital resulting in an urban landscape which has become "*the product of an increasingly corporate society, [with] the planning and design of the modern city...a blueprint for placelessness, of anonymous, impersonal spaces, massive structures and automobile throughways*" (1987: 42-3, cited in Ellin 1996: 16). Furthermore, there is a broad consensus in urban studies literature (Ellin 1996; King 2004; Sklair 2006; Eldemery 2009; El Zeini 2017) that argues that the acceleration of the globalisation of architectural production from the mid-20th century onwards exacerbated this placelessness. This is therefore important to the study's analysis of the impacts of globalisation on urban character via built environment processes concerning planning, policy, and design.

The effects of globalisation on contemporary living are commonly associated with trade and commerce, and the freer and more widespread movement of people around the world to facilitate this. This increased international mobility of trade and people influence many other aspects of society, including that of

the built environment, where, according to Eldemery, the '*global culture of design is supported by architects who study what other architects are creating, no matter where*' (2009: 345). Therefore, an examination of the reasons why there has been a globalisation of architecture and urban design, how these influences are manifesting in the built environment via such players as the Global Intelligence Corps (GIC)⁵ (Rimmer 1991, cited in Rapoport 2013), as well as the practice of '*designing at a distance*' (Faulconbridge 2009) - whereby designers are not based in the locality or often even the country of the project - is needed to understand how this impacts on the role of urban character in cities. How globalised design is affected by, and affects, procedural and practical concerns resulting from local influences and needs such as planning requirements via political and economic considerations and agendas, is also required for this research to fully assess the impact such globalised design is having on the identity and character of cities.

As part of this assessment, focus on how international architecture travels and is '*put in its place*' (Faulconbridge 2009: 2551); that is how it embeds in the physical, social, economic, and wider culture of a city through such processes as hybridisation and indigenisation of design (Lippard 1997; King 2004) is needed. The influence brought by what local design expectations see as appropriate, also helps the research's understanding of how these elements of globalised architectural production contribute to, or detract from, the urban character of cities. The issues and drivers of globalised architecture's role in symbolising wealth creation and the adoption of Western neoliberal political and economic agendas, also informs the research. For example, Rapoport says that there is often an active rejection of local architectural practices. She argues that the design ideas of these local practices are frequently ignored in favour of GIC ostentation and its perceived '*kudos*' (2013: 112).

⁵ The GIC is a small number of architectural firms based mainly in North America and Western Europe. These have captured a significant section of the international market in sustainable masterplan design. They therefore exert a globally influential role through the dissemination of their ideas leading to a standardisation of design in this sector (Rapoport 2013).

3.2.2 Globalised Architecture and its Sources

Globalised architecture can be seen as an aspect of what has already been discussed in Chapter Two as *'inauthentic'* place-making in respect of Jacques Ellul's work (Ellul 1967) concerning an overly concentrated focus on technique and functional planning. However, the causes and motivations for this approach to the built environment stem from a wider failure of those involved in the design processes to appreciate, or have a desire to engage with, or be instructed to engage with, the urban character of place. This engagement with urban character is achieved through a design understanding of the local cultural, social, historical, and aesthetic influences particular to where the design is to be realised. This failure is articulated by Eldemery: *'Architects working in the ivory tower of their rational dreams produce architecture that is universally applicable but lacking in truth and relevance, as it is no longer supported by a corresponding cultural identity'* (2009: 347). This debate concerning the globalisation of the built environment is often polarised, with architectural theorists seeing it as either a useful and natural evolution of society and a phenomenon bringing progress and diversity, or as a driver for an unpalatable homogenisation of architecture and urban design (El-Husseiny 2004). These arguments therefore provide a balanced insight for the research's examination of the ways in which globalised approaches to the built environment are cognisant of local factors and context, and how these are incorporated or ignored by the international forces driving architecture and urban design. This therefore helps address the study's third research question concerning the factors impacting urban character.

In many ways the issues raised by the contemporary globalisation of the built environment echo those concerning the phenomenon's initial partner of modernism in the 20th century. For example, as already highlighted, modernism, like globalisation, was criticised for homogenising the built environment, and as being inappropriate as it ignored architecture's role in creating the specific identities and character of cities by rejecting regional and national architectural traditions, and with this the marginalisation of design influences such as urban character (Ellin 1996; King 2004; Smith 2008; Verbes 2015). Parallels between

globalisation and modernism can also be drawn regarding the dominant role of economics as a key driver in shaping the built environment. It is economic considerations which take primacy, rather than the more unique influences of holistic design elements like urban character (Ellin 1996; King 2004) which create emotional links that tell a story which, as Anholt says, '*offers an insight into the place and people*' (2010). These tensions between what can be seen as more generic and non-place-specific approaches to the built environment found in globalisation, and methods more rooted in historical architectural tradition cognisant of the broader and specific socio-cultural factors of place, are central to informing this thesis's examination of urban character's identification and role in contemporary built environment processes.

3.3 The Drivers of Globalisation in the Built Environment

3.3.1 A Standardising of Design Influences

The drivers and sources of the globalising of architectural production can be seen through the identification of a number of developments which have led to the standardisation of influences, methods, and technologies. For example, the internationalisation of design images and precedents, trade, information, technology, CAD methods, the dispersal of design expertise around the world, and the use of international design competitions (King 2004). There has also been an internationalisation of architectural theory (ibid). There is a broad consensus in the literature that these developments in technologies and methods have facilitated architectural homogenisation and the creation of non-places - so called due to their lack of meaning in the classic sense - such as airports, supermarkets, and shopping malls (Iberlings 1998; Auge 1995; Arefi 1999; King 2004; Verbes 2015). Therefore, the methods of, and influences on, urban design have shifted away from the more intuitive, creative, and locally expressive responses of designers to become a more scientific process based on functionalism and corporate identity, as seen during globalisation's forerunner, modernism (Colquhoun 1969; Ellin 1996; King 2004). The research will therefore further examine how this shift towards more internationally standardised influences impacts on urban character in built environment design. The study is

also informed by how these new methods and influences of a globalised approach potentially contribute to a reversal of homogenisation and express the '*synthesis of different elements*', highlighted by theorists like Pieterse (1995, cited in King 2004: 32).

3.3.2 The Corporate Drivers of Urban Development

As discussed in detail in Chapter Two, corporate and commercial agendas are one of the major drivers of the built environment generally, and this is heightened with globalisation and its representation in urban design. Sklair states, '*...the agents and institutions of the transnational capitalist class have increasingly come to define the times, places and audiences that make buildings, spaces, and architecture...*' (2006: 21). According to Sklair it is the transnational capitalist class (TCC) that are the dominant drivers of this overtly commercial globalisation and the production and representation of architecture, particularly that of the iconic brand of design. Without this corporate sector however, he contends, it is unlikely that many of the large-scale architectural projects would be realised given the finances involved (ibid). This capitalist agenda driving the globalisation of place cites '*urban boosterism*' as its justification and rationale (ibid: 38). This is a powerful narrative and one which political actors find hard to resist as it is perceived as a potent economic catalyst, and therefore enjoys '*primacy*' (Clark and Kearns 2016: 2) in the hierarchy of urban development. This 'boosterism' underpins the modern approach to the political economy of urban policy and development, to the extent that it has led to urban regeneration now appearing '*to be at the mercy of capitalists*', according to Pugalís and McGuinness (2013: 351).

It is this dominant neo-liberal ideology which brings a transformation from urban managerialism to urban entrepreneurialism (Harvey 1989; McLeod (2002). Here urban policy switches from Keynesian economics and a political aim of resource redistribution and public service provision to urban economics led by private enterprise and an associated '*demunicipalization and recommodification of social and economic life*' (Leitner 1990, cited in McLeod 2002: 604). Harvey (1989) argues that this urban entrepreneurialism is characterised by cities being 'liberated' from a principally local government management to the super-

charged laissez-faire approach brought by globalisation, where urban policy is largely dominated by business interests and realised via public-private partnerships. This illustrates the ideological shift away from redistributive urban governance to a competitive entrepreneurialism and the transition from ‘*a politics of income redistribution [to] a politics of growth*’ (Hall and Hubbard 1996: 155, cited in McLeod 2002).

Under urban entrepreneurialism, a more business-like approach is adopted by the public sector (Chaplin 2000; Moulaert et al. 2003, cited in Doucet 2013; Lennon 2014). As part of this new approach, local government forms partnerships with private companies and organisations; the aim being economic regeneration which also help cities to climb the urban hierarchy and become more integrated into global city networks (MacLeod, 2002; Lehrer and Laidley, 2008, cited in Doucet 2013). More specifically, Swyngedouw *et al* (2002) contend that the primary goal is the improvement of city tax basis through a socio-spatial and economic reorganisation of metropolitan space (ibid: 552). This urban policy approach requires that municipal governments must go beyond managing urban development and become proactive in pursuing ‘*footloose capital*’ (Sairinen and Kumpulainen 2006, cited in Doucet 2013: 2038).

As discussed in Chapter Four, Lennon (2014) highlights the effects of this shift, with cities being left to fend for themselves economically to a greater extent, rather than rely on national government. Lennon argues that had Glasgow not adopted this entrepreneurial approach brought by globalisation, it would have suffered further economic hardship (2014). Indeed, this shift to urban entrepreneurialism has had a profound influence on Glasgow, with the city embracing an approach to urban regeneration which sought to cultivate private developer-led projects as part of its post-industrial repurposing and rebranding (Zanetti 2006; Tiesdell 2009; Lennon 2014). A particular aspect of this shift is high-profile flagship projects like convention centres and festivals, often aimed at leisure and business tourists rather than citizens (MacLeod 2002). This aspect of entrepreneurialism is particularly apparent within the globalised urban development of Glasgow from the 1980s onwards, and more especially in sub-case Study Area 2. This is therefore examined in detail in Chapters Four and Five.

This globalised commercial agenda creates urban environments which Hitchcock argues are the ‘Coca-Cola’ of architecture (1951, cited in Adam 2008: 75), in that the buildings produced do not identify or represent the place and culture in which they are built. It is this neoliberal discourse and practice at play in contemporary urban thinking, and its preoccupation with the economic benefits of urban design and architecture, that informs the study’s examination of the arguments for the benefits of a more holistic approach through the integration of urban character. While recognising the value and contribution of the built environment to the economics of cities, it is important, as Sepe and Pitt contend, to go beyond this narrow focus and understand how cities can achieve distinctive design, reflective of their character and uniqueness and which can contribute to the social capital and fabric of a place (2014).

3.3.3 City Branding and a Revanchist Political Economy

Accompanying this shift to urban entrepreneurialism is a focus on place-marketing and the ‘*imageable city*’ (Mitchell 1995:118, cited in McLeod 2002: 608) for the purposes of attracting global capital and business and leisure tourism. Here, the concept of ‘*brand differentiation*’ (Smith 2008: 75) and symbolic modernity highlighted in the literature as being sought by these neoliberal agendas conversely lead to cityscapes which are repetitious and lacking urban distinctiveness (ibid). Within the context of the globalisation of architecture this pursuit of brand differentiation is of particular relevance, as in order for cities to succeed commercially ‘*destinations must agree upon and clarify a sense of place which makes their locales distinctive and different from others*’ (Jarratt *et al* 2019). A revanchist political economy becomes a strand of controlling and purifying urban environments in order to choreograph and maintain this new economic and political paradigm of metropolitan purpose (McLeod 2002) based on brand. In seeking ways to react to the deindustrialisation and globalisation of the 1970s and 80s, along with the parallel financial asphyxiation of municipal funding, many Western cities embraced a form of governance based on public-private coalitions. Generally, the financial risk of these partnerships was on the public, rather than private, purse (Waite, cited in Kintrea and Madgin 2019). Here, the aim was to regenerate and reimagine derelict industrial areas. These were to be ‘*scrubbed*

clean' (McLeod 2002:605) both in terms of delivering gleaming built environments, and demographically in relation to those deemed socially and financially unsuitable adornments for such '*new urban aesthetics*' (ibid: 605).

This aspect of urban identity as a brand, will therefore be examined to understand the role of urban character in the creation of cities seeking form expressive of their uniqueness aimed at attracting and retaining multinational corporations. This guides the research in the examination of the theory and motivation behind these built environment processes. This is especially important to the study's understanding of the role and incorporation of urban character within the globalised political economics driving cities. For example, it leads the research to analyse if, and in what ways, the concept is used in urban strategies which seek the seemingly contradictory goals of attracting international corporations, and their preferred standardised approach to built environments, and citizens, while at the same time developing distinctive urban identity based on the city components as a whole.

3.3.4 'Successful' Architecture

As the dominant influence on the built form of cities, the corporate capitalism of Western companies has come to determine, with the acceptance and compliance of other regions of the world such as Asia, what 'successful' architecture should look like (King 2004; Eldemery 2009; Faulconbridge 2009; Rapoport 2013). In effect they have become privileged speakers on the built environment. This architecture is often welcomed as a sign of modernity and connection to the world, not just by corporate clients but by citizens more generally. For example, asked about Taipei's Shin Kong Tower office development, a respondent enthused: '*It's modern, international, and gives us hope*' (King 2004: 19).

Clients also see this corporate international architecture as a way of symbolising that a country or city has joined the Western model of capitalism, with skyscrapers in particular being seen as '*a globally competitive display of economic virility and political power*' (Jacobs 2006: 6), and with 'international

style' architecture used to emphasise a client's corporate success (Faulconbridge 2009). These designs are often heavily influenced by the clientele who are particular in specifying design requirements and actively seek Western firms that will deliver this international, rather than local, style (Faulconbridge 2009; Rapoport 2013.). This is exacerbated and facilitated by international architectural practices admitting that their '*...work is not really contextual*' and that they are not concerned with embedding their buildings within the local context (Faulconbridge 2009: 2543). This willingness to bend to the wishes of the corporate client is unsurprising given that many theorists, as has been discussed in Chapter Two, criticise the mainstream architectural profession for being in the payroll of capitalism and therefore unable or unwilling to respond to the broader needs of cities (Cuff 1991; Ellin 1996; Piotrowski 2008). As Larson argues, '*architects work in a state of heteronomy, having to defer to the client and their demands rather than working as autonomous artisans*' (Larson 1993, cited in Faulconbridge 2009: 2543).

Again, as with the similarities highlighted between modernism and globalisation's homogenising impacts on built environment design, parallels can be drawn between the approach of architecture practices involved in '*designing at a distance*' (Faulconbridge 2009) and corporate clients seeking to influence design professionals to deliver architecture purposely homogenised to reflect their perceptions of corporate success (King 2004; Jacobs 2006; Rapoport 2013). Indeed, this over reliance and adherence to multi-national corporate clients has led to a mirroring of modernism's approach of producing 'object' buildings, rather than buildings informed by urban character and the specificities of architectural identity. This is at the expense of the creation of buildings designed to enhance the wider urban fabric and contribute more to cities than separate structures solely concerned with themselves (Cullen 1961; Frampton 1983; Ellin 1996; Sanders and Baker 2016).

The accusations highlighted earlier in Chapter Two concerning '*gimmicky*' architecture which is strongly conceptual but lacking engagement with, and an understanding of, the '*fine grain or culture of the locality*' (Evans, *et al.* 2011: 40) becomes evident, and therefore, as with modernism, so does the marginalisation of local urban character's informing of the built environment.

The reprise of the effects of modernism on urban identity, along with an acquiescence to the dominance of generic corporate landscapes, informs the study's examination of whether cities are, as the broad body of literature cited argues, losing their distinctive urban form due to a globalised approach to the built environment.

3.3.5 Facilitating a Globalised Approach to the Built Environment

According to Sklair (2006) this perception and pursuit of how success should be architecturally represented adds to the global homogenisation of the built environment. He argues that Western architectural ideals are replicated around numerous parts of the world (ibid). Aiding this process are the technological advances which make it possible for design companies to '*design at distance*' (Faulconbridge 2009: 2541) using technologies such as CAD software. This often results in more standardisation and a loss of regional identity due to preferences for similar building methods, materials, and styles (often house styles) being applied (Eldemery 2009).

However, arguments for the benefits of such technology as a way of potentially creating more diverse built environments are also advocated. For example, Verbes suggests that '*the power of design technology today is its potency to create architectural differentiation*' (Verbes 2015: 29). Tombesi (2001) highlights that many architects, particularly those known as star-architects, say that without tools like CAD they would have been unable to design their more iconic buildings. Whether these computer-aided buildings do in fact create urban distinctiveness and '*assist us in improving our understanding of the relationship between built form and culture through identification of pertinent elements in the built environment*' (Eldemery 2009: 347) is moot. According to Sklair this is particularly so, given that where architects make such iconic designs others attempt to create buildings which resemble and emulate them, thereby contributing to repetitious and homogeneous built environments (2006).

However, Eldemery (2009) cites the extension of the Prophet's Holy Mosque (see figure 3.2) in Medina as an example of the potential positives of globalised

architectural design and production, and to an extent supports the assertions of Tombesi (2001) and Verbes (2015) concerning modern technology. This project used advanced technology to produce a building which linked to the ‘*local roots of identity*’ (Eldemery 2009: 349). The building mixed modern technology with a highly culturally sensitive project which incorporated modern functionality with technological innovations reflecting the symbolism of place identity and respected the ‘*locality of the Islamic style and heritage*’ (ibid). Such examples and debates therefore inform this study’s examination of globalisation as a force and facilitator in the creation, rather than destruction, of place identity and urban character.

FIGURE: 3.1 UMBRELLAS ON THE PIAZZA OF THE PROPHET’S HOLY MOSQUE IN MEDINA, SA.

Figure 3.1 Umbrellas on Piazza Medina 1

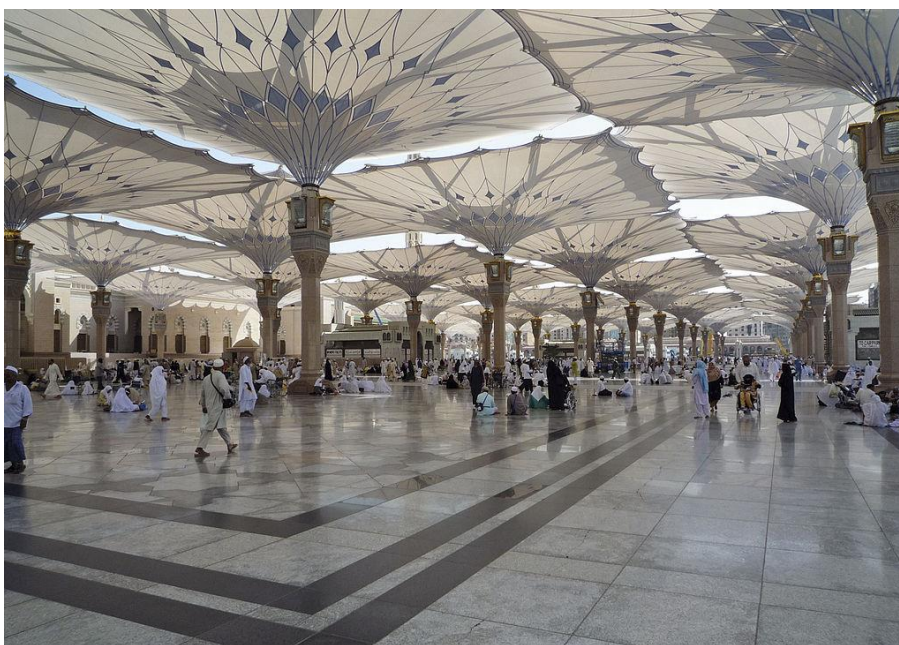


Image author: Sekretärin

3.3.6 Transnational Practices

Nevertheless, the broad consensus within the field of urban studies is that these tools of globalisation have had a homogeneous impact on architectural production. This being facilitated and exacerbated by transnational practices, and in particular by the Global Intelligence Corporations (GIC) (Rimmer 1991, cited in Rapoport 2013) - see section 3.2.2. Rapoport has considered the globally

influential role of these firms as they disseminate their ideas around an international model of sustainable urbanism which has led to a standardisation of designs in this sector (ibid). This relatively small number of practices has a limited palette of design ideas and a limited stock of design precedents, with these ideas being further perpetuated through a tendency for employees to circulate between these companies for employment (ibid).

Rapoport's study demonstrates the similarities between international masterplans and individual high profile 'iconic' architecture in the approach of clients seeking '*brand differentiation and symbolic modernity*' (Adam 2008: 75). This approach is at the expense of local design ideas, and a proliferation of an international style which, ironically, increases the homogeneity of cities (ibid). However, there is evidence to suggest that there is an impact from the role of local delivery architects and contractors used by such GIC firms that can, to a limited extent, bring more local influences to the final outcomes of this practice of '*designing at a distance*' (Faulconbridge 2009: 2541). This is therefore important to this study's understanding of how globalised architecture, seen as lacking a place-specific approach and the influences of the components of urban character, sits within local urban landscapes, and the extent to which it is perceived as being particular to that place. Moreover, the ways and extent to which local built environment processes impact international design steers this research to examine the specific techniques and approaches that can mitigate globalised homogeneity. This guides the study to analyse how architectural production can be hybridised and embedded so that the components of local urban character are, to some extent, incorporated to create more place-specific design.

3.4 Globalisation's Contribution to Urban Identity

3.4.1 Localising the Global

As discussed, it is also argued that the globalisation of architectural production does not inevitably result in greater homogeneity of the built environment

(Tombesi 2001; Verbes 2015.). Further to this, both Jacobs (2006) and Faulconbridge (2009) in particular examine such counter claims. Faulconbridge does this through an exposition of the regulation and governance of transnational firms and the impact of local professionals involved in the design and build process, as well as through the social production of architecture. This social production concerns how users shape the buildings once they are inhabited, and asks whether, if once these buildings are produced, they become more appropriate for the cultural, economic, and political contexts of the city (Faulconbridge 2009). Although many firms do not express a concern with embedding their work in the context of an architectural tradition via the understanding and experience of local conditions and precedents, Faulconbridge suggests that buildings are nevertheless subject to a significant degree of local influences. These include, building codes and regulations, the use of local building contractors and other professionals (ibid). Faulconbridge sees the impact of these *in situ* design influences as adapting design, rather than fundamentally changing it (2009) but which can nevertheless have significant impacts. This debate is therefore useful in guiding the study in examining the level of impact that the localised aspects of a globalised approach to design have in reducing the generic effects of such designs, and if, and to what degree, urban character finds a role through these local influences.

Further dissent regarding the perception that the distinctiveness of cities is being eroded by globalisation, comes from Nigel Thrift. Thrift disagrees that all cities are '*instants of global space flows*', or that cities are necessarily becoming more homogenised and inauthentic (Thrift, cited in Jacobs 2006: 10). Again, this argument, similar to some extent to Faulconbridge's, is based on the social interactive aspects of architecture or the '*networks of associations between unlike actors*' (ibid: 10) and how this might provide a different perception of the built environment.

Jenkins also argues against the idea that cities are becoming more homogeneous: '*...we need to dispel the myth of buildings as being static, closed, and materially constant*' (Jenkins, cited in Jacobs 2006: 11). Here Jenkins cites Law and Mol regarding the co-production of materiality: '*When we look at the*

social, we are also looking at the production of materiality. And when we look at materials, we are witnessing the production of the social' (ibid: 11). This argument is important to the study as it suggests a two-way process in understanding a building's identity which involves an interplay between materiality and its social and experiential aspects. This further broadens the concept of urban character beyond the restrictive definitions of what components are involved in creating place through the physicality of buildings, and links to the discussion in Chapter Two regarding the relationships between the physical and non-physical elements of place identity. Furthermore, discussion related to the interplay between the tangible and intangible influences on place guide the study's objective to test the tensions and interplay between these aspects of urban character, in order to identify a more holistic approach to city creation and identity. Law and Mol's (cited in Jacobs 2006: 11) co-production of materiality is especially important to the study. This concept steers the research's approach in the second research question related to the identification of architectural outcomes resulting from the interplay between urban character's physical and non-physical components, and how this can be seen as integral to the uniqueness of a city's identity.

3.4.2 Globalisation and the Hybridisation of the City

Globalisation has been crucial in determining the role and significance of architecture in people's lives, including its form and function, according to Majerska-Paubicka (2020). These impacts of globalisation are argued as being apparent '*in the alteration of architectural media and aesthetics, as well as in the change in perception and interpretation of architectural message'* (ibid:2). It is due to globalisation's approach of seeing the nationality of those creating and using built environments as '*of secondary significance'* (ibid:2) which results in architectural design taking on new meaning from a '*cultural mixture and detachment from the context, tradition and often cultural roots'* (ibid). Framed within this globalised approach, the components of urban character in concepts like distinctiveness, history and meaning in place, remain of fundamental importance but are '*delicate factors in urbanism'* (ibid) which like society more generally, are influenced and challenged by everchanging economic, socio-cultural, and technological forces.

This delicacy is highlighted in contemporary architecture's attempts to find a balance between the influences of globalisation and regionalism (ibid). Sited between traditional and modern influences, contemporary architecture is, argues Majeska-Paubicka, a '*reaction to design universalism, uniformity, stereotypes and simplifications in the shaping of space*' (2020:6). While the co-existence of contemporary architecture with regional and existing is argued as possible, provided that the new is cognisant of, and takes design reference from, the existing built environment and its spatial order, this can in reality be difficult to achieve (ibid; Sanders and Baker 2016). Nevertheless, globalising forces are argued as being positive for the character of cities through the phenomenon's potential as a conduit for the hybridisation of culture and its indigenisation; that being the ways in which the movement of people, ideas, cultures, *etcetera*, translates, transforms, and embeds in a place (El Zeini 2017; Cheshmehzangi 2020; Majerska-Paubicka 2020). This view is further posited as being a hybridisation of elements which have the potential to be a dynamic force delivering something new, and as already highlighted, a '*synthesis of different elements*' (Pieterse 1995, cited in King 2004: 32). This directs the study to this 'synthesis' being reflected through the inclusion and expression of the multi-faceted elements of a city's tangible and intangible urban character in built environment processes.

Furthermore, this hybridisation is helpful to this study's examination of city homogeneity stemming from globalised architectural production. The concept steers a focus to the analysis of localised physical and social influences in producing character-driven urban form within the practical requirements and imperatives of a globalised economy. This includes the ways in which such influences enter built environment processes. Moreover, this character-led focus is important to this research in that, as highlighted, such an approach recognises the essential value of expressing the life of a particular world's characteristics in places. This focus acts as a reference for informing design through the input of people who live and use a city on a social, economic, and cultural level (Sepe and Pitt 2014), but whose needs and aspirations, this study contends, are currently often overshadowed due to the dominant and narrow interests of multi-national corporations and institutions.

3.4.3 Globalisation and the New Identity of Place

As has been discussed, the broad consensus in the field of urban studies is that the identity of cities is not static but is in a constant state of flux and evolution reflecting society, socio-culturally and economically (Lynch 1960; Relph 1976; Sepe and Pitt 2014; Jarratt *et al* 2019; Cheshmehzangi 2020). Globalisation, as Cheshmehzangi states, already *'acts as a major force in restructuring our cities, reshaping them, and revamping them with old and new identities'* (2020: 16). As a key driver in urban evolution, the impacts of globalisation are considered by the literature as not only *'an expression that is directly associated with a loss of cultural identity'* (El Zeini 2017). There is also recognition of the potential for the phenomenon to bring new dimensions and identity to cities. Lippard argues that *'rather than mass tourism and globalisation stripping areas of their sense of place, more complex processes may also be at work which might constitute the evolution of a new sense of place which reflects modern-day mobilities and a process of hybridisation'* (Lippard 1997, cited in Jarratt *et al* 2019: 409).

El Zeini argues that although globalisation is accused of being a significant reason for the loss of city identity, this can be defended as the *'same openness to global design approaches in design enlarged the designers' capability to be engaged and be visually cultured'* (2017: 2). It is, according to El Zeini, the standardisation of design that should be rejected as it is this which *'in itself is against the core of identity'* (ibid: 2). Therefore, within the literature there is debate that globalisation, and its practices and culture, have the potential to provide new ideas to built environment processes and in fact contribute to a city's contemporary urban character as it evolves and changes. For example, as Short highlights, *'...globalising practices such as the hosting of mega events, the siting of urban spectaculars, the rewriting of the city and its representation to a world of global flows'* are central in the processes of *'socio-spatial transformation'* (Short 2004: 7, cited in Cheshmehzangi 2020: 16).

Furthermore, these debates surrounding the positive contribution potential of globalisation echo Kenneth Frampton's intent regarding Critical Regionalism as a bridge connecting urban identity with global vision, as discussed in Chapter Two.

Indeed, via the necessity of sustainable development, Majerska-Paubicka argues that there is the possibility to *'enter into a dialogue of mutual respect, which is the condition for the coexistence of local, regional and global values'* (2020:7). This allows for an exchange of values between the contemporary cultural and economic which *'in turn leads to the spiritual and material development [that] generates certain needs which influence the requirements set in relation to the living environment, including architecture'* (ibid: 7). This helps the research's understanding of the complex processes and influences at work in the shaping and contemporising of urban character, along with the interplay which takes place between the tangible and intangible components of the concept through such processes as socio-cultural and economic hybridisation and the ways in which this impacts built environment outcomes. These impacts of globalisation on the built environment are profound and are therefore at the heart of this study. The ways in which the phenomenon effects how cities look, and how people and place interact in the physical shaping of the built environment, is therefore central to the research's understanding of urban character.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the literature concerning the impacts of globalisation on built environment processes. This has been done in relation to how the role of urban character has been affected by the phenomenon. There is consensus in the literature that globalisation has caused a shift away from a place-specific approach to the creation of built environments that are more standardised and generic. There is broad agreement that this has resulted in the increased dominance of corporate influence, and the determining of the built environment's form through narrow commercial lenses. The dominance of these neoliberal drivers is seen as being at the expense and marginalisation of the inclusion of the socio-cultural components of urban character in design processes, resulting, at least in part, from an increasing disconnect between architectural theory and practice due to the dominant neoliberal drivers of the political economy of urban development.

The sources and drivers of the globalising of architectural theory and production were also analysed. A number of authors argue that a standardisation of the

production processes of built environments has led to a dilution of place distinctiveness. The use of CAD software methods, and the internationalisation, and therefore standardisation, of design images and precedents, and project competitions, has facilitated a growing homogenisation of architectural outcomes. This homogenisation has been further driven by a relatively small number of European and North American transnational practices which have replicated architectural designs and masterplans around the world, with these designs being drawn from a limited palette of ideas. Authors such as King (2004), Sklair (2006) and Rapoport (2013) identify a particular impact of this as being in contributing to the Westernisation of what is seen as architecture representing and projecting, largely corporate, success. These practical and technical reasons help the study understand the arguments that distinctive place identity is being eroded. They provide a framework for the analysis of the impacts of globalisation and allow the scrutinising of these within the context of the research case study. This helps address the third research question related to factors impacting urban character and how these drive, constrain or prevent the concept's role by providing examples with which to measure the effects of globalised approaches to built environment processes.

Although the weight of evidence from the literature suggests that globalisation is eroding urban identity, a range of authors counter this assertion. The use of local construction companies and their methods, along with approaches taken by other built environment professions, as well as local planning codes and regulations, are offered as examples of where international design is localised through the practical aspects of project delivery (Faulconbridge 2009). These practical elements of built environment processes are seen to have some impact, particularly when combined with the social production of space (ibid). These localising factors are important as this research uses a case study with a built environment consisting of what, *prima facie*, appears to be a particularly international landscape of traditional and contemporary architecture and urban design. Therefore, such localising factors give potential insight as to the extent to which, and by what processes, international design embeds in place. This further guides the study in addressing the third research question through an analysis of the impact of globalisation on urban character at different points in a city's evolution. These factors provide insight into how the forces of

globalisation change a city over time and are particularly useful as they are highly specific and local processes.

These local factors also assist in approaching the second research question concerned with how the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character result in architectural outcomes. The ways in which official local built environment processes, such as planning and construction methods, combine and are influenced by local social demands and expectations, help to highlight how these international designs are impacted in particular cities through tangible and intangible components. This draws out if, and how, urban character is incorporated via these official processes and social influences. This is particularly interesting to the study as it gives insight into how architecture 'travels' and contextualises in place.

This social production of space is crucial to this research as it is argued as being a key element in localising globalised architectural production. This aspect of urban character suggests that the ways in which a building is used post construction, via local cultures, habits, and traditions, can help to embed a built environment in place. These social components of urban character are augmented by what the literature terms hybridisation. Hybridisation is posited as a process by which the urban character of cities can benefit from a fusion and indigenisation of the multinational influences of people, ideas, cultures, and so on, to create new urban identity. The concept of hybridisation appears to have a more substantive impact on place identity than those of the practical delivery of projects. This is of particular help to this thesis's aim of analysing the interplay between the components of urban character and how this influences the perceptions of built environment outcomes of design, planning, and associated professions, and their understanding of the ways in which key forces, like globalisation, impact on urban character in Glasgow. The interplay between these globally influenced socio-cultural components of place, and the more tangible elements, such as international architectural materiality and design, and how this is evidenced in architectural outcomes, is central to the research's contribution to a more holistic encapsulation and understanding of urban character.

Having analysed the literature concerning the impacts of globalisation on the urban character of built environments, Chapter Four will now examine the decisions and applications of planning and policy on the research's case study - the city of Glasgow. The focus of this analysis is from the immediate post-war period to the contemporary. This chapter will examine the themes highlighted in the literature within the context of the case study.

4. Chapter Four: Planning a Path to Place: Urban Policy and Planning in Glasgow

4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines planning and urban policy in the case study of Glasgow from the immediate post-war era to modern-day. The historic influences and contemporary issues underpinning attitudes and objectives, and the ways in which the city's urban character has been influenced by, and has influenced, planning and urban policy is critically analysed. The chapter builds on the themes discussed in the literature review and examines these in relation to the case study. This is essential to the research as it develops a better understanding of these themes within the specific context of Glasgow's place identity and its overall tangible and intangible urban character, including the ways in which this has evolved from 1945 through to the contemporary era.

Urban planning itself is a tool for the '*preparation of plans for and the regulation and management of towns, cities, and metropolitan regions*' (Inch and Huxley 2020: 82). It seeks to organise socio-spatial relations and is concerned with the economic, environmental, and social aspects of place and the ways in which these are distributed and governed (ibid). Lefebvre's spatial triad posits the interconnectedness of three considerations of space: representations of space; spatial practices; and spaces of representation (Lefebvre 1974; Watkins 2005). *Spatial practices* involve the practical socio-spatial organisation, regulation, and production of space, as detailed above by Inch and Huxley (2020). Closely associated with spatial practices is Lefebvre's *representations of space*, which again deals with space as a practical concept with which to organise and direct spatial relations. This is how space is conceived and used within the context of tools like design, via maps, plans and drawings (ibid 2005). However, Lefebvre's concept of representational space is distinguished from these working definitions of spatial practices and representations of space (Neill 2004; Watkins 2005), more associated with the urban planning profession. Representational space is discussed as a process of cultural placemaking or '*place assembly*' and, as Liggett states, is '*...deeply*

symbolic and embedded culturally...It calls on shared experiences and interpretations...' (1995: 251, cited in Neill 2004: 12). These representational spaces are, according to Liggett, '*the loci of meaning in a culture*' (ibid: 12). Therefore, these approaches to, and concepts of, space and its planning, governance, use, and meaning are important to why urban policy and planning are significant to the analysis of urban character. They highlight both the practical concerns of planning, as well as the theoretical and more intangible focused on the experiential and meaning of place. These debates and ideas within planning therefore reflect and assist the thesis' holistic approach to urban character (Neill 2004). Planning acts as a practical and theoretical framework within which the study can examine the processes affecting how cities develop; predominately the physical design of the built environment and the socio-cultural considerations and imperatives that drive such design, and the discipline more widely. It is therefore necessary that planning acts as a central pillar for this research's examination of the holistic definition of urban character.

Together with the chapters reviewing the literature, policy and planning helps shape the study's research questions and address the aim of analysing the interplay between the components of urban character and how this influences the perceptions of built environment outcomes held by design, planning and associated professions, and their understanding of the ways in which key forces, like globalisation, impact on urban character in Glasgow. In doing this the chapter contextualises how urban policy and planning debates and decisions relating to the governance and implementation of the political, social and economic priorities of local and national governments, and those advising them, have shaped the case study's built environment, and particularly the sub-case study areas.

The ways in which these policy debates and decisions have been influenced by the forces informing and impacting the social and economic drivers, such as globalisation, will be examined to understand why the city looked the way it did at certain periods, and how such decisions have incrementally contributed to its overall contemporary architectural representation, and within this its identifiable urban character. Therefore, the analysis will guide the new research in approaching the thesis' questions focused on identifying urban character's

components; if and how the interplay between the concept's tangible and intangible elements results in architectural outcomes; and what factors impact this, and in what ways.

For example, as discussed in Chapter Two, the literature related to symbolism and the expression of a society through its built environment is a broad manifestation on the architectural fabric of a city and is a snapshot in time (Cullen 1961; Venturi 1972). It is based on factors such as fashion, wealth, economics, politics; it acts as a historical physical narrative of the forces that have shaped a city's past. Analysing such influences on Glasgow's built environment from a planning and policy perspective is important to an understanding of how such factors have determined the ways in which the city has responded to the challenges it has faced. In examining the historic and contemporary influences exerted on the case study through planning and urban policy, the new research will identify and analyse how these have affected the way the city looks and feels, and thereby its tangible and intangible urban character.

The chapter is in two parts. The first covers the period from 1945 to the beginning of the 1980s and focuses on the imperatives driving planning in Glasgow in the immediate post-war period, through to the appraisal of the built environment and its architectural heritage in the early 1970s. Section 4.2 analyses the competing plans for the renewal and restructuring of the city through policies aimed at zoning uses and the residential depopulating of the inner city. The attitude of planning policy and its aims of creating efficient, modern built environments which facilitated primarily the economic recovery of Glasgow, along with the top-down hierarchical approach of planning in achieving this, is also reviewed. This is done within the context of identifying the city's urban character and how these forces have impacted the concept's tangible and intangible components. Section 4.3 discusses the importance of a report by the key figure of Lord Esher concerning the conservation of the existing built environment, and how the city's architectural heritage could be used to inform the contextual creation of new architecture in Glasgow through the democratisation of planning.

The second part of the chapter analyses planning and urban policy from the 1980s onwards. Underpinning this is the rise of globalisation and the need for cities to compete internationally for financial investment and economic prosperity. Section 4.4 therefore focuses on the power relations at play in built environment processes. Analysis is made of the ways in which Glasgow responded to this competitive environment by using its tangible and intangible assets to tackle the city's post-industrial socio-economic decline to repurpose and reimage itself. Here the chapter also focuses on the economic and political agendas which helped shape the two sub-case study areas.

How planning and policy drove this repurposing of the city is examined in relation to how this has changed and evolved Glasgow's urban character. Planning's realignment and engagement with citizens via the democratisation of built environment processes and how this influenced Glasgow's urban character and its role, is analysed in section 4.5. The final section, 4.6, examines the continuation of the involvement and empowerment of people in architectural production, particularly as a result of the fundamental policy shift in the focus of planning from a place based to a contextualised placemaking approach. The impact of this shift and the involvement of citizens more directly, and thereby the more intangible aspects of urban character, along with the interplay between these and the physical architectural environment, is interrogated in relation to how this affects the contemporary built environment and its identity.

Together these analysis provide a basis for identifying urban character and its role within a policy and planning context. The themes emerging from this analysis guide the new research and helps it contribute to the understanding of the concept of urban character via this thematic framework. Considerations and decisions rooted in the city's historical and contemporary built environment steer the examination of how the theoretical debates and practical implementation of planning have impacted and informed urban character's role.

Part I: The Practical Imperatives of Post-War Planning and Restructuring

4.2 The Post-War Battle for Glasgow's Urban Character

4.2.1 Homogeneity and Renewal in the Built Environment

In the immediate post-war period Glasgow was preoccupied with rebuilding and replacing its urban fabric and economy, and with providing citizens with improved housing and communications infrastructure (CCG 1945; CVRP (Clyde Valley Regional Plan) 1946b; CCG 1951). This brought with it a focus on functionality and an expedient approach to the built environment, administered centrally and through a hierarchical top-down approach from politicians and planners (CCG 1945). Following the Second World War, Glasgow Corporation's Chief Engineer, Robert Bruce, published the influential: *First Planning Report to the Highways and Planning Committee of the Corporation of the City of Glasgow* (CCG 1945), known as the Bruce Report. While many aspects of this report were not implemented, largely due to rival plans from the Scottish Office-backed planner Patrick Abercrombie, as well as the plan's general scale and cost (CCG 1951) selected ideas from the report did nevertheless impact substantially on the physical form of the city (CCG 1945). The plan led directly to the establishing of Comprehensive Development Areas (CDAs) in the 1950s, which saw a *tabula rasa* approach to tackling issues concerning overcrowding and the generally poor condition of municipal housing stock (Urban 2018).

Control, order, and functional efficiency, rather than a desire to work more organically with the existing urban fabric, were at the heart of the Bruce Report:

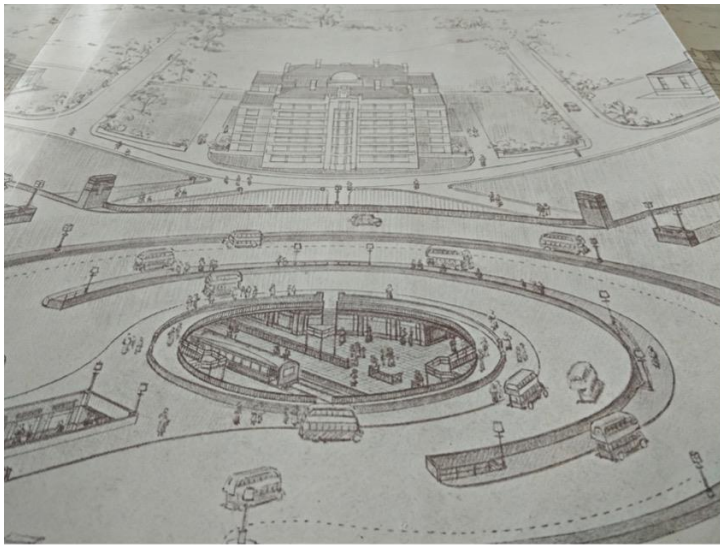
'Planning is an instrument, the skilful use of which can, in time, secure order out of disorder, efficiency in many spheres where efficiency cannot, under present conditions, be attained, and beauty which, in unplanned urban areas exists only by accident' - CCG 1945:

64

The perspective of the report was led principally by Glasgow's economic needs, stating that the requirements of industry must be: '*First and foremost*' (ibid: 64) and '*receive primary consideration in fashioning the planning policy...*' (ibid). Aspects of this approach to urbanism and the built environment were echoed in other policy documents, such as the Clyde Valley Regional Plan (CVRP 1946b) and the Glasgow Development Plan (CCG 1951). It was in these plans that the emergence of a homogeneity, or '*harmony*' (CVRP 1946b) as it was often referred to as, in Glasgow's urban planning was evident, influenced and facilitated, in part, by modernism and North American approaches to planning through land use zoning (CCG 1945; 1951). A standardisation of the appearance and style of the city was sought, not only through an aesthetic, but also at a functional level maximising the potential of a technology-driven capitalism where the city was increasingly seen as needing to facilitate the seamless movement of people to and from their employment (CCG 1945; CVRP 1946b). In support of this built environment efficiency and functionality the Bruce Report cited the estimated £70,000,000 per annum loss to New York City resulting from delays experienced by workers commuting to their employment (CCG 1945).

As part of this drive toward a built environment servicing the monetary needs of a post-war era where capitalism was increasingly the dominant impetus for a controlled and efficient urban environment, post-war planning policies in Glasgow sought homogeneity on a practical and aesthetic level (CCG 1945; CVRP 1946b). The Bruce Report bemoaned that: '*There is no homogeneity about the civic buildings in Glasgow with the result that they have little claim to dignity or to attention from the architectural viewpoint*' (CCG 1945: 52). This was to be rectified by the report's aim of ensuring that the new municipal buildings were planned as '*being one architectural conception*' (ibid: 52). It was this '*dignity*', along with terms like '*unitary*' and '*harmony*' (ibid) that formed a planning code for homogeneity that was to be realised through the modernist architectural and cultural era of the time (see Figures 4.1 and 4.2).

Figure 4.1: Illustration from the Bruce Report which sought an efficient modernity to facilitate the post-war economy of Glasgow



Source: Bruce Report 1945

Figure 4.2: Modernist tradition - a contemporary visualisation of how the Bruce Plan would have changed Glasgow city centre's predominantly Victorian urban fabric.



This approach to planning seeking a homogeneous and zoned built environment is important to the research as it highlights that policy was not nuanced and informed by the diverse needs and aspirations of citizens, or through an understanding, interpretation and contemporising of what the wider literature calls the '*fine grain*' (Evans, et al. 2011: 40) of the environmental context. It was the tangible aspects of urban character that were to the fore in planning, rather than the more intangible socio-cultural components. Furthermore,

planning policy in Glasgow reflected the broader post-war predisposition to modernism as a vehicle for achieving an architectural homogeneity and 'harmony'. This seeded a globalised approach to the built environment via the commercial imperatives of neoliberal capitalism as the dominant driver, again at the expense of the socio-cultural aspects of architecture, not just in Glasgow, but in urbanism more widely (Ellin 1996).

4.2.2 Removing the Intangibles

Both the Bruce Report and the Abercrombie plan had profound effects on Glasgow's existing, largely Victorian, urban character due to policies which sought to residentially depopulate its inner core, as well as remodel many key public buildings. Bruce planned to achieve this depopulation via the creation of large housing schemes on the city's periphery (CCG 1945), while Abercrombie's strategy advocated the construction of New Towns satelliting the city (CVRP 1946b).

Although geography was a source of conflict between the competing plans, coupled with the importance, or otherwise, of maintaining the size of the city's municipal population and the integrity of its administrative boundaries, both resettling approaches were in part realised with the city subjected to the creation of peripheral housing schemes and New Towns designed to drain away the inner core's population (CCG 1945; CVRP 1946b).

The implementation of these plans was through Comprehensive Development Areas (CDAs) (see Figure 4.3) initiated by the Glasgow Corporation in the late 1950s and which were officially ended in 1974 (Urban 2018). There were 29 of these CDAs planned which, had they all been realised, would have extended over around one-third of the city's nineteenth century built environment and totalled 118,500 flats (ibid). These CDAs, although only nine were approved, are important to the research as the resultant residential clearances deprived the inner core of elements of its intangible urban character, via the multifaceted interactions of those that once inhabited the city. Together the Bruce and Abercrombie plans and CDAs impacted profoundly on the case study's urban character, particularly regarding the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of the concept. This is therefore crucial to the study's

research in understanding how such interplay can both be impacted, and impact, the built environment through policy interventions and urban governance.

Figure 4.3: Anderston (city centre) CDA influenced by the Bruce Plan



Source: Author's Own

4.3 Preserving the Past with a View to the New

4.3.1 Future Proofing Urban Character

The key driver of planning policy during the immediate post-war period was unerringly economic, and the conservation of the existing architecture as a component of the city's urban character was confined mainly to buildings in neighbourhoods deemed of particular historic importance (CCG 1951). However, in the early 1970s the City Corporation engaged Lord Esher to undertake a general appraisal of building preservation. His report initiated the beginnings of a meaningful understanding and awareness of the city's architectural heritage and character, and how this could inform the future built environment (CCG 1971). Esher pointed out that it had been '*a point of pride by the city in seeking to destroy and build better*' (CCG 1971: 4). It was this *tabula rasa* attitude by the city planners which had resulted in the existing Victorian city centre being '*ruthlessly superimposed on its Georgian predecessor...*' (ibid: 1) due to the City Improvement Acts of the 1860s (Reed 1993). Furthermore, Esher's report argued

that due to *'a lack of public recognition that [Glasgow] was a fine city'* (CCG 1971: 5) it suffered the mutilation of its buildings more than any other city in Britain (ibid). Esher therefore drew attention, not only to the potential merits of the city's existing built heritage but began a shift towards a more inclusive and democratic involvement of citizens in built environment processes. Esher's intervention is critical for this research as it provided a basis for a significant change in attitude towards how the city perceived its built heritage and its importance. This was both in terms of an appreciation of architecture *per se*, but perhaps more importantly for this research, the potential economic benefits of the built environment, and within this the role of urban character.

The report drew attention to what Esher saw as the importance and merit of the city's architectural heritage and recommended much greater and stricter planning controls to protect the urban fabric (CCG 1971). He argued that a *'subjective mix of historical, architectural and environmental factors'* (ibid: 2) would inform his appraisal of the built heritage, and that the statutory lists resulting from this needed to *'ensure that future lists take more account of the townscape contribution of individual buildings and groups'* (ibid: 2). The qualities of buildings and their influence on the wider built environment, as argued by postmodernism's contextualisation and urban morphology discussed more generally in the literature in Chapter Two (Cullen 1961; Caliskan and Marshall 2011) was acknowledged. The report recognised that it is the interplay between the components of urban character, including the historical, architectural, and environmental, which create a city's urban character. This therefore supports the study's examination of a holistic approach to, and demonstrates the importance of, identifying urban character as a fusion of the architectural outcomes of the tangible and intangible components of the concept.

Furthermore, although Esher advocated that the urban fabric needed unity via architectural replication, there was also an appreciation of the importance of evolving Glasgow's cityscape and allowing the existing urban fabric to inform the creation of new buildings. Esher's advocacy of the preservation of architectural heritage was not due to a nostalgic want to replicate existing and historic built environments, but rather as a tool to inform and influence the expression of

local contemporary society, culturally, socially, and economically (CCG 1971). Therefore, Esher's work is essential to researching how urban character can be identified, and how the interplay between the concept's various contributing components shape and evolve the case study's built environment over time.

The report also argued for conservation areas, those being: '*areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*' (CCG 1971: 8). Esher saw the importance being to '*underline in the minds of residents the fact that they live in an area in which they, and the city as a whole, can take pride, and by joint action confidently improve*' (ibid: 8). His argument concerning the role of citizens being encouraged to appreciate and therefore preserve the built heritage challenged the norms within the planning process, and arguably indicated the beginnings of a democratisation of the post-war top-down hierarchical approach. Esher saw encouraging interest in, and the appreciation of, the built environment as a way of protecting the city from the past 'mistakes' of a *tabula rasa* approach. His advocacy of better engagement and understanding of planning reflected a wider movement at the time. The Skeffington Report, published in 1969, promoted the idea of participatory democracy, whereby the public was to become more active in planning decisions, rather than wholly abdicating such decision-making to political and built environment professionals (Glass 2017). This democratisation of planning again steers the study to examine the potential impacts brought by policy more open to the inclusion and effects of the intangible aspects of urban character. This is via the recognition of the direct input of people on built environment processes and lies at the heart of this study's analysis of a holistic understanding and identification of urban character and its role.

4.3.2 Recognising the Interplay of Urban Character's Components

The establishing of conservation areas in the city also drew together an audit of the tangible elements which contributed to Glasgow's character. Of particular interest to this research was the description of the business district between the city's Queen Street and Renfield Street, with Esher noting the: '*High Victorian banks and commercial palaces that give Glasgow its unique and powerful atmosphere*' (CCG 1971: 16). Here there was a recognition of a key aspect of the

study's research into the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character, with the report highlighting the atmosphere resulting from the tangible physical presence of buildings which speak of the city.

This audit of the city's physical environment was supported by the recommendation that a townscape study of the whole central area be undertaken, the aim being to analyse and illustrate as vividly as possible the character of the city centre (CCG 1971). Importantly for this research, the report argued that the study should make recommendations on details such as plot ratios, height controls and building materials. As Esher highlighted, without such recommendations it was '*no surprise that architects and planners in the recent past have made such an indifferent job of replacing its [the city centre's] component pieces*' (ibid: 19). This is therefore useful to the research as it highlights the importance of a deconstructive approach to identifying the components of urban character, as well as their impact on architectural outcomes embodying distinctive place.

The report further asserted that the townscape study must be holistic and encompass more than just aesthetic criteria to include the economic forces that determine urban decay. Esher's understanding of the importance and relevance of the specific components contributing to urban character such as scale, materials, and aesthetics, coupled with a need to examine other broader factors like the economy, is vital to this research as it demonstrated that a city's character results from the interplay between all its contributing components, and therefore needed to be defined in equally broad and dynamic terms.

Part II : Urban Renaissance and Globalisation

4.4 The Rise of the Competitive City

So far, this chapter has examined the impact of planning and urban policy on the case study's urban character through the lens of the, essentially practical, imperatives of post-war restructuring. However, from the 1980s onwards planning policy began to reflect the globalisation of urban development, and

with this a shift towards a focus on how the city would repurpose itself to meet the new challenges the phenomenon posed. This part of the chapter therefore examines how Glasgow's planning policy sought to meet these challenges via the use of its built environment. An analysis is made of the ways in which the city's tangible and intangible urban character became central to the city's response to the demands of globalisation, and to the contemporary economic and socio-cultural context more widely. Within this, the political and economic influences on the processes of urban development relating to Glasgow, and in particular the two sub case study areas within the city, will be examined. This is in order to understand how the architecture and urban design of these areas takes its contemporary form.

4.4.1 Power Relations and the Image Conscious City

Following the immediate post-war period there was an increasing awareness in urban policy of the need for Glasgow to compete with other cities, nationally and internationally, to secure and sustain its economic prosperity. The city looked in particular to the planning solutions being pursued by North American cities in their urban renewal programmes (CCG 1961). Representatives from the Scottish Office and the Glasgow Corporation undertook a fact-finding mission to a number of cities, including Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, to examine how the problems of urban centres were being tackled.

A key finding was that of the relationship between business and planning where the *'American businessman has become a very close partner of the whole city planning process'*, according to the report (CCG 1961: 21). The Scottish delegation was ambivalent about this partnership due to perceived narrow interests of business, but nevertheless the potential positive financial possibilities of private sector involvement were noted (ibid). Of particular interest to the delegation was the assertion by businesses in these North American cities that *'downtown' was finished due to out-of-town developments, unless these areas were invested in. The Scottish representatives were 'greatly impressed by the fundamental belief shown in the future of central areas by the determination to achieve new forms of activity and circulation in them...'* (ibid: 21).

Contrasting the American and Scottish approaches to the involvement and influence of the business community and the public in the planning process, the delegation highlighted that since business interests were instrumental in promoting downtown redevelopments and providing the finances, there was little opposition to the projects. In a blurring of who wields the greatest power and authority, the Mission's report stated that it found it difficult to determine '*which was the dog and which the tail*' (ibid: 21) and noted that in seeking clarification of this from a secretary of the Local Citizens' Association, the response was: '*It is my privilege and my duty to look over the shoulder of the Planning Officer*' (ibid).

The increasing influence over the built environment by business interests was also evident in the image consciousness, or branding, of these American cities. The already competitive landscape which saw the preservation and enhancement of the built environment as an important way of engendering civic pride and thereby assisting in project approval, also understood that in an increasingly mobile economy it was important that cities competed by providing attractive environments. Indeed, the report noted: '*No self-respecting and highly qualified executive or professional man [sic] would dream of living in the kind of Pittsburgh that existed ten years ago*' (ibid: 40).

This direct influence of corporate interests is crucially important in directing this research to the forces impacting on the case study's built environment, and thereby influencing its urban character. This corporate-focused approach would be actively courted and become increasingly dominant in the formation of Glasgow's planning policies in future years as the shift towards a service-based economy would gain momentum, and the full forces of globalisation and neoliberal competitiveness would be felt in the city (Lennon 2014). Importantly for the city's urban character, these dominant corporate forces would be, perhaps unpredictably, responsible, directly, and indirectly, for the preservation and enhancement of important aspects of the historic character of Glasgow through the recognition of the importance of strong, distinctive, and attractive urban environments have in gaining inward investment (Evans 2005; GCC 2017a). Policy informed by this corporate recognition of the role of built heritage underpinned Glasgow's renaissance from the 1980s onwards. This will be

examined further later in this chapter as it has a pivotal role in the research's understanding of how the case study's urban character was used in this regeneration.

4.4.2 A Shift in the Political Economy of Glasgow and the Impact on Urban Development

A formalised recognition within planning of the influences changing how Glasgow was to sustain and improve its economy accelerated in the late 1970s (Strathclyde Regional Council 1979a. Pacione 2009). Reflecting the slow decline of heavy industries and the beginnings of a post-industrial service-based economy, there was a partial revision of the immediate post-war planning emphasis on the need for extensive land for traditional industrial use, with a shift to the provision of land for lighter industry and new technology-focused companies (SRC 1979). The 1979 Strathclyde Structure Plan (SSP) highlighted the substantial scale of vacant and derelict land, much of which it acknowledged was very unlikely to be developed in the foreseeable future (ibid). It was against this backdrop of economic change and accompanying shifts in the demands for, and use of, land, which saw planning wrestle with how this vacant land could be used, re-used, or improved to meet the likely demands for future development (ibid).

Policy became more aware of, and concerned with, the issues of blight and obsolescence partly caused by this extensive land dereliction in Glasgow and its conurbation. There was a duality of purpose in policy seeking to ensure that there was adequate provision for the zoning of land to accommodate the potential needs of growth industries and new technologies requiring large floorplates, and to address the increasing issue of post-industrial blight caused by vacant land (ibid). It was here that the beginnings of the shift away from the immediate post-war thinking where the requirements of industry were of absolute paramount consideration in the formation of planning policy (Bruce 1945), to an agenda led and conforming to '*a model of urban land revaluation whereby discourses of 'blight' and 'obsolescence' are mobilised to justify wholesale redevelopment and capitalist accumulation strategies...*' (Zanetti 2006: 19) began to emerge.

According to Zanetti, this discourse of obsolescence cloaked a neoliberal approach very much focused on economic outcomes and concerned with place, rather than people (2006). This era in planning policy became increasingly concerned with the facilitating of a service economy and the anticipated increase in office development, as well as in expressing the view that sustaining central Glasgow as the prime office location was of key importance to the city and the wider Strathclyde region's economy (Strathclyde Regional Council 1979).

4.4.3 The Business of Culture

Planning policy cognisant of a new urban order aimed at gearing the city to be competitive economically in a globalised environment became of primary importance. This had a highly influential role in the formation of policy during the 1980s and 1990s. As discussed in the examination of the influence of North American cities on Glasgow's urban policy, an increasingly close partnership between planning and business had been developing, and with this the corporate say over the built environment. As part of this influence, the branding and image of cities emerged as central to architectural and urban design processes. This was aimed at attracting business investment and the accompanying workforce. Therefore, the perception of place began to be integral to planning and urban policy (CCG 1961; SRC 1979; GDC 1986). Further analysis is needed of the role of urban character within the context of planning's concern with the perception of places. This is to gain insight into how urban character can be used to influence city imaging, as well as the converse, i.e., how imaging strategies can impact urban character. The concept's role beyond solely the physical is highlighted and directs the new research to excavating the outcomes resulting from the interplay between the intangible and tangible components, and the ways in which they impact the city's overall urban character - including via such factors as image and perception. This will contextually augment the wider literature discussed in Chapter Two concerning how, as Evans *et al* posit, a place's urban character can be perceived very differently depending on how a city is viewed, for example, due to influences such as media portrayal (2011).

In Glasgow, this imaging strategy focused on planning as a tool for attracting inward investment through the regeneration of the physical built environment

via cultural events, for example as part of the policy rationale behind the Garden Festival in 1988 and European City of Culture in 1990 (GDC 1986; Myerscough 1991). It was here that the relationship between the tangible built environment and the intangible aspects of the city's culture became apparent. This is absolutely crucial in guiding further research seeking to holistically identify and examine urban character. The interplay between these components highlighted a fundamental shift in the city's planning and economic policy paradigm and subsequent architectural outcomes.

The literature highlights the forces at play in shaping planning policy from the 1980s more widely, with a more aggressive globalisation and embedding of economic neoliberalism impacting cities around the world (King 2004; Zanetti 2006). At this time Glasgow was wrestling with issues caused by relatively recent post-industrial decline and accompanying negative imaging (Keating 1988). In response, the city sought ways of developing and accelerating its repurposing for this new age of increased competition to halt and reverse its decline (Pacione 2009; Lennon 2014). Indeed, this new economic framework necessitated a wider assessment of the role of local and national government, as already discussed in Chapter Three in relation to the shift from urban managerialism to entrepreneurialism, where, as Lennon argues, *'In the context of globalisation and increased competition between cities, governments and councils have had to change and become more entrepreneurial'* (2014: 23).

The need to repurpose initiated an increased awareness within planning, the inklings of which were seen in earlier policies (CCG 1961; CCG 1971; SRC 1979) that the built environment and its urban character was an important asset as a catalyst to secure the city's economic future. It was during the 1980s that Glasgow's physical and cultural shift away from primarily an industrially focused economy towards a mixed and service based one, trading partially on its physical and socio-cultural urban character, was cemented (Myerscroft 1991). There was a formalised policy recognition of the role that place identity and character, along with a strong cultural identity and architectural heritage, can have in underpinning the city's strategy in adapting to a new highly competitive world order and attracting inward investment (GDC 1986).

Here the ideological foundations for cultural and event-led policy crystallised and began to deliver a programme of events such as the Garden Festival in 1988, European City of Culture in 1990 (ECoC) and City of Architecture and Design in 1999. These events were founded on the character, both tangible and intangible, of the city, and were designed to improve and modernise perceptions of Glasgow to aid its economic regeneration, particularly tourism and the wider service economy (Myerscroft 1991). In particular, the ECoC was credited as having been hugely important, with Glasgow cited as the first to use the event as a public relations tool to manipulate its economic fortunes by changing perceptions of place (Garcia and Cox 2013).

The city council was clear that its intentions went beyond merely showcasing Glasgow as a cultural hub, with the bid stating that the: *'European City of Culture will have an enormously beneficial effect on the city in continuing the momentum of the regeneration process and by providing the opportunity, perhaps once and for all, of confirming the new [post-industrial] image of Glasgow'* (Reason 2006: 75). Indeed, Glasgow's hosting of the event was widely credited with changing its scale and shifting its purpose firmly towards that of urban regeneration (Gold & Gold 2005; Garcia and Cox 2013). Furthermore, the event was instrumental in redefining and reimagining the city's identity as a contemporary metropolis with a thriving cultural scene, and as an increasingly important international business and media hub (Lennon 2014). This redefining of the city played a significant role in altering the built environment through the interplay between culture and architecture, or the intangible and tangible components of the city's urban character and resulted in a renewal of the physical fabric.

This interplay is therefore essential to this research's overall examination of the ways in which urban character is identified, formed, and used, and what the main factors are that drive, constrain, and prevent its incorporation in the case study's built environment. The interplay between the cultural and architectural elements of Glasgow in this re-imagining process is particularly crucial. It demonstrates that it is this combination of the tangible and intangible components of urban character that can affect architectural outcomes. This therefore guides the study's approach to further research aimed at identifying

built environment outcomes resulting from this interplay, and how this can be integral to a city's unique identity, including the evolution of this identity.

4.4.4 The Neoliberal Harnessing of Glasgow's Built Environment

Globalisation saw city officials position Glasgow firmly in the sights of corporations scanning the horizon for investment opportunities (Zanetti 2006). However, this courting of neoliberalism required Glasgow adhere to the rules of the corporate game and the ways investors and developers reimagine and recreate urban space for the primary benefit of business culture and tourism (ibid: 19). To make Glasgow an attractive place for business and tourism in the globalising economy, the city needed to ensure that perceptions of it complemented and assisted improvements being made to its physical environment (GDC 1986; Garcia & Cox 2013). Since its post-war industrial decline, Glasgow had suffered decades of negative publicity regarding its built environment and needed to, according to the city council: '*...cast off the grime of past ages when it cradled the industrial revolution*' (GDC 1986: 3).

Therefore, the reimagining of the contemporary city was central to Glasgow's corporate courtship, and as part of this strategy its official bid to host the European City of Culture (ECoC) sought to emphasise the '*remarkable transformation*' the city had undergone through private and public partnerships (ibid: 3). Glasgow was promoted as the most '*impressively beautiful Victorian city in the world*' (ibid: 3) and as having '*visual variety*' (ibid: 2). The bid document was particularly keen to ensure that it was, perhaps ironically given the emphasis on its Victorian heritage, the '*Glasgow of today*' which was being considered by both the official ECoC board and the Minister for the Arts (1986 - letter Director of Glasgow Action Group to Scottish Office).

This focus on the built environment and the city's unique tangible character in the official policy bid to host what was a significant cultural event, underlined the new policy emphasis of officials seeking to use the city's intangible character to promote the regeneration of its tangible built environment. The bid evidenced the importance of the relationship between Glasgow's tangible and intangible assets and their increasingly symbiotic relationship in the development and regeneration of the city (GDC 1986). There was a clear

alignment of these dual aspects of urban character to drive development and regeneration (ibid). This alignment was a reciprocal process, whereby the city sought to use selective elements of its cultural assets, i.e., its intangible expression of identity, such as the art, music and theatrical production of the creative institutions based in the city, as catalysts to progress the regeneration of its tangible built environment, and to use '*the arts as a means of communicating its renaissance*' (Myerscroft 1991: i).

4.4.5 The Benefits of Neoliberalism in Built Environment Processes

Although planning policy aligning the arts and culture with the profit driven objectives of corporations in regeneration programmes was not, according to some commentators (Workers' City 1990) necessarily the ideal way of influencing urban regeneration, there was a need to recognise the reality of the globalising neoliberal agendas of the time (Lennon 2014). Cities were largely left to fend for themselves economically, and therefore a realistic method of funding expensive regeneration was needed (ibid). Glasgow faced issues regarding its built environment due to post-war renewal and increasing post-industrial economic and built environment obsolescence (CCG 1951; SRC 1979; Reason 2006). Indeed, Lennon argues that had the city not sought to jump aboard the globalisation bandwagon, it would have likely been left behind (2014).

Furthermore, this relationship between the arts and commerce was not new in the city. Since the Industrial Revolution, design has been integral to Glasgow and was historically linked to the city's commercial fortunes (Reed 1993). The design and build of over 30,000 ships and ocean liners in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries during the height of the city's period as a leader in globalised trade (Pacione 1995) and the wealth that this generated, informed, and influenced the built environment greatly and produced a distinctive aesthetic known as the 'Glasgow Style' (Reed 1993: 6). This unique style provided the city with a tangible legacy of a strong character and sense of place and was evident in the architecture of Alexander Thomson and Charles Rennie Mackintosh, in particular. This 'Glasgow Style' is especially interesting for this research in directing its examination of how the interplay between factors like

commerce and culture can result in built environments displaying distinctive and unique urban character. This architectural style did not happen in isolation but was the result of a fusion between the design needs of the Industrial Revolution and the expression of a wider creative culture borne out of industrial design, which manifested in the built environment (ibid). This style augmented the concept of the intangible elements of the city informing the tangible. It added another layer to this creative equation highlighting as it did, the influence of the tangible elements of production, i.e., industrial design, and their further influencing and informing of the tangible aspects of the city's architecture.

4.4.6 Tangible and Economic Outcomes of Regeneration Policy

Through the use of arts and culture-led events, such as the European City of Culture and City of Architecture and Design, the overarching aims of Glasgow's planning policies impacted dramatically on the city's built environment. A policy strategy which sought to modernise Glasgow's physical urban fabric and infrastructure, as well as its economy, using its intangible elements, resulted in the creation of tangible assets in the form of corporate-friendly, cultural, and residential environments (Myerscough 1991). The ECoC alone yielded the construction of the Royal Concert Hall, the refurbishment of the McLellan Galleries and the reopening of Scotland Street School as a museum of education (ibid). Other major cultural projects of note were the refurbishment of the City Halls classical music venue and the opening of the Gallery of Modern Art.

Accompanying these tangible outcomes were those of image modernisation and enhancement seeking to complement the attracting of corporate and tourist business. Evidence suggested success in this image rebranding, with research showing that 67% of respondents to a market survey agreed that Glasgow was '*an attractive city full of old buildings and things to see*' (Myerscough 1991: 127). Analysis highlighted a generally positive coverage by the international press '*relaying a picture of Glasgow as a city of character and vision addressing economic challenges on a cultural platform*' (ibid: 179). Further analysis underlined the economic yield from cultural industries in 1990, with £304 million resulting directly in this year alone (ibid: 150).

4.4.7 The Tools of Revanchist Urbanism Shaping Glasgow

In order to ensure the city's new political economy sustained and thrived, coalitions between the private and public sector formed, along with the deployment of governance tools designed to create and maintain urban environments. The introduction of CCTV, private security, and accompanying legislation provoked accusations of revanchist urbanism (McLeod 2002; Zanetti 2006) with this approach justified to ensure that the free flow of commerce was not impeded or sullied by behavioural patterns deemed unacceptable in '*the new urban aesthetics*' (McLeod 2002: 605). This brand of urbanism has been used, and continues to be used, within the Glasgow sub-case study areas. For example, at least prior to the Covid pandemic, Glasgow city centre (sub-case Study Area 1) attracted accusations of '*mutating into a plethora of interdictory landscapes contrived in the image of fictitious capital and consumerist citizenship*' (McLeod 2002: 615).

This apparent revanchist turn in urban policy to facilitate the new political economy of entrepreneurialism guides this research's examination of the intangible and tangible forces creating urban character. The extent to which the socio-cultural and more physical aspects of urban character interplay to create uniqueness in place identity is essential to this study's central theme of identifying a holistic understanding of urban character. Therefore, Mitchell's argument that Glasgow was ensnared in a '*culture war*' (2000: 8) in the 1990s where the '*city-as-landscape does not encourage the formation of community or of urbanism as a way of life; rather it encourages the maintenance of surfaces, the promotion of order at the expense of lived social relations*, further highlights questions central to the thesis' problematisation of the dichotomy between the tangible and intangible components of urban character. It is the study's argument that urban character needs to be understood as a holistic concept in order that the uniqueness of place identity be realised through built environments which respond to the wider needs and aspirations of the broad demographic of citizens.

The impact of Glasgow's shifting political economy, and the tools used to deliver this neoliberal paradigm, are of fundamental importance to this research and

will be further analysed in Chapter Five in relation to two specific sub case study areas. The urban development processes by which these areas were shaped, and in discussing these as appropriate for the research's central aim, will necessitate a deeper and more specific examination and explanation.

4.5 Democratisation and Contextualisation in Planning Policy

4.5.1 Planning Policy's Engagement with People

A remit to educate and increase public awareness of 'good' design and how it can shape the city's future and improve lives, was central to the 1999 City of Architecture and Design festival. Glasgow maintained its focus on the use of the built environment to progress regeneration and further improve its image (Arts Council 1994). An emphasis on education was particularly significant given Lord Esher's report 30 years earlier highlighting that the '*lack of public recognition that [Glasgow] was a fine city*' (CCG 1971: 5) had contributed greatly to the mutilation of its buildings more than many other cities (ibid).

Echoing the postmodernist mantra that cities have the capability to provide for everyone, only when they are created by everyone (Jacobs 1961) the festival stated that: '*Architecture and design are not enough. If a city is to serve its people, and not impose upon them, the processes by which a city is created, and re-created, must be opened up to everyone*' (Arts Council 1994: 9). This reiterated postmodernism's rebuff of the planning and architecture of post-war modernism, which sought to impose its ideology on the city via top-down hierarchical dictums devoid of public opinion and influence (CCG 1945; CCG 1951). The ethos behind the festival bid advocated and sought to ensure that this approach was guarded against, and that the planning and design process be opened up to citizens (Arts Council 1994).

This is of particular relevance to the research's understanding of the role of urban character's influence on the built environment. The 1999 festival emphasised the intrinsic link between the city's physical environment and its

economic fortunes. The suggestion was that in periods, such as the post-war era, when the city did not use its inherent urban character to inform the creation of its built environment, not only was this damaging to its urban fabric, but it was also to the detriment of its economic prosperity (ibid). Education and public involvement were positioned at the heart of the design process. This highlighted that without this element of greater public awareness and input to urban design the city was poorer economically, physically, and socially. The notion was advanced that democratising the urban planning processes through the inclusion of the multi-faceted elements of urban character was viewed by policy as beneficial to the city and its citizens.

While education was a key component and aim of the 1999 festival, economics and commerce continued as the underlying primary motivation for improving the built environment. The bid recognised the limitations of using the built environment within the context of broader urban regeneration, stating that architecture cannot make an economy, but it can '*sustain and nourish it*' (Arts Council 1994: 35). The festival bid argued that '*beautiful buildings mean a city attractive to investors and inhabitants*' (ibid: 35) and that '*...good design is also sound business*' (ibid: 35). To this dual end the festival sought to assist local design and architecture practices to innovate and produce distinctive work, as well as explore ways in which this work could be better appreciated by the public. Underpinning this there was the suggested intention of futureproofing against the potentially negative impacts, such as those originally highlighted by Esher, where an apathetic and architecturally illiterate population contributed to the dilution and destruction of the city's built environment, as witnessed in the post-war era (CCG 1971).

Since Lord Esher's report at the beginning of the 1970s, although initially tentative, the direction of planning policy has been towards a democratisation of the built environment through the increased involvement of citizens, at least in terms of policy rhetoric (GCC 2009; GCC 2017a, b). As highlighted, this democratisation was partly initiated by Esher and by the Skeffington Report, and later through events such as the City of Architecture and Design Festival in 1999. Recent years have seen further focus on public participation in planning policy (ibid). At a national level, the rhetoric is of communities leading regeneration

and encouraging citizens to become involved and empowered so they can identify *'for themselves the issues and opportunities in their areas, deciding what to do about them, and being responsible for delivering economic, social and environmental action...'* (Scottish Government 2011: 20).

As part of this democratising of planning there has been an embedding of a more holistic understanding and approach of how urban regeneration should be achieved (GCC 2009). There has been an encompassing of how the various social, economic, and cultural elements can inform the built environment, along with a recognition of the vital role that creating distinctive places with a strong sense of identity impact on the multi-faceted aspects of urban life (Scottish Government 2011; GCC 2017b). To this end planning policy has looked to identify opportunities to create or re-establish a sense of place in the built environment.

This shift towards more democratic and inclusive planning policy, is key in directing the study's approach to analysing how the interplay of a city's tangible and intangible urban character impact policy and shape the physical outcomes. It demonstrates that fulfilling the functional and economic needs of a city can benefit from a holistic approach to the identification and role of the concept of urban character, and that policy is now cognisant of the argument that the practical physicality of a city is enhanced by being informed by the socio-cultural input of a place.

4.5.2 Heritage, Conservation, and the Physical Journey

The practical application of the factors that contribute to this democratisation through the tangible and intangible elements have brought a renewed focus and appreciation of Glasgow's historic built environment (GCC 2009). There has been an interest and understanding of the broader physical journey of Glasgow, with listed buildings seen as reflecting the architectural development of the city and its people (GCC 2009; GCC 2017b). While the merits of this are seemingly now obvious, they need to be viewed within the context of a city which, up until the 1970s, was devoid of any meaningful appreciation of its built heritage and sought to demolish and replace, firstly its Georgian, and then Victorian architecture (CCG 1971).

As part of this renewed focus on the importance of built heritage Conservation Area Appraisals (CCAs) were established (GCC 2009). These identified features, for example architectural detail and building materials, that made, or contributed to, an area's special character. CCAs sought ways in which these could be enhanced. Appraisals were designed to be used by the council in their consideration of proposals for developments adjoining conservation areas to ensure the maintenance and enhancement of the '*character and appearance of their historic context*' (ibid: 27). As policy pointed out: '*Styles, attitudes and values change. Areas once viewed as ordinary can, over time, be perceived in a different light, perhaps as well-preserved examples of style*' (ibid: 27).

'*Identity Areas*' (ibid: 300) were also created to augment the conservation of character. These recognised the '*nature and characteristics*' (ibid: 300) of an area, stating that in taking these characteristics into account, design should respect the existing built form and maintain, or re-instate, building line continuity, street patterns and elevational proportions. Furthermore, developments should seek to maintain the grid-iron pattern in the Victorian business area. The maintaining of this grid-iron pattern is particularly interesting to this research within the context of Esher's report, as it highlights potential problems, also discussed in Chapter Two, of the built environment being subject to changing perspectives of style and values through time. The maintaining of the grid-iron was seen as important to the city's urban character in 2009, whereas in 1946 Abercrombie saw it as having been a missed opportunity due to it resulting in the lack of '*sited*' buildings (1946b).

This therefore draws out that a city's identity and character is subject to political fashion and the power relations related to built environment processes. The case study's urban character is altered depending on fundamental differences of perceptions of what a city is for and how this is to be achieved. With a shift away from planning policy being the sole preserve of politicians and built environment professionals towards a more democratically inclusive process involving citizens, the built environment and its tangible and intangible character changes to reflect the processes and components deemed important.

Examining this in further detail through the study's empirical research is important to the understanding of how urban planning policy, and its implementation and governance, shapes the case study's built environment. This will help to explicate why the city's architecture and urban design has looked the way that it has at certain times, and how political, social, and economic priorities have impacted on the case study's urban character to incrementally result in the contemporary built environment.

4.5.3 Built Environment Heritage and Contemporary Contextualisation

While seeking to ensure that the historic built environment was respected and conserved, planning nevertheless encouraged contemporary architecture which observed design elements like townscape, context and setting, scale and massing, along with the architectural detail of existing buildings (GCC 2009). Detailed guidance regarding the balance of contemporising the built environment while respecting the existing broader architectural forms and precedents was given. For example, the Merchant City was viewed as having a character which '*emerges as a rich texture of shapes and colours unified by a rigidly consistent building line and predominant 4-5 storey building height*' (2009: 301).

Planning guidance stated that the '*existing urban character should be retained*' (ibid: 301) and where there was a necessity to demolish, or regarding gap sites, any new development should maintain established street patterns and building lines, as well as taking into account the role of terminal vistas. Furthermore, new developments should be designed to a high quality to reflect the diversity of the area and '*should not necessarily attempt to match existing buildings*' (ibid 301). Stating that new buildings need not seek to match or replicate those around it is of particular note and interest to this research. This demonstrated a recognition and understanding of the concept of urban character's potential to inform the creation of contemporary architecture, particularly within the context of the concept as a dynamic and adaptive influence, rather than nostalgic and concerned with restricting or stifling the evolution of the built environment.

The potential of urban character to create dynamic responses to the existing urban design was further illustrated in the Victorian Business Centre Identity Area. Planning sought to balance and maintain diverse building styles. Wherever possible, older buildings were to be refurbished and re-used, and where this was impractical or inappropriate efforts were to be made for the existing façade to be retained and incorporated into any new development (GCC 2009). The suggested presumption was in favour of a melding of old and new to produce buildings which echoed and benefitted from the architectural traditions and history of Glasgow to form something new, but which was nevertheless rooted in, and ‘of’, the city and thereby evolve, rather than stymie, the city’s unique sense of place identity. Furthermore, an acceptance of ‘diversity’ in building styles again highlighted how planning policy had changed from the post-war era, when homogeneity was seen as the way to plan the ‘*harmony*’ (CCG 1945: 52) of Glasgow through an approach to the city as ‘*one architectural conception*’ (ibid: 52). This again directly informs the research by demonstrating the impact of changing policy attitudes and the practical delivery of these in relation to design. It steers this study in analysing the debates concerning how the identification and role of urban character is subject to, and determined by, the evolving ideas and imperatives of what a city is, and how this should be architecturally realised.

4.6 Contemporary Policy and the Placemaking Approach

4.6.1 Nuancing the Neoliberal Agenda

Contemporary planning has undergone a fundamental shift away from the traditional ‘*land use*’ approach to that of a ‘*place based*’ (GCC 2017b: 3) one. This shift is evident throughout recent policy, with the rhetoric of placemaking, distinctive places and of character and identity embedded in planning documents at both a national and local level (Scottish Government 2011a, b; Scottish Government 2013a; 2013b; GCC 2017b). Indeed, Glasgow’s City Development Policy (2017a) was underpinned by the Placemaking Principle which is now applicable to all development proposals.

There is now a stated obligation on developers to demonstrate how this placemaking principle has been applied, with supplementary guidance in the

government's Place Standard Tool (Scottish Government 2013b) designed to assist developers and communities in the application of the principle. Contained within this placemaking approach is a general ethos of creating environments responsive to existing qualities and characteristics by establishing and enhancing the elements which make a place unique. Planning policy rhetoric continues to shift to inclusivity and a democratising of the planning process by ensuring that *'people and local community considerations are put at the heart of the decision making process'* (GCC 2017b: 8).

While an economic agenda remains the nucleus of built environment policy, where *'placemaking is regarded as [an] important means of achieving the Scottish Government's central purpose of "sustainable economic growth"'* (GCC 2017b:10) the approach and perspective of policy is now broader and more nuanced, at least in rhetoric. Planning views the creation of place as intrinsic to architectural production and that built environment development should be based upon *'balancing the relationship between the physical, social and economic characteristics of the area'* (GCC 2017a: 28). Policy states that there should be an application of *'a placemaking approach to the design and development of areas where people live, work and spend leisure time'* (GCC 2017a: 21) and that there is a desire to create cities that are *'sustainable, vibrant and distinctive places which are well-designed, accessible, safe, healthy and inclusive, and which provide for... growing and diverse populations'* (ibid: 21). In language reflecting policy now more attuned to an increasingly democratic and multifaceted built environment, contemporary planning policy considers place not to be just a *'backdrop to our lives, but as an agent of change'* (Scottish Government 2013b: 5). The positive holistic impact that buildings and places can have on people's lives is emphasised, along with the value gained through a strong sense of identity and community (Scottish Government 2013b).

This fundamental shift in policy is vital to the study in examining the identification and role of urban character. It again demonstrates planning's recognition and appreciation of a holistic approach to the concept within built environment processes. The research's analysis of the idea that architecture responsive to, and reflective of, the diverse needs and aspirations of citizens

better supports and facilitates a city's economic, social, and cultural wellbeing, is furthered via the interrogation of this policy shift. Policy viewing and seeking to incorporate the tangible and intangible components of urban character as assets, as well as the architectural outcomes resulting from the interplay between these, provides the research with a framework to examine and measure how, and to what extent, this is theoretically and practically realised in the case study.

4.6.2 Glasgow-appropriate Architecture

At a local level Glasgow's planning is now designed to complement the national policy and apply the placemaking principles in a '*specifically Glasgow context*' (GCC 2017b: 10). The city's unique character is described as core to the local planning strategy's aim of accomplishing the place agenda set by national government, with a commitment that '*the character of the city centre must be preserved and enhanced*' (ibid: 50). The City Development Policy (GCC 2017a) recognises the tangible elements of Glasgow's urban character and the holistic legibility of their interplay: '*Individual streets, spaces, buildings and waterways are all important in making the city recognisable*' (GCC 2017a: 27). It is through the combining of these elements to form a '*complex and dynamic whole*' (ibid: 27) that the city's character and identity are expressed and reflected, according to the policy. This acknowledges that the city is the sum total of its constituent parts, and that the context of the physical environment and the relationship of these parts with each other play an integral part in defining the city as an entity. This is interesting for the research in relation to a policy response to modernism. The wider literature identifies that the impact of globalisation on the built environment has seen a reprise of many of the components of modernism (Arefi 1999; Adam 2008; Eldemery 2009; Jacobs 2006; Sklair 2006). This has shifted design away from the holistic and collective approach advocated by such policy and back to standalone buildings seen as lacking contextualisation. Therefore, an examination of policy advocating a more holistic approach is valuable in the research's empirical examination of newer built environments, such as in sub-case Study Area 2 of the case study where a *tabula rasa* approach has witnessed wholesale urban renewal, rather than intervention and augmentation.

Furthermore, the ways in which Glasgow's physical identity is a representation of responses to the challenges it has faced and the priorities it has set, particularly those regarding economic and industrial growth and decline, is highlighted by policy as producing the city's '*current identity*' (GCC 2017: 27). Here in particular, planning policy reflects the urban studies literature arguing that urban environments and their identity and character morph under the influence of the multifaceted tangible and intangible components, and the interplay between these (Campelo *et al* 2014; Sepe and Pitt 2014). Policy acknowledges that the evolution of the city's urban character, and its historic legacy, play a vital role in influencing the built environment via forces and imperatives expressing a changing sense of place which augment and reflect Glasgow's particular character and its connection to its people.

As well as seeking to preserve and enhance the city's character there is a policy intention to resist the '*importing of generic spaces*' (GCC 2017b: 61). This can be seen to include a reaction to past experience with built environments '*that could be located in any other town*' (ibid: 61), as well as a planning tool aimed at preventing the placeless architecture often associated with globalised production. This therefore aids the research in guiding the study to examine what is identified as 'generic' and thereby helping to identify the converse, i.e., that which is described as displaying the city's unique identity, and how the components of urban character influence this.

4.6.3 Incorporating Intangibles into Policy

Creating places reflective and expressive of the multifaceted elements of a city is part of the policy objective of using the built environment to engender cultural context, sense of pride and belonging, along with a strong local and national identity (GCC 2017a). A holistic and reciprocal approach to placemaking suggests a planning policy that looks to embed new developments by informing their design via people and how they use and interact with a place, and equally to express and facilitate the lives of citizens through the built environment. Policy, at least in rhetoric, appears cognisant of a symbiotic relationship between the tangible and intangible in forming place creation, enabled through inclusivity and democratisation of the built environment '*designed to put people*

and their experiences of the City's environment at the centre of the planning process' (GCC 2017b: 5).

Furthermore, policy expresses the aim of retaining and enhancing urban character and identity through a placemaking process which is not only collaborative, but that seeks to work with the existing attributes of place (GCC 2017a). This further highlights how the city's contemporary planning policy attitude has shifted fundamentally from post-war dictate, not only in terms of overall ethos but through a detailed appraisal of what an urban environment is for and how this can be realised. This more democratic planning approach is significant for this research's identification and application of urban character in built environment processes. Adopting such an approach suggests a greater likelihood that planning's stated aspiration of '*strengthening the city's character*' and '*fully understanding the elements that contribute to the feel and ambience, environment, function and use of space*' (GCC 2017b: 8) will be achieved. This approach represents a potential entry point to allow urban character to play an intrinsic part in the planning process to assist in, what planning states as its aim of '*developing a strong Glasgow-appropriate architecture with its own distinctive identity and character...*' (ibid: 64). Again, policy steers the study's analysis of the ways in which the tangible and intangible components of urban character are incorporated into built environment processes. It helps the research's empirical examination of how urban character is identified and then translated into architectural design via planning policy and guidance. This therefore directs the study's empirical work in analysing how built environment professionals identify the existing attributes of a place, and importantly, how these, often intangible elements, can be embodied and expressed architecturally.

4.6.4 Urban DNA vs Globalisation

In creating urban design which fulfils the policy criteria of delivering a built environment with a strong sense of place and urban character, and which meets the intention of being a '*tangible expression of who we are*' (Scottish Government 2013b: 5) contemporary planning policy, as with earlier policies, states that it is important to preserve the historic built environment. The city's architectural heritage is contextualised: '*Glasgow's distinctive character has*

been shaped over many years. Previous generations have left their mark in the form of buildings, scheduled monuments, battlefields, townscapes, gardens, and designed landscapes, and in the pattern of the City's streets and parks' (GCC 2017a: 94). *'The historic environment is part of our everyday lives and gives us a sense of place, well-being and cultural identity'* (ibid). This helps the study's aim of excavating more deeply how place identity is created and used in built environment processes. Policy acknowledges the DNA of the city's character as a way of informing its physical environment, and as a tool for enabling the city to be more attractive and successful on a social, cultural, and economic level.

Policy seeks to address the city's built environment needs on numerous levels. At its core is, as ever, the economic driver, particularly of tourism, where there is a trend by cities looking to halt the globalisation of their built environments, and what the literature terms 'anywhere' architecture (Adam 2008). However, there would appear to be a broadening of what in the 1980s and 1990s was initially a very narrow neoliberal agenda of seeing the built environment only as an economic asset. Policy now suggests a wider informing of the planning process from an historical and grass roots level going beyond an endgame of solely the economic in isolation. By embedding the 'placemaking principle' there seems, **in rhetoric at least**, to be an understanding and acceptance that a holistic and inclusive approach which puts people and their experience at the core of planning (GCC 2017b) will result in Glasgow's urban landscape potentially facilitating the needs of citizens more broadly, and not merely those of business and commerce.

Contemporary planning therefore recognises the built environment's role beyond facilitating function, shelter, and employment. This is crucial to this study as it lies at the heart of the research's exploration of how, and to what extent, places attain a uniqueness, as well as how the complex and diverse components, often intangible, of a place interact and can be translated into design reflective and inclusive of urban identity. Policy encapsulating this holistic attitude and approach is therefore vital in guiding the research's analysis of urban character's role and contribution to the construction of the case study's tangible and intangible DNA.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the historic and contemporary influences of, and on, planning and policy in relation to Glasgow's urban character, as well as the ways in which such influences have affected the actual and perceived identity of the city. This is important to the study's identification of the components of urban character, the role of these components, and how they have changed and evolved, both literally and in importance, since 1945 through to the early part of the 21st century. As part of this exploration, themes discussed in the literature chapters, such as planning democratisation and globalisation, were examined within the context of the case study to analyse how they have influenced the city's tangible and intangible constitution, and the role they played in defining and creating Glasgow's current identity and urban character.

Audits and analysis of the components of the city's tangible character through the likes of Lord Esher's 1971 report and the drawing up of Conservation Area Appraisals (GCC 2009) along with contemporary policies seeking to identify, capture and include the contribution of intangible elements to the feel and ambience of place (GCC 2017a; b) were discussed as instrumental in shaping the case study's built environment. The chapter highlighted how these influences impacted Glasgow's urban character and shifted the importance and balance of the concept's components. As discussed, in the immediate post-war era, urban character's role within planning policy was essentially confined to that of the tangible expression of the built environment via the primary driver of economic functionalism (CCG 1945; CVRP 1946b; CCG 1951). However, the period since the 1980s saw planning shift towards built environments founded more in a balance between the tangible and intangible components of urban character (Arts Council 1994; GCC 2009; GCC 2017a, b).

Underpinning the move towards a planning approach based on the use of urban character's tangible and intangible components was the changing objectives of the economic agendas driving the built environment (Zanetti 2006; Lennon 2014). Central to this, and particularly important to the study, was the phenomenon of globalisation and the demands this placed on Glasgow, and cities generally, to compete for and accommodate the needs and demands of multinational corporations. A new urban paradigm demanded cities offer

attractive environments, physically and culturally, to complement and retain economic investment. Glasgow's response saw it use its tangible and intangible character to reinvent and repurpose itself through cultural and events-led policy. This further evolved to meet current urban agendas, again underpinned by economics, seeking to create and promote distinctive built environments to counter accusations of globalised city homogeneity and placelessness (GCC 2009; Scottish Government 2013a, b; GCC 2017a, b).

Having analysed the literature and planning policy related to urban character and its role in shaping and influencing the case study's built environment processes and outcomes, the following chapter will present and detail the methodology for the empirical research.

5. Chapter Five: Methodology

5.1 Introduction

As stated in Chapter One, the aim of this thesis is to analyse the interplay between the components of urban character and how this influences perceptions of built environment outcomes. Its focus is the perceptions of this interplay held by design, planning and associated professions, and their understanding of the ways in which key forces, such as globalisation, impact on urban character in Glasgow. There is a particular emphasis on the relationship between the tangible and intangible components of the concept of urban character.

To address this aim the following objectives are set:

- 1 To identify the components of the concept of 'urban character' as defined by built environment professionals and examine how they conceive of how the interplay between these leads to specific architectural outcomes, as well as contributes to the wider identity of cities.
- 2 To examine how the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character inform the process of design and planning,

as well as urban character's overall role in creating uniqueness in built environments.

- 3 Through the interrogation of professional design, planning and policy understanding of urban character and the concept's practical application, analyse how Glasgow is imbued with a unique urban character.
- 4 To identify the main socio-political and economic factors impacting on the components of urban character and the ways in which these affect the uniqueness of built environments.

The following research questions are designed to fulfil these objectives:

RQ 1:

To what extent, and in what ways, are the tangible and intangible components of urban character characterised, and how does this create uniqueness in a city's built environment?

RQ2:

In what ways, and to what extent, is the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character important in the design and planning processes of built environment professionals seeking to create uniqueness in Glasgow's built environment?

RQ3:

What are the main factors, including globalisation, impacting on urban character, and how do these affect the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of the concept?

This chapter therefore details the research approach and methodology used to answer the research questions, and, in so doing, meet the study's aims and objectives. In the next section of the chapter (5.2), the theoretical and philosophical framework and considerations underpinning the study are described and discussed. Section 5.3 outlines the research strategy and design and justifies the case study approach. Section 5.4 then describes the overarching

Glasgow case study and the two sub-case studies which are used as the focus of the research interviews. The two final sections detail the research methods used, and the approach to data analysis.

5.2 Theoretical and Philosophical Framework

The study is underpinned by an interpretivist epistemological position. It thus views social reality as being formed and generated by individual and collective experiences (Snape and Spencer 2003; Bryman 2008). Such an epistemology is in line with the study's pursuit of place identity and urban character through research founded in and derived from shared perceptions and meanings of place, as well as those that are the result of individual interpretation (Relph 1976; Stokols and Shumaker 1981; Milligan 1998). Therefore, an interpretivist position provides this thesis with a theoretical and methodological framework that allows an understanding of social action (Bryman 2008). It is how urban environments are viewed and experienced by interviewees which is important to the study as this helps the research analyse how people interpret and make sense of the world, as well as the extent to which such interpretations are held individually or collectively.

Arguments concerning the co-production of materiality, that is the idea that *'when we look at the social, we are also looking at the production of materiality, and when we look at materials, we are witnessing the production of the social'* (Jenkins, cited in Jacobs 2006: 11), underpin the study's objectives and research questions. Thus, the reciprocal relationships between materiality and social constructs, particularly in terms of analysing the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character, and how these were impacted by factors like globalisation, was central to fulfilling these objectives and answering the research questions. Therefore, it was the relationships between the physicality of place and the social and experiential components via human interaction (Cheshmehzangi 2020) and how this influenced and shaped built environments, that was intrinsic to this thesis' approach in examining the concept of urban character.

Furthermore, the ways in which the feel and ambience of a place was interpreted from the physicality of space, and how this was achieved through design, was fundamental to the study's argument of the importance of understanding and experiencing the built environment from a holistic perspective. This involved going beyond interpretations of architecture as purely a functional medium, for example as solely providing shelter. It was important to interrogate the wider effects of physical place and how architectural outcomes have a certain presence (Thrift 2000; Jacobs 2006), given this research's concern with how cities are seen and sensed from the experiential point of view of others (Bogdan and Taylor 1975, cited in Bryman 2008). Therefore, an interpretivist position underpinned the research's examination of the way people view and interpret architectural objects. The 'aura' (Harman 2005) and 'allure' (Benjamin 1967) posited by the authors as resulting from the relationships of people and physical place that can give built environments an existence beyond the practical and functional (Latham 1999), was important to the research in appreciating the differences and commonality in people's experiences of place. It was the insight brought through lived experience which the research used to examine the architectural representation of cities, and how as entities they have a '*...certain magic hovering beneath the contours and flaws of [their] accessible surface*' (Harman, cited in Karrholm 2014: 11).

5.3 Research Strategy

The research takes a qualitative approach, allowing a focus on written and oral language as the tools of investigation and analysis (Bryman 2008). The research strategy involved semi-structured traditional and walking interviews focused on a clearly delineated case study (detailed in Section 5.4) and was devised to draw out the meaning participants attributed to their social and professional interactions (Marshall and Ross 1999) with a specific built environment. This enabled Objective 1 - 4 to be met, namely, identifying urban character and the factors impacting on it.

Factors like history, economics, purpose, symbolism, and memories affect the meanings and therefore perspectives of the built environment. These go beyond

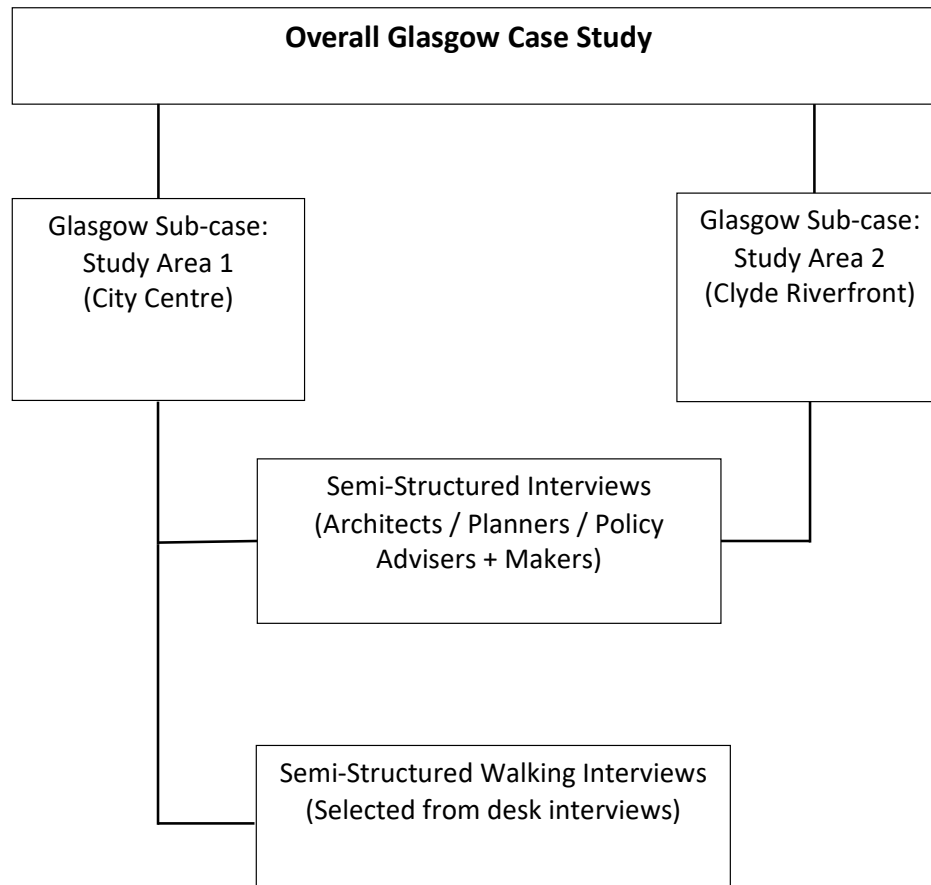
those formed purely by the physical and are therefore more rooted in the experiential and atmospheric sense of place (Healy 2010). Semi-structured interviews therefore facilitated the research's aim of providing scope for participants to consider both the tangible and intangible components of local urban character and their representation, rather than structured interviews based on a more quantitative approach, for example questionnaires. Semi-structured interviews were chosen over structured interviews as a less leading approach and more likely to generate data unique to the concept (Bryman 2008; Greener 2011) allowing the interview process the latitude to explore all aspects of the concept.

Furthermore, a qualitative approach was in line with the study's use of walking interviews to identify and understand the relationship between people and urban spaces. The more nuanced data generated by this method encouraged the expression of anecdotal experiences and provided deeper and fuller narratives of individuals and communities (Bryman 2008; Evans and Jones 2011) and their understanding and interpretation of the built environment. Such narratives were valuable in producing data that answered the research questions via historical accounts of the architectural changes that have taken place over an extended period of time, and which facilitated answers that were informed by the individual and collective meanings attributed by interviewees.

The rationale for this approach is discussed in more detail in section 5.5, including Table 5.2, in relation to meeting and answering the study's objectives and research questions via the qualitative tools.

5.4 Research Design

TABLE 5.1: OVERALL CASE STUDY AND SUB-CASE STUDY AREAS



5.4.1 Case Study Rationale

The examination of the influences shaping and affecting the components of Glasgow’s urban character and how this resulted in a particular overall place identity made the city itself the primary unit of analysis, and therefore a case study approach (see Bryman 2008). Furthermore, the city was identified as a representative case providing a suitable context with which to answer the research questions (Yin 2003; Bryman 2008). More specifically, the city provided sub-case study areas illustrating examples of the outcomes and tensions between locally contextual development, and those built environments displaying a globalised approach to urban design, as discussed in the study’s literature and planning reviews. While the wider city was referred to by participants during the interviews, the focus of the research was on two sub-case studies within Glasgow. These were used as units of analysis to focus and aid the feasibility of the research. These were sub-case Study Area 1, which consisted of Glasgow’s

core city centre, and sub-case Study Area 2, which was approximately two miles west of the city centre in an urban quarter regenerated and repurposed from shipbuilding (see section 5.4.2).

The distinct contrasts found in the chosen sub-case study areas (detailed in section 5.4.2) allowed participants to identify more incremental and historical influences on urban character in the core city centre of sub-case Study Area 1, in contrast with the contemporary and *tabula rasa* approach to the built environment found in sub-case Study Area 2. This therefore allowed interviews to explore and assess the impacts of globalisation on the local built environment, as well as older planning and policy approaches found in Victorian and Georgian practice.

Glasgow's post-industrial economic and cultural regeneration was also a critical factor in making it a suitable case study for the research. As identified in the planning review in Chapter Four, Glasgow essentially 'discovered' the economic importance of its built heritage from the 1980s onwards (CCG 1971). This discovery has been highly influential in the city's physical, economic, cultural, and social development since, and has been intrinsic to attempts to respond to the forces of globalisation (GDC 1986; Zanetti 2006; GCC 2009; Lennon 2014). As part of this response the city undertook regeneration and branding initiatives such as 'Glasgow: Scotland with style', and events like the Glasgow Garden Festival in 1988 and the European City of Culture in 1990, as well as more recent sporting events like the 2014 Commonwealth Games and 2018 European Championships. Events such as these further highlighted the prevalence of the forces of globalisation at play in the city, and therefore made Glasgow an ideal case study for this research.

5.4.2 General Introduction to the Overall Case Study

The complexity of the case study's urban character has been noted by scholars: '*It is a city so chaotic that one despairs of discovering a generalisation to come within measurable distance of describing its quality.* (Blake 1934, cited in Reed 1993: 1). Architecturally, Glasgow is seen as one of the finest examples of a

Victorian city (CCG 1971). However, following the decline of its traditional industries, most notably shipbuilding, it also became associated with substantial post-war urban renewal which resulted in the demolition of significant parts of its Victorian heritage. This was partly realised via Comprehensive Development Areas (CCG 1951; Urban 2018) and the accompanying modernism - see Chapter Four.

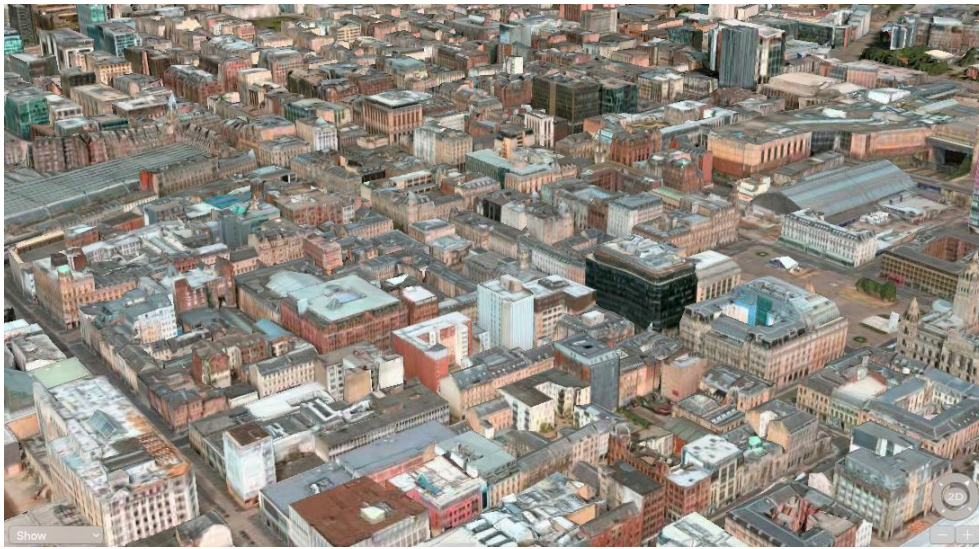
In the decades following WWII, the city struggled to emerge from post-industrial decline. However, in the 1980s Glasgow adopted a more neoliberal and '*entrepreneurial*' economic agenda in the face of an increasingly globalised economy (McLeod 2002; Doucet 2012; Lennon 2014). From the 1980s onwards, the city underwent a process of reinventing and repurposing itself and pursued a shift to a service-based economy. This saw a focus on financial services, entertainment, and sporting events, as well as the associated business and leisure tourism (Reason 2006). This repurposing was accompanied by rebranding, with the city using high-profile events like the European City of Culture in 1990 to gather regeneration momentum and re-image Glasgow as a post-industrial city (ibid). This repurposing and rebranding were underpinned by a recognition and use of the tangible and intangible components of urban character, with urban strategies putting both the city's built environment and its wider cultural assets to the fore (GDC 1986; GCC 1991; Arts Council 1994).

Most recently, the city has again sought to focus on place identity and its urban character via national and local planning policy. Local planning policy now talks of '*the character of the city centre [needing to] be preserved and enhanced*' (GCC 2017a: 41). Furthermore, there is formal policy recognition of the intrinsic relationships and mutual benefits derived from the relationships and interconnectedness between the city's built heritage, its brand and its '*sustainable economic growth*' (ibid: 6).

5.4.3 Introduction to Sub-Case Study Areas

The specific geographical focus within the case study of Glasgow was in two areas.

Figure 5.1 Sub-Case Study Area 1: Glasgow City Centre Grid



Source: Apple Maps

Sub-case Study Area 1 is defined as the area of central Glasgow bounded by the river Clyde to the south, the Saltmarket and High Street to the east, M8 motorway to the north and west as illustrated in Figure 5.1. This area provided a compact focus for the fieldwork but encompassed a diversity of architectural styles and purpose, i.e., retail, administrative, business, transport, cultural, with which to identify aspects of the city's urban character, such as those resulting from the civic, institutional, and economic life of the city. The area also incorporates examples of the outcomes of the repurposing and realigning forces acting on the city via policy decisions and architectural theory. These forces are discussed in Chapters Three and Four and are largely rooted in post-war attitudinal changes which saw the case study shift from heavy engineering and manufacturing to a service-based economy, mainly necessitated by the economic demands of a globalising economy. Accompanying this globalisation was a shift in the political economy, moving from an urban development rationale and policy of urban managerialism to that of urban entrepreneurialism (McLeod 2002; Doucet 2012; Kintrea and Madgin 2019). The impact of these forces was examined through the evolution of the built environment via the juxtaposing of commercial architectural styles, priorities and infrastructure which resulted from this shift.

Furthermore, sub-case Study Area 1 has a demographic diversity of users and provided a rich mix of the multi-faceted interactions of urban use. While the

area incorporated representations of the city's physical architectural character, it also provided examples of architectural symbolism (Venturi 1972) as well as the potential 'allure' (Harman 2005) and 'aura' (Benjamin 1967) emitted by place and architecture, discussed in the literature review. Therefore, research participants had a palette from which to identify and interpret both the potential tangible and intangible components of urban character, as well as the identification of architectural outcomes potentially resulting from the interplay between these components.

With reference to the intangible components especially, the area contained and expressed the life of that particular world's characteristics (Sepe and Pitt 2014). This acted as a basis for reference that informs design with the inclusive input of those who live and use the place on a social, cultural, and economic level (ibid). Moreover, and as discussed at length in Chapter Four, the city centre grid provided a chronological illustration of the built environment choices made by planners, politicians, and designers and how these vary, depending on the drivers identified in the planning review such as, functionality, conservation and commercial and cultural needs and attractiveness. These drivers represent key influences on the city's built environment, and in the post WWII era indicated Glasgow's response to globalisation and contemporary neoliberal competition between cities.

The 1985 McKinsey Report furthers the neoliberalising purpose of sub-case Study Area 1. Architect and urban theorist Gordon Cullen was tasked with the reimagining and redesigning of the city's main shopping thoroughfare, Buchanan Street, so as to make '*the city centre a better place for everyone* [by helping to] *develop and enhance* [its] *civic spaces*' (GCC 2000:1). This involved a commodification of public realm in order to create the image of a consumerist downtown for potential investors and tourists (McLeod 2002). Rather than '*for everyone*', a hierarchy of preferred users of the built environment saw those on the margins of society deemed undesirable for such reimagined spaces. This resulted in tensions and conflicts between those creating sub-case Study Area 1 and the wider citizens who had traditionally used it (ibid).

Intrinsically linked to the reimagining and repurposing of the area's built environment was a discourse of moral order which sought to underpin this urban

entrepreneurialism. It was this demographically exclusive approach to urban development which drove Glasgow's regeneration via events like the European City of Culture in 1990, and which brought accusations of a sanitising of Glasgow's character and erasing the city's socialist heritage (Workers City 1990; Boyle and Hughes 1994).

This shift in the political economy of urban development aimed at economic and socio-cultural re-imaging and post-industrial realignment, is further witnessed in the Merchant City district of sub-case Study Area 1. Here city boosterism focused on the built heritage and the repurposing and reinvigorating of a former warehouse district into a residential quarter in the heart of the city centre. This was delivered via policy seeking to repopulate the inner city - a reversal of post-war policies seeking the opposite - and was supported via public-private partnerships (Doucet 2013; Kintrea and Madgin 2019). As the area mainly consisted of pre-war properties, conversion grants were used to entice private developers by making it more financially attractive (GDC1992). This approach was combined with a willingness to allow planning and design standards to be flexible, with only the facades of buildings sometimes retained and new interiors built behind (Kintrea and Madgin 2019). At street level, the Scottish Development Agency, a government body, financed stone preservation and urban realm to make the area more attractive. These public and private sector developers worked together to regenerate the area via regulatory and financial mechanisms. In tandem with these tools, developers, along with estate agents, delivered a successful rebranding campaign (ibid) which augmented and complimented the one taking place in the wider city.

Figure 5.2 Sub-Case Study Area 2: Clyde Riverfront



Source: Apple Maps

This area sits to the west of Study Area 1 and is approximately two miles from the main civic square in the city centre. As shown in Figure 5.2, it incorporates the area centred around the Scottish Event Campus (SEC) on the north side of the Clyde river and the land immediately south of the river, including a science centre, BBC headquarters and Scottish Television studios.

This provided the study with a built environment which has undergone complete urban renewal and repurposing from an industrial heritage. Here the effects of a *tabula rasa* and master-planning approach afforded by a more unitary land ownership, versus the incremental approach of the city centre and the impact of multiple landownerships and competing interests within this district of the city, could be examined. The area provided clear examples of architecture aimed at the wholesale regeneration of a city quarter and allowed for data comparison with the more locally contextual (e.g., scale and massing) built environment found in the city centre environment of sub-case Study Area 1. Within this the potentially contrasting approaches of more locally or nationally based designers and that of multinational firms and the practice of designing-at-a-distance, discussed in the study's literature review (Falconbridge 2009; Rapoport 2013), could be interrogated.

The inclusion of both the city centre grid and riverfront areas provided the fieldwork with rich content concerning older and newer approaches to urban development. With the main driver in the creation of Study Area 2 being international events-led repurposing, it provided the opportunity to examine the forces impacting on the city's urban character through an area designed with the express function of responding to the forces of globalisation. As discussed in Chapter Three, a notable feature of urban entrepreneurialism is that of speculative flagship projects, driven by business interests and seeking to enhance the visual marketability of cities (McLeod 2002). To finance this approach, public-private partnerships form, as with the Merchant City in sub-case Study Area 1. In sub-case Study Area 2 the city's imageability is part of the urban development agenda, with architectural statements like the Clyde Auditorium (Armadillo), OVO Hydro and the Riverside Museum continuing Glasgow's strategy of culture-led regeneration using architecturally emblematic statements of its economic transformation and reorientation (Pollock, cited in Kintrea and Madgin 2019). This focus on business and cultural tourism also forms part of the rationale for the area's contemporary built environment, with the Scottish Government, and its Westminster counterpart, providing an equal share of a £1.13bn City Deal designed to support infrastructure projects across the city region (Waite, cited in Kintrea and Madgin 2019).

Particularly notable in the urban development of sub-case Study Area 2 are the power dynamics between the city authorities and private developers. Glasgow's difficult post-war economic history, examined in detail in Chapter Four, meant that the local authority has seen itself as having a weak position in influencing and restricting what is built, and being unwilling to reject private developer proposals (Tiesdell 2009). This led to the city council's relegation to approving, rather than leading or controlling, planning applications (ibid). As discussed in Chapter Four, such were the levels of dereliction and obsolescence in Glasgow overall (SRC 1979; 1995), and on the Clyde waterfront in particular, the main focus was in welcoming and facilitating investment. This subaltern relationship with private developers resulted in a reticence to challenge or question megaprojects in sub-case Study Area 2, and explains a more piecemeal approach lacking a strategy which unified these waterfront developments and ensured that they linked with the rest of the city Doucet (2013)

5.4.4 Evaluation Approach

Case studies are designed to generate intensive examination of a particular case and are therefore exposed to the criticism that the findings cannot be generalised (Bryman 2008). However, this study sought to achieve a measure of external validity in order that the findings are, to an extent, generalisable beyond the specific case study itself so as to have a degree of applicability to cities more widely (Marshall and Rossman 1999; Bryman 2008). While the specifics of Glasgow's urban character cannot be generalised, as these are by definition unique, the study aimed to generate theory from the findings which made connections between concepts developed from the data (Yin 2003; Bryman 2008), for example that which indicated mechanisms and techniques for the identification of urban character and its components. Here, the research looked to deconstruct methods which tethered more specific and explicit ways in which the components of urban character were identified. Importantly, the ways in which the concept was used to create more holistic built environments, inclusive of the diverse needs and aspirations of citizens, was also sought via the identification of built environment outcomes resulting from interplay between the tangible and intangible components. The research's approach was therefore in the inductive tradition in seeking to also draw more generalisable inferences from the data findings. According to Mitchel, a robust '*cogency of the theoretical reasoning*' (Mitchel 1983: 207, cited in Bryman: 392) is needed to support such external validity. Therefore, the research analysis sought to achieve this through a rigorous approach to the application of thematic coding and the triangulation of multiple theoretical perspectives and sources of participant data via semi-structured interviews (Denzin 1970, cited in Bryman 2008: 379) - see also section: 5.6.3 (Policy).

Furthermore, as Eisenhardt states, case studies are particularly suited to '*research areas for which existing theory seems inadequate*' (Eisenhardt 1989, cited in Rowley 2002:16). As the literature review highlighted, the concept of urban character is elusive, often viewed as ambiguous and complex (Relph 1976; Dovey *et al* 2009). Existing definitions are restricted and narrow, as well

as underdeveloped in considering the tangible and intangible components of place and the complex nature of the interactions between these (Ellul 1967; Relph 1976; Dovey, *et al* 2009). This research therefore contributes to the general theoretical framework in the field of place identity through a measure of analytical generalisation via the empirical results of the case study (Rowley 2002). For example, participant interviews discussed the ways in which the feel and ambience of places can be physicalised through particular design approaches related to scale, diversity, cohesion, order, balance. While the specifics of these components will vary depending on the place, the design approach highlighted by the research can be applied more generally in order to understand how the particular feel and ambience of a place can be pursued through practical design methods.

5.5 Research Methods

5.5.1 Theoretical Framework for the Research Methods

The concept of legibility developed by Lynch (1960) as an analytical tool for determining how people identify, and identify with, place, particularly influenced this research's methodological approach. Lynch posited that legibility can be seen through the deconstruction of the fundamental physical design elements of cities, namely: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks, with these used to examine how people identify place through the physical characteristics of urban form (*ibid*). The use of semi-structured interviews provided a method to deconstruct these tangible constituent components of local urban character within specific architectural form, for example materials, symbolism, detailing, as well as overall architectural and urban design. This deconstruction enabled the research to isolate and clarify the tangible elements contributing to participants' identification and interpretation of the case study's urban character, and thereby directly address RQ1.

Relph's assertion that the identity of place consists of three interrelated components: its physical features and appearance; its observable functions and activities; and the symbolism or meaning of place (1976), complements Lynch's ideas surrounding the deconstruction and analysis of the tangible component

parts of a city. Relph, along with others such as Benjamin (1967), Berque (1999), Neill (2004), Jacobs (2006) and Sepe and Pitt (2014), complement and augment the legibility concept through detailed focus on the intangible elements influencing place identity like interaction and usage, and the meaning of place (see Chapter Two). This assisted the research's objective of analysing the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character to establish if architectural outcomes, embodying such interplay, were identified by stakeholders during interviews. By drawing out these intangible elements contributing to the sense of a building, or place, RQ 2 was addressed.

Qualitative interviews captured data on these intangibles unique to Glasgow's urban character and which identified how a building (or place) comes to have a feel or presence (Jacobs 2006). Furthermore, interviews established the hierarchy and balance between what participants identified as the tangible and intangible elements of urban character, and whether these were viewed as intrinsically linked in their identification of a building or place as being particularly 'of' the city.

Moreover, in addressing RQ 3, Lynch's argument that city's which have strong legibility and distinctiveness can act as social and economic drivers by creating places that people want to live in and visit, as well as attract business and inward investment for the same reasons (Lynch 1960), was examined in the research's literature review and planning policy analysis. As discussed, this analysis highlighted that in attracting business and inward investment many cities, including Glasgow, pursued such goals through neoliberal economic policies (CCG 1961; GDC 1986; Arts Council 1994; SRC1995; Lennon 2014). These policies were bound up with the forces of globalisation and acted as major influences on Glasgow's built environment (ibid). However, rather than having resulted in the creation of legible and distinctive cities, contemporary policy (GCC 2009; Scottish Gov't 2013a, b; GCC 2017a, b) now seeks to redress and guard against what is perceived by professional stakeholders as '*generic*', '*anywhere*' architecture and '*non-places*' (Arefi 1999; Smith 2008; Verbes 2015; CDP 2017) created by such forces.

Based on these ideas, the research interviews have been designed to provide detailed and nuanced data relevant to how urban character was considered in the promotion of place identity and in defending against this perceived international architectural homogeneity and non-place, as well as whether the concept informed urban policy and design outcomes.

5.5.2 Development of Interview Questions

Interview questions were developed via engagement with the existing academic literature, which identified key debates and gaps, as well as ensured that the research agenda had a secure theoretical basis. The questions were also developed on the basis of the analysis of planning policy detailed in Chapter Four. This ensured that the interview process was conducted with detailed understanding of the case study to the fore. Thus, the interview questions were formulated using historical and contemporary policy, and its implementation, to identify how Glasgow has responded to the economic and socio-cultural challenges it has faced. In particular, national and local policy aimed at promoting and implementing the shift from a land based to place based approach was used. The questions included policy rhetoric and terminology which put the character and identity of the city at the centre of policy. This was in order to analyse this fundamental change in planning emphasis towards a place-based approach. Furthermore, contemporary policy helped in formulating the interview questions to direct the study's probing of if, and the extent to which, such policy was successful in identifying the components and role of urban character in built environment processes, as well as how it sought to address factors impacting the concept, such as generic and globalised approaches to architectural production.

5.3.3 Aligning the Research Methods with the Research Objectives and Questions

Table 5.2: Research Methods & Research Objectives/Questions

Method	Qualitative Tools	Rationale	Contribution to meeting objectives	Contribution to answering research Questions	Data Analysis
Case Study		To examine the key themes related to urban character arising from the literature review and contextualise these within a case study. This is to examine how urban character is identified, its architectural influence, and how the concept and its influence are impacted by relevant factors.	Objectives: 1-4	RQs: 1-3	Thematic Analysis
	Semi-Structured Interviews (built environment professionals)	To gain perspectives of experts (architects/planners/policymakers & advisers) re objectives 1-3 to answer RQs.	RQ1 / Objective 1: Semi-structured interviews to identify what the tangible and intangible components of urban character are & how these contribute to the case study's unique identity.		Thematic Analysis

	Walking Interviews (built environment professionals)	<i>In situ</i> interviews to gain added richness to narrative stimulated by study areas and the stories and connections related to a sense of place.	<p>RQ 2 / Objective 2/3: Semi-structured interviews to examine whether the tangible and intangible components identified have an interplay resulting in tangible architectural outcomes seen as unique to the case study's identity + processes by which these occur.</p> <p>RQ 2 / Objective 4: What factors impact the tangible and intangible components, and how do these influence and change the case study's overall urban character via the built environment.</p>	Narrative/Thematic Analysis
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Focus Groups – Original intention to further develop interview data via focus groups – not possible due to C-19.

5.5.4 Application of Interview Methods

The rationale for the application of the methods concerned the research's approach of developing the interview questions via the literature and planning policy reviews in chapters 2-4. In particular the policy review grounded the research questions in an understanding of how planning viewed the concept's importance and role. This was to establish a sufficiently well-developed identification of the concept to then be able to explore the other research objectives focused on the interplay between the concept's components, and the factors impacting it, and in what ways. Given that the concept is seen as ambiguous and particularly complex regarding the interplay between the tangible and intangible (Relph 1976), the research approached interviewing as a process of discussions to excavate and thematically cross-reference the identification of the components of urban character to clarify these and thereby the overall concept. This provided a framework for the interrogation and deconstruction of the concept so that the impact on the case study's urban character, as stated in Objective Four, could be discussed through the lens of a sufficiently well-developed consideration of the concept. This was achieved by an incremental exploration of urban character using semi-structured interviews to develop a basis of understanding. Initially this discussed the general aspects of the concept and its themes before closer scrutiny of the more specific and nuanced aspects of urban character and its components was made.

5.5.5 Semi-Structured Interviews (see desk interview questions list - appendix i)

Semi-structured interviews were the main qualitative tool used by the study. This approach sought to ensure that participants were able to answer questions as free of preconceived ideas or bias of the concept of urban character as possible. This gave insight into how urban environments are perceived and understood through the use of open questions broad enough to provide interviewees with a topical framework, but sufficiently loose to yield answers not restricted by a prescriptive or narrow attempt to control responses. Furthermore, the format of semi-structured interviews was chosen to foster an approach of treating participants as conversational partners (Rubin and Rubin

1995). The approach of semi-structured interviews also afforded sufficient flexibility to allow interviewees to explore the concept generally, and particularly the more intangible aspects requiring a greater degree of discussion to elucidate. To prevent participants focusing exclusively on the physical components of urban character, interviewees were asked to consider their perceptions of the qualities of these places beyond the physical and architectural. Participants were invited to consider the feel and ambience of places and explain why areas or buildings captured the intangible character of the city.

5.5.6 Walking Interviews see walking interview questions list appendix ii

Figure 5.3 Walking Interview Route (Study Area 1)



(Source : Apple Maps - n.d.)

To elaborate on answers given during the desk interviews, a selection of participants was invited to take part in follow up walking interviews. The use of walking interviews is a technique developed by Rescue Geography (Jones 2008) where participants describe the connections they make to buildings and landscape which have either been lost or have changed in a significant way. This technique is often used to trigger memory and provide more evocative recollections of what connects people with place, and to tease out what these connections mean to them (ibid). Walking interviews were of particular value to this study as the data gathered was informed by the physical environments in which they took place, and therefore aided the understanding of the

'relationship between what people say and where they say it' (Evans and Jones 2010: 849).

Furthermore, walking interviews produce *'rich place narratives'* (ibid: 849) regarding the spatial specificity in the area being studied (ibid). Therefore, walking interviews assisted the research in the process of drawing data through *in-situ* examples of the types of places and buildings perceived as embodying local urban character. This interview method was particularly useful in relation to RQ3 in yielding data concerning perceptions of the factors impacting the tangible and intangible components of urban character in the built environment. This was done by encouraging place narratives through the opportunity for participants to identify and relate the historic changes to a landscape and built environment. This was especially relevant regarding shifts identified as having been due to the impacts of globalisation and associated indicators, such as in the scale and materiality of buildings. Furthermore, walking interviews aided the exploration of the accompanying changes to the intangible factors, such as a place's atmosphere, resulting from this physical repurposing. Walking interviews also therefore aided the research's examination of the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character and the outcomes of this on the built environment in relation to RQ2.

The *in-situ* perspectives yielded by taking participants to sub-case Study Area 1 and asking them to describe what they identified as the main characteristics of the location, and what made these unique to the city, provided nuanced data to augment that generated by the desk interviews. This research technique assisted in guiding the research focus towards the inclusion of intangible components and was beneficial in encouraging participants to discuss their emotional reaction to a place or building (Jones 2008; Evans and Jones 2010). Participants were invited to elaborate on answers to examine what particular elements made them answer in the way they did. This steered interviews towards data focused on the balance between the tangible and intangible components, as well as examining whether stakeholders considered the components as intrinsically linked in the identification of the city's urban character. This interview technique was therefore also valuable in addressing RQs 1 and 2 in this respect.

Walking interviews were limited to sub-case Study Area 1 due to the time constraints of participants. Sub-case Study Area 1 was where interviewees were based for employment and therefore more practical for those who agreed to give additional interviews. Given these time restrictions, the focus on sub-case Study Area 1 was justified as the walking interviews were designed to augment and further nuance data gathered from the desk interviews. These initial interviews clearly highlighted that sub-case Study Area 1 contained what the majority of participants identified as the core themes around what the components of urban character were. The desk interviews also highlighted a number of key factors impacting on urban character in sub-case Study Area 1, including globalised built environments and planning policies. While these factors were also at play in sub-case Study Area 2, the desk interview data pointed to the absence of factors relating to the components of urban character and their interplay, rather than their presence, as was the case in Study Area 1. Therefore, given the time restrictions, sub-case Study Area 1 warranted the targeting of further interviews in order to examine in more detail the themes arising from the initial desk interviews. Furthermore, throughout the desk interviews, sub-case Study Area 1 yielded particularly rich and detailed responses and was the area in which participants identified the presence, rather than absence, of the components of urban character, their interplay and the factors impacting them. This was therefore reflected in a slight asymmetry in the overall research findings towards sub-case Study Area 1.

5.6 Research Participants

5.6.1 Quantity of Interviews

The number of semi-structured interviews, including walking interviews, was twenty-eight. Participants were drawn from architectural design, planning, urban policy, and politics.

Table 5.3: Participants and Interview Numbers

Table 5.3 Research Participants 1

PROFESSION	NUMBER of PARTICIPANTS
Architect/Landscape architect	13
Planners	6
Policy Advisers	4
Senior Politician	1

Twenty-four in-depth semi-structured desk interviews were conducted, with each lasting a minimum of one hour per interview. However, interview durations averaged approximately two hours, with some taking over three hours. Four walking interviews were undertaken, with each lasting approximately 1.5 hours and each followed the same route through Study Area 1 (see Figure 5.3). Slight deviations were made to the route at the request of participants if they wanted to draw attention to particular buildings, streets etc.

NB. Originally ten walking interviews were to be conducted. However, only four were possible due to C-19 restrictions. The intention had been to undertake a sufficiently high number in order to be able to cross-reference with desk interviews so as to further excavate participants' identification of urban character, particularly by triggering specific examples related to this by being in the study areas. Furthermore, with participants being *in situ*, the additional walking interviews would have sought to build on the four interviews which were conducted to continue to nuance interview data by potentially enabling more sentient responses. The walking interviews which were undertaken provided particularly rich data related to the interplay between the tangible and intangible components, such as the 'energy' a number of participants highlighted. Therefore, a higher number of walking interviews would have been likely to have augmented data in this aspect of the empirical research.

5.6.2 Participant Sampling

Purposive sampling was applied to recruit participants from the built environment professions. With regards architectural designers, purposive sampling was partly based on a design practice's level of theoretical engagement with historic and contextual factors in the case study. For example, there are a number of practices in the city which expressly (via websites, design statements etc) refer to the city's character or identity and often have specialist experience in repurposing traditional buildings for contemporary purposes. This often involves the physical augmentation of such buildings and attempts to retain the existing building character while interpreting this in a contextually contemporary way.

Purposive sampling was also used to include design professionals responsible for a number of the buildings in the study areas. The selection of participants for walking interviews was through convenience sampling based on those willing to give the additional time commitment.

5.6.3 Selection of Participants

Participants were chosen on the basis of the relevance of their profession, and their experience and focus within the profession. Interviewees were categorised into three main groupings. Additionally, a senior politician, with a particular interest and influence in the case study's built environment, was interviewed.

The three categories were:

- Architectural design
- Planning
- Policy

- Architectural design

This group consisted of architects and urban designers and contained participants identified as having a direct impact on the case study through design outcomes - both directly and via policy input. This group had an integral role in interpreting place through its physical context and functionality, as well

as in interpreting and architecturally realising the wider intangible elements which contribute to a city's character, such as socio-cultural factors.

The selection criteria were firstly based on architectural practices which were, as mentioned, involved in projects which stated - via websites, design statements, specialist media - a particular emphasis on a contextual approach to their design responses in relation to the case study. A number of the practices chosen were known, anecdotally within the local design community, as being indigenous to the case study. Such practices were therefore viewed as being rooted in what was described by a Senior Policy Advisor as the city's '*incredibly strong indigenous architectural culture*' (see Chapter 6: 6.6.2). Therefore, a degree of specialisation and awareness of the case study's architectural aesthetic and urban design was attributable to these practices. Additionally, the practices chosen often had a history of repurposing and augmenting the built heritage, with this criteria partly demonstrating the extent to which practices had an involvement with the city on a design theory basis and which sought to interpret local architectural character in contemporary ways.

Senior architects within the practices often had careers demonstrably interlinked with the wider creative, academic, and socio-cultural life of the city, for example teaching at architectural schools; as members of architectural societies and institutions related to the city's built environment; as well as involvement with cultural and arts bodies. Furthermore, some participant architectural designers had career histories that extended into the local authority - and quasi local authority bodies involved with urban policy and architectural/cultural events - and were therefore able to provide insight into how planning and other relevant departments would view and manage the research issues being discussed. This also meant that interviews with architects often gained from a working knowledge of the practical considerations and aims, and constraints and pressures, faced by city planning and policy officials. This therefore added balance and depth to the data and gave comments from such participants a weight and gravitas rooted in a broad knowledge base of the design, planning and political factors at play in the case study's built environment processes.

As well as architects described as indigenous in their design approach, those associated with a more general or commercial focus were also included in the interviews. For example, larger architectural practices involved in projects with a more international client base and concerned with the design and delivery of large corporate or institutional briefs. This provided the research with a balanced approach to the creative perspectives, understanding and practical considerations of the case study's urban character from practices with potentially different architectural agendas resulting from, amongst other factors, client briefs and the commercial needs of the practices themselves.

Additionally, input from local practices acting as delivery architects for multinational architectural firms was sought. This gave an added insight into how designers with potentially different perspectives and approaches collaborated to deliver architectural projects, and how hybridisation and embedding (see Chapter 8) can find entry points within local contexts and built environment processes.

- Planning

Participants in this category were those within the local authority and private consultants.⁶

Local authority planners were from Glasgow City Council's City Design Planning Services Development and Regeneration Services (DRS). This group was important due to their role in analysing the submissions of design professionals to determine whether such submissions adhered to official planning laws and fulfilled policy ambitions, for example relating to placemaking and the 'placemaking principle' (Scottish Gov't 2013a, b; CPD 2017b). This group was also important in relation to the examination of the more nuanced intentions behind policy regarding the political, social, and economic intent, as well as the more direct design outcomes.

Private planning consultants also formed part of this interview group. These participants also worked directly with local authorities, including Glasgow, as

⁶ NB. National planning officials within the Scottish government were approached for interview. However, either they failed to respond or were unwilling to be interviewed.

well as national governments. Participants were therefore able to provide the research with independent professional perspectives, as well as perspectives informed by the political and policy aims, considerations and tensions, stemming from their involvement with the local authority. Some participants from this group had also been involved in projects focused on citizen engagement with the built environment and therefore were able to contribute to the research's focus on the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character, in particular. This provided a useful cross-over between planning and policy.

- Policy

Participants from varied policy remits and roles were interviewed, including specialisms in architectural heritage, sustainable urban design - in the wider socio-economic sense - and placemaking. Interviewees held senior roles within their organisations and came from former positions related to the built environment, such as planning and architecture. The organisations were quasi-governmental and independent bodies.

The breadth of the policy issues and wider professional experience of participants provided the research interviews with a depth of perspectives on the thesis' objectives. This allowed the data to triangulate (Webb *et al* 1966) with that of architectural designers and planners interviewed from practices and organisations directly involved in the delivery of these disciplines. This triangulation therefore added confidence to the research findings through the use of more than one participant data source and theoretical perspective (Denzin 1970, cited in Bryman 2008: 379) by interviewing different professions with different foci and disciplines within these professions themselves.

5.7 Data Analysis

Thematic coding (see section 5.7.1) was used to analyse the data collected via the semi-structured desk and walking interviews. NVivo software (described in section 5.7.1) was used to generate thematic codes and sub-codes.

Table 5.4: NVivo Thematic Coding

Table 5.4 NVivo Thematic Coding 1

The screenshot shows the NVivo software interface with the 'Analyze' tab selected. The main window displays a list of nodes under the 'CODES' section. The nodes are organized in a tree view, with 'Globalisation + Challenge...' expanded to show its sub-nodes. The table below represents the data shown in the interface.

Name	Files	Referen...
Globalisation + Challenge...	9	106
Branding + Placemaking	22	66
Commercial Drivers	16	52
Historical Precedent	12	28
Hybridisation + Embed...	15	39
Indirect Impacts	7	11
Local vs International A...	16	40
Scale + Materiality + T...	17	42
Influence of Policy	10	130
Interplay Between Tangibl...	8	59
Interplay Between Tangibl...	9	179
Architectural + Policy...	20	76
Architecture vs Building	14	33
Culture + Branding + E...	15	40
Culture + Sensory	18	68
Historical Impacts + Pr...	22	82
Hollistic Approach vs A...	15	39
Natural Elements	14	29
Social Interaction + Us...	24	108
Quotes	17	132
Rules for Urban Characte...	10	76
Sense of Identity - Intangi...	9	36
Sense of Identity - Tangib...	10	127
Tensions Between Comm...	7	56

A narrative analysis was also used in examining the data gathered from walking interviews, which used the same codes as the desk interviews. Along with a contextual analysis of policy and planning, the data analysis from the semi-structured interviews was triangulated (Webb, *et al* 1966) to ensure robust findings that addressed the RQs 1-3. This helped in crystallising the identification of the components of urban character, the interplay between these components, and the ways in which factors like globalisation impacted on the concept and its role in built environment processes.

5.7.1 Thematic Coding and NVivo Software

Thematic coding as a way of generating theory or concept was used in the analysis of the research data. As this research strategy was for an open remit to participant responses on urban character, an approach of allowing concepts to emerge from data via a process of analysing substantial amounts of interview material helped to distil the data into workable categories through the practice of open coding (Bryman 2008; Blaikie 2010). The process of coding provided this analysis with a method of breaking down themes and ideas not immediately apparent, and assisted in ordering the data by labelling, organising, and streaming it into sub-categories which related to a central core category, i.e., a recurring theme or issue emerging from the data analysis. For example, a central core category of: *Globalisation and Challenges to Place Identity*, would be further analysed into sub-categories such as: *Hybridisation and Embedding Processes* - see Table 5.4.

This data from the semi-structured and walking interviews provided the input for coding to enable the creation of an index of themes and subthemes via NVivo. NVivo is a software programme which helps to give an organised and structured approach in the analysis of data gathered from qualitative methods, such as interviews and focus groups. It allows data to be stored in a single database, facilitating access and use. Files can be imported and analysed using techniques such as word choice and key phrases. The creation of 'nodes' are used to code data, with these nodes incorporating references to areas within files where a particular code is located (Bryman 2008). Nodes are '*a collection of references about a specific theme, place, person or other area of interest*' (Bryman 2008: 570). This helps in developing themes and sub-themes from the data for the purposes of analysis.

In this research, these themes were further streamed and organised into emergent core theories. This process identified themed relationships between the data collected from the interviews to highlight patterns and how they varied and developed. Through a process of iterative comparison, where a constant comparing of the '*phenomena being coded under a certain category so that theoretical elaboration of that category can begin to emerge*' (Bryman, 2008:

542), patterns of identification and interpretation from numerous, varied and often ill-defined concepts of what urban character is became more apparent. This process was repeated in relation to themes concerning the interplay between the tangible and intangible components, as well as the factors found to be impacting the concept and its role in the built environment.

As the literature review highlighted, urban character is '*not easily defined nor contained within the spatial field of urban planning regulation*' (Dovey *et al*, 2009: 1). Therefore, to ensure that nuances relating to urban character were captured, the research looked for repetitions in topics concerning not only urban character *per se*, but those more widely descriptive in articulating the built environment's identity. These descriptive terms encompassed both the tangible and intangible components of the wider concept to include and capture the essence and feel of places within the study areas, as well as overall sense of place and character. Repeated use of terms such as, '*comfortable*' and '*energy*' referring to the intangible aspects of place emerged from the interviews, and thereby made it possible to probe and examine further how these related to the tangible aspects of the built environment, for example, scale, materiality, and so on.

As well as ensuring that the broad ingredients of the constituent parts of the built environment were captured and analysed, this was particularly important given that the literature review highlighted that urban character is often used synonymously with terms like place identity and *genius loci*. The analysis of indigenous categories (Bryman, 2008) was therefore important. These were identified through data containing local expressions when describing urban character. Similar to this, any metaphors and analogies arising from participants explaining thoughts and ideas were included in the coding, such as the atmosphere in Study Area 2 being '*Kubrick-like at times*' - a reference to the film Clockwork Orange.

Furthermore, the similarities and differences occurring in the ways in which participants explained ideas and thoughts were extracted, as was that which was omitted from such explanations (Bryman 2008). This was incorporated

into the thematic matrix for analysis, for example the use of similar and different explanations, impressions, or an atmosphere experienced by participants from a building or area. Data on both the tangible and intangible elements generated data sets which were paired.

The same analytical techniques were used to compare and contrast the data between the two study areas, as well as within the individual areas. For example, sub-case Study Area 1 was frequently described as containing the city's energy, with this partly attributed to the scale, massing and urban layout. Whereas sub-case Study Area 2 was often identified as being devoid of this energy due to the effects of the different tangible components of scale, context, urban layout. This therefore aided this research's analysis of the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character and the built environment outcomes of this, and thereby the answering of RQ2 in particular.

5.8 Ethical Considerations

This research was approved in May 2017 by the Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Research Involving Human Subjects at the University of Glasgow.

The main ethical considerations of the thesis related to the anonymity of participants. The built environment profession within the Glasgow and the wider Central Belt of the country is a relatively small pool and as the interviews were conducted with participants based in the cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, it was essential that identities were protected for the purposes of professionalism, both in terms of business interests and broader working relationships.

In order to protect the identity and confidentiality of participants, their contributions were anonymised and referred to through general categories of their professional roles when citing and attributing content. A numerical system distinguished participants within the same professional categories, e.g., Senior Architect 2 or Senior Planner 3. The organisations or design practices for which interviewees worked are not named anywhere in the thesis. It was important that the levels of this confidentiality were communicated and agreed, and as the

researcher I informed participants that general professional categories would be used to anonymise contributions, and that this confidentiality would be maintained throughout the writing of the research and beyond its completion into publication (see Bryman 2008).

Furthermore, it was made expressly clear that participation was voluntary. Consent forms were signed by participants, and as the researcher I ensured that sufficient information about the research and its uses, such as future publication of academic papers and use in teaching, was communicated in order that informed consent could be given. This consent included permission to record interviews and for their transcription, both by hand and electronically via software.

As walking interviews were conducted at specific locations in the case study, issues concerning health and safety were observed - although as these took place within a city centre environment during daylight hours, this involved general attention to ensuring that interviewees were not exposed to any particular risk resulting from their participation in the research.

5.9 Conclusion

This chapter has detailed the qualitative methodology used to address the overall aim of the study, as well as meet the objectives and answer the research questions. The research strategy and design have been outlined, including the rationale for a case study approach. This justified the city of Glasgow as the primary unit of analysis, as well as the sub-case study areas within the city used to focus and aid the feasibility of the research.

The research methods of semi-structured desk and walking interviews have been described, along with the ways in which these were suited to addressing the thesis' objectives and research questions. Furthermore, the selection of participants and the rationale for this have been discussed. Finally, the thematic approach to the analysis of the research data was explained.

The thesis now moves to the empirical chapters. Chapter Six focuses on objective one relating to the identification of urban character via its tangible and intangible components. Chapter Seven will analyse the interplay between these components, and the built environment outcomes of this, and therefore addresses objective two and Three of the study. Chapter Eight examines the factors impacting the components of the case study's urban character, and thereby addresses objective four.

6. Chapter Six: Case Study: Identifying the Components of Urban Character

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the ways in which the tangible and intangible components of urban character were characterised in the case study, along with the hierarchical importance of these. For example, the tangible components, such as the architecture and urban design of the built environment, and how these have been influenced by cultural factors and economic imperatives, as well as a seemingly symbiotic relationship between these, is examined. The chapter also considers the intangible aspects relating to the ways and processes by which people contribute to the urban character of cities, both through direct interaction, and via perceptions of, and attitudes towards, place. This chapter therefore relates to RQ1 and RQ2 of the thesis concerning the extent and ways in which tangible and intangible components are characterised, and how the interplay between these components is important in the design and planning processes of built environment professionals seeking to create uniqueness in Glasgow's built environment.

Introducing Urban Character

As examined in the literature and planning reviews in Chapters 2-4, given the myriad input of the components relating to intangible identity especially, the identification of the holistic urban character of a city, particularly in an age of globalisation, is highly complex. Not only that, but the accelerated pace at which cities change due to the globalisation phenomenon, both physically and culturally, makes the pursuit of urban character subject to increasingly diverse and fast-paced change, and therefore more elusive. However, notwithstanding the rapidity of physical and cultural urban evolution, it is possible to establish many of the components, and the interplay between these, which contribute to place identity and the potentially unique aspects arising from these contributions to the urban character of a city.

As with the research case study, there is a connection and relationship between the culture of cities, in all its forms - industrial, leisure, history, political and so on - and the tangible built environment. However, the extent to which, and how directly these relationships are responsible for a city's unique urban character, and whether its components can be deconstructed to better understand built environment outcomes on place identity, forms an integral part of this research.

6.2 A Sense of Identity from the Tangible Fabric

6.2.1 Materiality, Form and Legibility

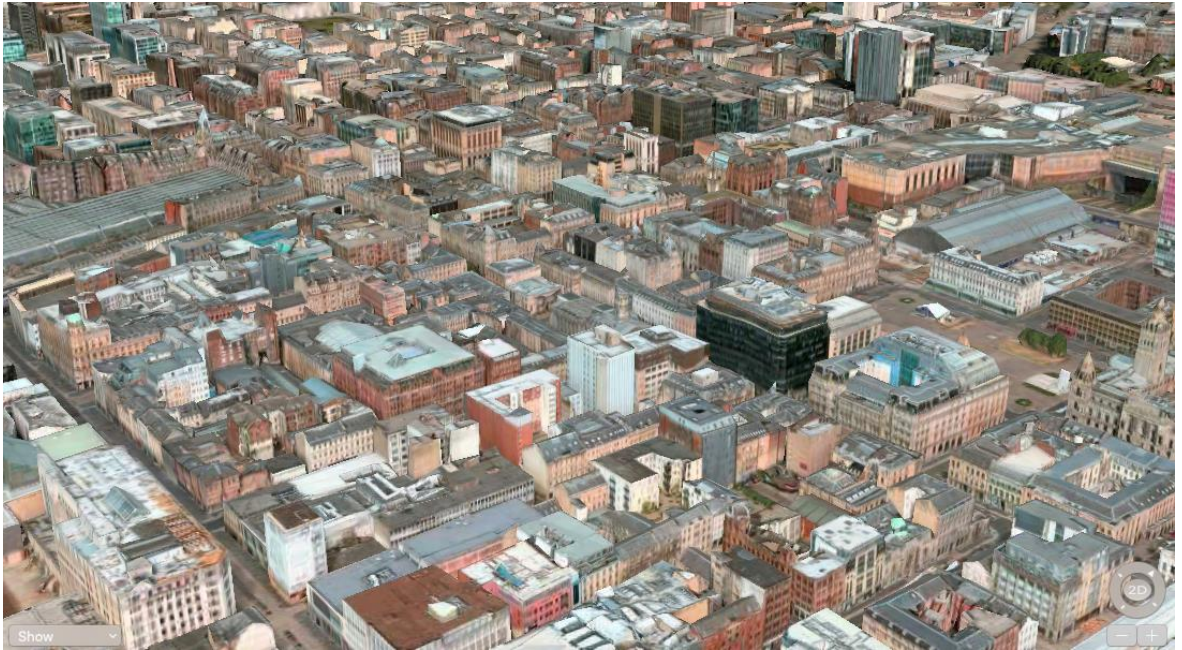
Materiality, Scale, Urban Design + Context

The research found strong repeated themes in the tangible identification of the city, along with distinct variations between the two sub-case study areas of what participants from all professional groups identified as the success of these tangible components in creating place identity and urban character. The findings showed consensus around the identification of many of the components of urban character in sub-case Study Area 1, however, agreement in sub-case Study Area 2 in this respect, while still largely aligned, was more disputatious.

Sub-Case Study Area 1

Study Area 1 consists of the core city centre district.

Figure 6.1: Sub-Case Study Area 1 (city centre)



Source: Apple Maps

When invited to discuss the urban character and identity of sub-case Study Area 1, all participants highlighted the materiality and urban design. Descriptions of the physical urban character focused on the street grid pattern as one of the most important aspects informing and influencing identity. Senior Architect 4 described the Victorian city centre as *'a sort of structural coat-hanger that holds everything up...it's very much about grids and blocks, [there's] a structure and a density and weight to it, which I think is very much its major characteristic.'* Furthermore, the grid was seen to act as guidance to the architectural scale and massing, where if you need to replace a building, you can, as Senior Planner 3 said, take *'a piece of the jigsaw out, and you can put a piece of jigsaw back.'*

Participants from a cross-section of built environment professions - architectural, planning and policy - drew attention to the city's topography, highlighting that an identity and character was generated by the urban design and the surrounding physical context, which, according to Senior Landscape Architect 2, allowed *'you to see an urban response to the drumlins (hills) where essentially public civic buildings and markers are on the top of the drumlins. So,*

you get that legibility that arises from that.' A number of participants identified this topographical interplay as contributing to the uniqueness of the city centre's urban character. This was through an interaction with the indigenous natural elements, with the natural topography, and specifically the drumlins on which the city centre is built, providing, what Senior Planner 3 described as, *'incredibly powerful view corridors.'* These interacted with the Victorian street grid and afforded vistas to the surrounding hills making *'for something that's very of Glasgow'*, in the opinion of Senior Architect 11. This interaction was also highlighted during walking interviews. Here, the same participant pointed out that: *'you get these stunning views right back to the Southside and to the Glennifer Braes, which is that connection back to the city edge and nature.'* Added to this uniqueness was the fact the grid was, as Senior Policy Adviser 1 said, draped over the drumlins with a *'boldness'* characteristic of the city's Victorian urban planning (see Figure 6.2) and *'it [the grid] doesn't pay any attention to the topography. You run straight up the hill; you don't run round the hill. You're straight there. So, I would say that sort of boldness is a thing for me. And I think that's one of the characteristics that exists in Glasgow is that there's a confidence there.'*

Figure 6.2: Glasgow urban grid demonstrates a ‘confidence’



Source: Author's Own

This ‘*confidence*’ expressed in the built environment of the age was raised by a number of participants, including Senior Policy Adviser 1 who said, ‘*looking at the city there’s a huge self-confidence in these buildings.*’ This was attributed to the wealth generated from the city’s central role as an imperial power. As well as the ‘*confidence*’ and ‘*boldness*’ engendered by wealth, the primacy of an economic approach to urban planning taken by the city’s Victorian forefathers showed little sentimentality for the built environment if money was at stake. This was discussed by Senior Architect 1 when commenting on Glasgow’s tendency to be driven by financial expediency, rather than by an attachment to

the preservation of the existing urban landscape. This focus on economic efficiency was evidenced by *'things like moving the University to the West End, building a shipyard in front of St Vincent Crescent, demolishing the castle, and building over the Blackfriars graves.'* This showed an attitude, that in the participant's words, *'doesn't mess about, it just gets it done.'*

As part of, and in reinforcing the strong structural identity highlighted by participants, the city centre's materiality was cited in the majority of interviews, with reference to sandstone universally quoted as the overall representative material. Working in tandem with the gridded and block structure, sandstone was discussed as the element which promoted other tangible qualities associated with the identity of sub-case Study Area 1. According to most participants, *'there's a solidness to Glasgow'* - Senior Architect 5. This solidity, along with the scale of the buildings, was frequently used to describe sub-case Study Area 1 and was seen as intrinsic to the area's sense of identity where, as Senior Policy Adviser 1 stated, *'you think of a certain scale and the grid pattern'* when describing the city centre. The overall effect of these qualities gave rise to seemingly a paradox in the city's distinct identity and character through its popularity as a cinematic stand-in for other, usually North American, cities. Senior Architect 11 commented, *'it's really interesting that it's got that sort of very Glaswegian character, but it can then double up as something completely different.'*

Frequent comparisons were made with New York City and the similar urban design which was, according to Senior Architect 4, related to what he thought was *'very much about grids and blocks, city blocks. And coming back to New York (in comparison), its strength is very much in its masonry, build quality, its masculinity, and legibility again, which is monolithic'* (see Figure 6.3). The strong tangible identity was therefore reliant on urban design features that acted to strengthen the character beyond simply a local distinctiveness to allow it to project different qualities of what constitutes an urban environment. This ability of the city to, as Senior Architect 11 said, *'double up as something completely different'*, was illustrated in its popularity as a backdrop for films

which were often not portraying Glasgow but other urban environments like Philadelphia, San Francisco, and New York.⁷ As Senior Architect 4 reflected:

'It's funny also how in recent years Glasgow has been used for big film projects, where again they've not necessarily used the buildings but the views, the fabric of the city. And that says something to me about the nature of what comes back to that thing about, how do people view cities, that whole sort of idea of this strong, muscular structure that people think of cities. Whether it's New York or Philadelphia or wherever, it has this sort of quality to it that that's what people expect cities to be. It says something about the city that people regard it as having those qualities that people love about cities.'

This, almost contradictory view of Glasgow's identity as having a strong physical urban character of its own, but at the same time being able to cinematically represent North American cities, suggested an interesting dichotomy in that it was a perception of what was seen as a generic representation of an urban form that also gave the city its distinctive urban character - perhaps as a city's city.

Figure 6.3 Cinematic Stand-In 1



Figure 6.3: Glasgow's built environment as a cinematic stand-in for US cities, especially New York - dichotomy of a distinctive urban character but which also could represent other cities.

Source: Author's Own

⁷ Cloud Nine (San Francisco (Cloud Nine)), World War Z (Philadelphia), Patrick Melrose. Indiana Jones. Batman (New York).

Sub-case - Study Area 2

Figure 6.4: Sub-Case Study Area 2 (Scottish Events Campus + Pacific)



Source: Apple Maps

The architectural and urban design components identified in sub-case Study Area 2 contrasted with sub-case Study Area 1, according to the majority of participants, and therefore provided a useful analysis of the ways in which the city was able, or not, to use these components to renew and create its contemporary built environment.

Sub-case Study Area 2 focused on a district of the city which has been subject to extensive urban renewal from the 1980s onwards. Formally at the centre of the city's shipbuilding industry, it does not have the architectural and urban design layering of centuries of continuous development seen in sub-case Study Area 1, according to participants. As a result, while the research found consensus in the importance of the area in terms of its economic and branding contribution, as well as on neighbouring areas, most participants highlighted the lack of the components, both tangible and intangible, identified in sub-case Study Area 1 as contributing to the city's urban character. Senior Architect 4 said, '*the Clyde waterfront doesn't have that legibility because the commercial functions are very much more piecemeal and not a continuum. Whereas the city centre is very*

much a continuum.' This was in part due to a *tabula rasa* approach which was often seen as '*a romantic idea*' but which, according to Senior Planner 2, negates the fact that a '*city is valid as a concept when it is organic.*' Therefore, while there was a more restricted choice when regenerating sub-case Study Area 2 due to its historic use in shipbuilding, the rich mix, context and guidance given by the city centre continuum was an entirely absent component in its regeneration. The majority of participants argued that this had led to an area devoid of a strong sense of local urban character, and indeed an architecture and urban design which, as Senior Architect 2 said, '*could have been built anywhere.*' The cohesion and contextualisation found in the city centre, resulting from the grid and block design, was identified as missing and therefore the legibility necessary for strong tangible identity was reduced, with different approaches due to different agendas creating very different outcomes, according to the same participant. In highlighting the stark contrasts between the city centre and waterfront, Senior Architect 2 pointed out that '*inside here [Study Area 1] when that was all put together in the planning brief, there was economic development, but it's come over time. When Foster and Partners did that [Study Area 2] surface car parking was required. So, the structure of the plan in here was a series of individual building types*', rather than a cohesive and coherent approach orchestrated by the city centre grid.

Although the area featured in marketing and branding material, the tangible identity was, Senior Architect 6 argued, largely cosmetic and reliant on what he described as the '*long-view from the Kingston bridge or wherever.*' While providing city marketing shots, this identity failed in terms of human interaction and was frequently described by participants as a '*desolate*' and '*barren*' experience and failing to, as Senior Policy Adviser 3 said, '*connect with the rest of the city in any meaningful way.*' The widely held view amongst participants was that this was due largely to an architectural approach of a series of 360° objects, described by Senior Architect 11 as '*shouty shaped buildings*' (see Figure 6.5). Participants saw these object buildings as lacking contextualisation, with Senior Policy Adviser 3 likening them to being '*a bit like a collector's cabinet, but not that discerning a collector.*' An architectural approach of standalone buildings, rather than an urban environment recognising and seeking to use the appropriate components identified in sub-case Study Area 1 as

integral to the city's strong urban character, resulted in an area that Senior Planner 2 said, was composed of '*objects and not spaces*' in which the architects saw '*their buildings [as having] great character, but as a place [not] really having much.*'

Figure 6.5: Foster and Partners Hydro Arena - seen by most participants as lacking place contextualisation



Source: Author's Own

Homogeneity in Glasgow's Tangible Identity

In examining Glasgow's tangible identity, the question of urban homogeneity arose as a historical influence. Sub-case Study Area 1 displayed elements of what was described as a homogeneous form, in terms of the urban design via the grid and factors like building plot sizes, but also the palette of sandstone as the predominant material where it was estimated by Senior Architect 6 that '*80 to 90% [was] distinguished by sandstone.*' However, it was this materiality which added to the distinctive tangible urban character, where, according to Senior Planner 2, '*the homogenous nature of sandstone gives [the area] that strong characteristic.*' This homogeneity was however largely seen as restricted to the

area's materiality and urban design, and even the structural rigour of the grid varied between the western and eastern parts of the city centre, most notably the older Merchant City quarter. Senior Architect 1 highlighted that the grid is slightly different in this quarter, and tends to terminate street vistas with landmark buildings, rather than views beyond the city centre as seen further west.

Interviews indicated that it was in architecture that the city centre's diversity and juxtaposition of styles was most apparent. Senior Planner 3 said that: *'Glasgow has historically, and always will be, a remarkable collision in many ways of buildings' ... 'When you drive over the Kingston Bridge you're reminded of just how much of a collision there is. It begins to reveal itself when you come into the guts of the city.'* According to Senior Policy Adviser 4, the diversity of the city's architecture helped define its identity via a complex history charting the periods of Glasgow's purpose and function. This left a particularly distinct tangible urban character encompassing, what the participant detailed as *'Glasgow Baroque school, the Glasgow Style school, which both coexist simultaneously, and then you get American Classicism coming in on the back of that. But which nicely ties into a kind of Georgian and early Victorian and mid-Victorian Classicism as well'*. As the architectural critic Ian Nairn poetically put it: *'[Glasgow] is like a Beethoven symphony played over 150 years...'*. Here the research exposed, what *prima facie*, seemed like another contradiction in the distinctiveness of the area's tangible identity in the global appropriation of architectural styles, but which nevertheless created a strong local physical urban character. This was explained by Senior Planner 2:

'It is preserving the past in the sense of buildings which are very majestic if you like, not just in materials, but also in the architectural expression that they're using. None of that is of course original because it's been taken by all the periods, all the countries. But nevertheless, it's been so consistent that it defines the character of the place.' - Senior Planner 2

Therefore, the research drew out participants' questioning of the simplicity and uniqueness of tangible identity, with the role of the interplay between different components highlighted as needed in unpacking the local urban character

beyond architectural style and façade to encompass other physical urban design contributions. This interplay was suggested in the complex and sometimes subtle outcomes of the relationships creating physical identity, in that, as Former Senior Planner 1 explained, *'the buildings we've got are a complete range of different ideas coming from different parts of the world. But they're held together by the grid iron, held together by the materiality.'* This point was repeatedly emphasised by participants in stating that the tangible character of Glasgow was less attached to landmark buildings - although notable exceptions were cited - but more in a holistic viewing of the urban fabric, where, as Senior Policy Adviser 1 said, *'...you think of stone, you think of a certain scale, and the grid pattern. And to me it's that rather than any individual building.'*

Infrastructure and Renewal

Glasgow's built environment has had a particularly violent history in terms of urban renewal and regeneration, with the city having undergone frequent cycles of demolition and rebuilding - contrasting with neighbouring Edinburgh, as illustrated by Senior Architect 1:

'It's almost like the built form of two intellectual arguments. One [Edinburgh] is constructed out of a sort of medieval way of looking at the world: defence and beyond this the town, and the loch and then you go across it and build the New Town, which is presumably at the time quite space age. And then in Glasgow, that kind of idea of, you know..., our old professor of architecture said they knocked down the medieval city to build the Georgian city, then they knocked down the Georgian city to build the Victorian city. And now they're knocking down bits of the Victorian city to build a modern city.'

Interviews highlighted the contribution of the grid iron of sub-case Study Area 1 to the sense of identity from the tangible fabric, however, in the post-war period of urban renewal this *'structural coat hanger'*, as it was described earlier by Senior Architect 4, was challenged by a political view of modernity and the design ideology of modernism (see Chapter Four). Interviews drew attention to these infrastructure projects and how these resulted in the fringes of the city centre grid subject to a strategy of Comprehensive Development Areas (CDAs)

and replaced with, as described by Senior Policy Adviser 2, '*layers of big hostile infrastructure*', such as the M8 motorway. The area on the western edge of Study Area 1 at Charing X and Anderston (see Figure 6.6), and stretching to the river Clyde, evidenced the city's embracing of a particularly American style of urban thinking, according to Senior Architect 1 who said, '*Glasgow [has] this rigour which is the American thinking through this idea of efficiency.*' However, and setting aside any discussion on the merits, or otherwise, of the architectural form, this was where Glasgow's strong sense of identity from the tangible fabric broke down, according to Senior Architect 8. The gridded form and its design guidance were usurped by the characteristics of a modernist approach to urban planning, where, as the same participant argued, '*you only start to become aware of it [the grid] not being there as an underpinning comfort blanket, let's say, once you've moved outside of it and there's a fragmentation of it. And it feels, I think, slightly weaker for that. I think the character of the grid is its strength.*' Therefore, the scale and coherence of the study area was identified as having faded, and with it the rules which can be used as guidance in creating the characteristics of architectural form and materiality associated with the local urban character. This attenuation of scale and coherence was in large part, according to Senior Architect 11, '*to do with the scar with the motorway towards the west hand side of the study area where you've got a lot of non-Glaswegian buildings, if you like. You've got the brick hotels and the very strange military building (see Figures 6.6 & 6.7) down in that part of the city, and concrete of the Anderston Centre.*'

Figure 6.6 'Non-Glaswegian' Building



Source: Author's Own

Figure 6.7: Anderston- post-war redevelopment where street grid is broken



Source: Author's Own

As a result, it can be argued from the interviews that this western fringe of the city centre had more in common with sub-case Study Area 2's reprise of modernism, and the movement's signature of 'object' buildings focused more on themselves than on developing or enhancing an urban fabric and character within the wider city context. Again, it is important to highlight that this faltering urban identity was not essentially due to an architectural form, there are numerous examples of modernity in the gridded centre, but as an urban design and morphology lacking the elements already identified as signalling and guiding a strong sense of tangible urban character. As Senior Architect 8 contended, if there is an absence of a design sensitivity that seeks *'to be respectful and well-mannered and part of a dialogue that contributes, it is unlikely to stand the test of time particularly well.'*

However, as was reiterated by all participants from across the professions and throughout the interviews, the evolution of cities is constant and necessary and, as Senior Policy Adviser 1 said: *'it's not static and the function of the city is changing.'* The ways in which urban environments physically develop in response to contemporary demands is crucial and is therefore examined throughout this research. As Senior Architect 3, from a large firm argued: *'I don't think that a city's character is borne out of having sturdy masonry or stone buildings, I really don't. I think cities evolve in character and they have to evolve in*

character, because what was fit for purpose a hundred years ago, 50 years ago, is just not where it's at now.' Therefore, the suggestion was that the very idea of the sense of identity from the tangible components already discussed is constantly challenged by the forces of commerce and globalisation, and within that the very perception of Glasgow's physical urban character.

6.2.2 Cultural Drivers of the Built Environment

This section examines the research findings relating to the cultural drivers which have, directly, manifested in the tangible fabric of the city. Distinct themes concerning the ways in which Glasgow's physicality has been influenced by cultural forces and imperatives were established through the participant interviews. These began with the city's role in the Industrial Revolution and imperialism of the Victorian era, through to the repurposing and rebranding of Glasgow from the late 20th century onwards via its cultural assets, including its built environment. The city's indigenous design culture, and how this was established and continues to shape the city, was also highlighted, and will therefore be considered. These cultural factors identified by the research interviews are important components of the case study's urban character and help to further unpack the diverse elements which contribute to capturing the city's holistic urban character.

Historical Influences on the Built Environment

Cities, according to Senior Architect 11, are the results of *'decisions and economics and history from a long time ago which we built on top of, and which gives cities their individual character and characteristics.'* This role of history in the city's character and the strong relationship between the cultural elements of this and the tangible built environment, was a central theme highlighted by participants. The most significant, and until recently, wilfully marginalised, historical influence on Glasgow's built environment was its central role in British imperialism, and particularly the transatlantic slave trade (Devine, 2015). As Senior Policy Adviser 3 noted, *'slavery and coal created the Glasgow art-nouveau, the Glasgow Boys (painters), a whole bunch of stuff, and people with a whole load of money that could afford to invest in that. So, whatever the kind of morals, you look at those things and you go: there's nowhere else like*

that in the world.' This financial wealth saw largess lavished on the built environment which still forms the Victorian core of the city centre. The interviews identified this built environment as engendering a strong urban character and a sense of place attachment through a fondness and familiarity with this architecture. However, as pointed out by Senior Policy Adviser 2, the impact of this cultural and economic past on the built environment may be seen in an ostentatious architectural grandeur and inspire place attachment, but the appreciation of this needs to be tempered by the political and cultural reality that made it possible:

'We fall in love and we romanticise all these buildings, and they are beautiful and stuff, but they were funded by people who got money by trading violence and killing people and it just so happens that the wrapper looks appealing. So, let's just be a bit honest about the constructed romanticism that we participate in to make the environment benign.'

Former Senior Planner 1 acknowledged that, it is only relatively recently that such 'honesty' has come to the fore, with this cultural and economic aspect being re-exposed and the city only now beginning to '*stand up and be counted for going into slavery in a big way in that cultural triangle between Africa, the West Indies and America.*' This stark connection to an ugly cultural layer, ironically reflected in what is generally seen in facades of beauty, like an architectural Dorian Gray, highlighted the importance of the relationship between the past and the built environment. The connection provides insight to this research's understanding of the historical elements at play in the creation of urban identity and character, and the ways in which people perceive and engage with the city.

Repurposing and Rebranding in Response to Economic Adversity

Interviews also emphasised a more recent historical impact on Glasgow's urban character resulting from the city's reaction to economic adversity. Former Senior Planner 1 said, '*[Glasgow was] a post-industrial city on its knees in effect in the 70s.*' Senior Planner 3 highlighted the rapid decline in traditional industries and the acceleration of neoliberal agendas at this time. Faced with

the accompanying intercity and international competition for employment and wealth creation, Glasgow wrestled with the fact that it was now, the same participant stated, *'part of globalisation, [and was] hostage to the wider European market.'* This realisation of a changing economic landscape was again highlighted by Senior Planner 3 with respect to the 1988 Garden Festival, a cultural event credited with kick-starting the city's response to its industrial decline. The participant argued that *'the speed and demise of the shipyards and the docks gave an added impetus. That's why the Garden Festival became the imperative to sort of reboot and reenergise [and] to create a positive out of a negative.'* This suggested the beginnings of an understanding of the impact such events could have on the built environment, and that culture-led initiatives began to form the basis for the city to explore how to stem blight and obsolescence through its existing tangible and intangible urban character. According to Senior Architect 8, the impacts of the Garden Festival in this cannot be underestimated as *'the catalyst for everything that happened in Glasgow. I remember before that Glasgow had quite a difficult reputation.'* He added that the impacts of the event were not restricted to the physical environment *per se*, as the festival also acted as a driver of cultural change, including attitudes. This was demonstrated by the participant's family's initial scepticism as they: *'all felt it was a complete waste of money, spending the money on the Garden Festival.'* However, as he continued, once *'they all started to go and realised how fantastic it was, all of a sudden the paradigm shifts and the dialogue changes, and the question is: "why don't we have more public space like this?"'*

Participants further drew attention to this cultural shift in perceptions becoming increasingly embedded in the psyche and physicality of the city following other culturally led festivals, such as the European City of Culture in 1990, and the City of Architecture and Design in 1999.⁸ As Senior Architect 1 reflected: *'I think that was very interesting, the idea of arts as a sort of renewal of place and community and culture and everything else.'* These events can be seen to have crystallised the relationships between the tangible and intangible urban character of the city. This had a direct impact on the built environment, leaving

⁸ The tangible and intangible legacy of these events continues as a direct and integral part of contemporary Glasgow's cultural, architectural, and economic identity and will be examined further in the context of interplay in Chapter 7.

a significant architectural legacy. As well as new buildings arising from the shift to a service-based and culture-led economy, such as the Royal Concert Hall created for the 1990 festival, other buildings and city quarters were repurposed from past industrial uses. The same senior architect gave an example of the changes of use that took place, such as that of a former tram depot being converted into the Tramway art gallery and explained that *'Glasgow was pretty much at the forefront of that type of exploration.'* This extended to the repurposing and regeneration of numerous buildings into arts-orientated uses, with the refurbishing of the McLellan Galleries, and classical music venue the City Halls, along with the extension of a city centre library to incorporate a gallery of modern art. Interviews further revealed the extent of this cultural shift, with a whole city quarter, once an industrial warehouse district, finding a new identity. Senior Architect 1 explained:

'I think the thing about Glasgow as well is reuse of older buildings. I think the idea of reusing buildings like the Tron Theatre - [that] was never originally a theatre, the Fruitmarket [music venue] used to be a fruit market and Cafe Gandolfi used to be a cheese market, Babbity Bowsters used to be a store for barrels; there's been this kind of adaptive thing.'

Glasgow's Design Culture and its Contribution to Urban Character

Ideas around, what was described by Senior Policy Adviser 4 as a local design culture, emerged from the interviews, with the suggestion that this was a particularly indigenous element in contributing to Glasgow's urban character. As well as being a contemporary factor, interviews also discussed this design culture as having been historically influential, and as a bellwether to the preservation, enhancement, and evolution of the city's urban character. According to the same senior policy adviser, Glasgow has had periods where it enjoyed an *'incredibly strong indigenous architectural culture'*, particularly in the Victorian and Edwardian eras. The participant contended this was as a result of the wealth being generated, enabling the funding of grandiose projects and giving talented homegrown architects opportunities to develop styles and expression more unique to the city. Senior Policy Adviser 3 posited that, buildings like the Art-Nouveau St Vincent Chambers, also known as the 'Hatrack' (see Figure 6.8), was an architectural example of this local design culture, with

'the Hatrack, and buildings like that, embodying [and are] very creative of its place; unique, as unique as these things can be.' Glasgow developed architecture with a *'style that doesn't exist anywhere else'* according to the same participant, and although *'there are parallel movements, and you can see similarities in aspects, those buildings like that are unrepeatable.'* The city's most celebrated architect, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, was also cited as part of the indigenous design culture. Mackintosh was seen by Senior Architect 4 as being influenced by the relationship between local cultural elements and architectural form, resulting in the design of buildings which, while again set in parallel movements like Art-Nouveau and a Japanese style, were nevertheless, due to factors like climate, light, materiality, industrial setting, more unique to Glasgow and architecturally revolutionary. Indeed, as Senior Architect 1 enthused, *'if you look at photographs of a typical Victorian room at that time it was like, you know, it [the Mackintosh House] really was like punk rock.'*

Figure 6.8: The 'Hatrack' identified as an architectural style unique to Glasgow



Source: Author's Own

This design culture persists in Glasgow, argued Senior Policy Adviser 3, and pointed out that *'more recently there are practices which work in the city*

who've got their own distinctive style [and] what you have is a very rich and very varied output from contemporary practice [ensuring] Glasgow is going to have a legacy of buildings.' Therefore, the suggestion was that there was the potential for a strong local design culture to interpret and respond to cultural influences and imbue architectural expression with a more unique urban identity. For example, the city's enthusiasm for music, and the general extroverted nature of its citizens and their propensity towards cultural exuberance and ostentation, frequently mentioned by participants, was manifest in the built environment, with designs seeking to reflect this by injecting 'pizzazz', as Senior Architect 7 put it, to their architecture.⁹

Figure 6.9: Theatre Royal extension described as a physical expression of Glasgow's cultural exuberance and ostentation.



Source: Author's Own

However, the contemporary impact of this design culture was contested to a degree. Senior Architect 5 argued that, particularly due to economic pressures,

⁹ This interplay between social attitudes and characteristics and the city's built environment will be examined further later in this chapter.

'there is no particular style that's evolving in Glasgow's contemporary architecture because it's actually responding to other things that are less about the importance of the architecture, and more about getting it to meet budgetary requirements and to meet briefs, and to actually allow it to get to the table.' Senior Policy Adviser 3 agreed, to the extent that, while there remains a strong local design culture, with practices developing a distinctive style, *'whether or not there's a collective style - I kind of don't think there is. There's much more that distinguishes them than links them.'* Therefore, this suggests that although the endurance of a local design culture has to a degree helped preserve a more unique architectural identity in Glasgow, this has not necessarily resulted in a contemporary local design homogeneity. This poses further questions for this research regarding the extent to which this design culture has resulted in a more distinctive contemporary local urban character. For example, whether the design processes were similar to those participants identified in the Victorian era where the appropriation of international styles were embedded in particular ways and created a distinct local architectural identity. These are important considerations and will therefore be explored through later sections and chapters addressing globalisation and the hybridisation and embedding processes.

6.3 A Sense of Identity from the Intangible Fabric

As this research is concerned with the holistic identification and understanding of urban character, the focus of this section turns more directly to the contribution of people in relation to the sense of identity from the intangible fabric, or as Senior Architect 1 described it, the *'cultural soup'* of the city. The hierarchy of importance of people's interaction with the city and the contribution of this to urban character, their attitudes and perceptions, and the forming and changing of these towards themselves in relation to the city, was raised by interviewees. As well as this, participants raised the ways in which political and economic forces contributed to these attitudes and perceptions. Furthermore, the processes by which emotional attachments were generated also forms part of the section.

6.3.1 The Hierarchy of Identity

According to the majority of participants, it is essential to draw attention to the limitations of the tangible elements in isolation when identifying urban character. It was argued as important to emphasise that cities and their urban character were as much about people and the intangible qualities they bring, as it was the physical environment and its architectural design. For example, as Former Senior Planner 1 said: *'I like to think it's not primarily about the buildings. To me it's about the people and how the people interact with one another.'* Therefore, it is helpful to outline some of the broader themes relating to the more intangible qualities contributed by people in the identification of local urban character.

Interviews indicated that the physical success of cities resulted from the interaction between people and place, and although this may appear obvious, the research identified that it was not necessarily as obvious or influential in the processes of planning and designing Glasgow's built environment as might have been expected. As Former Senior Planner 1 stated: *'...you've got to be very careful that we don't get too tied into that's a great building [because] if it is a great building that actually has no one in it, or no one is engaging with it, it's pointless.'* Participants argued that it was integral to a city's ability to retain, enhance, and evolve its unique urban character through the imperative that people, and the intangible qualities they bring to place, are *'central to everything you do, because if you don't then you create a zombie film set'*, according to Senior Architect 6.

The central importance of this was highlighted through a discussion on the ability of people to interact with cities in a democratic way. The built environment's role as a connector between people and place was seen to be vital in this aspect. As Senior Architect 4 claimed, the street, especially, can function as an *'urban connector'* between citizens as they have a greater control over this space than they have the architecture. The participant noted that the private or semi-private nature of buildings, along with their inevitable replacement or change of function, makes this connector less accessible and less consistent, although nevertheless important. This idea of urban connectors was further identified when participants were asked to suggest places of emotional

attachment, or that captured the essence of Glasgow. The buildings cited as intrinsic to this were either public, or easily accessible by the public. This was not confined to a building's architectural merits, or necessarily a uniqueness of form, or as a signifier of the city's physical identity, but to places that allowed the congregation and interaction of people from all demographics. The importance of this interaction was communicated by Senior Planner 2, when he said that *'the very moment that people have ownership they buy in to the place, they start to belong to the place, they feel that the place is theirs. Then they will start to inject their own identity and the place will absorb that. If there is none of that dynamic, the place has failed.'* For example, Kelvingrove Art Galleries, the Botanic Gardens, the People's Palace, Central Station and George Square were frequently named beyond simply their architectural merit and distinguishability, and described as *'innovative and social, very social buildings'*, by Senior Architect 4. They were highlighted as public or quasi-public places where citizens can interact and therefore generate the intangible aspects

of urban character enabled by built environments which set the scene and encourage, actively or incidentally, such behaviours. These places have, what Senior Architect 6 called, the *'drag effect'*. This, he argued, caused people to linger and therefore inhabit a particular part of the city. While many of these examples stemmed from the city's Victorian era and therefore often had an accompanying grandeur of the architectural age, this was not a prerequisite to them being people places. The Barrowlands ballroom and market (Barras) in the city's East End were named by participants as such places, and as Figure 6.10 illustrates, they are not, save for the ballroom's illuminated sign displayed at night, particularly notable buildings or places. Yet the music venue and market were cited as synonymous with Glasgow's urban character and where strong place-specific memories were generated. As Senior Architect 4 said, *'The Barras still has energy and an entity about it that people hold on to.'*

Figure 6.10: Barrowlands ballroom - described as synonymous with Glasgow's urban character



Source: Author's Own

Furthermore, the research drew attention to the hierarchical importance of this connection between people and place in a city's urban character, and that it can vary depending on the city in question. As Glasgow and Edinburgh are less than 60 miles apart, the former being the country's largest city and the latter its capital, comparisons were frequently made. Interestingly, participants repeatedly highlighted the intangible qualities of Glasgow's citizens in relation to its identity, and that, as Senior Architect 4 argued:

'Glasgow's identity becomes nonphysical. If you were to talk to the man in the street and say: what do you think Glasgow's identity is? They would undoubtedly, I would say 8 out of 10, maybe 9 out of 10 would say, it's all about the people, and it's about the way that you are embraced in the city on a certain level. And then they would start to talk about the city in its physical form. So, identity for me is a very broad term as it has to encompass all of these things cause it can't just be physical, and it can't just be visual.'

While it can be contended that all cities are intrinsically linked to their citizens, Edinburgh included, the research found that it is potentially the hierarchy of this component in the city's urban character which differs. For example, *'...there's a very strong cultural identity [in Glasgow] that arguably isn't actually quite rooted in the same way of physical place'*, according to Senior Landscape Architect 2. This sentiment is reflected in the city's current marketing slogan:

People Make Glasgow. The hierarchical difference was also suggested by a number of participants responding to being asked whether they thought that an examination of Edinburgh's urban character would also result in the intangible components being so prominent. The indication was that this element might not feature as highly as with Glasgow, as alluded to by Senior Architect 4 reflecting that although *'I've only spent short periods working in Edinburgh and not lived there... I think it would be quite different.'* This was furthered in so much as the comparisons between the cities focused on the legibility of Edinburgh, and its identity being more associated with landmark buildings. The same participant explained that in his view:

'Edinburgh has a much more visual tangibility than Glasgow. It's a much more visual city, in the sense that it is, well, one it's the capital so therefore it brings with that all sorts of other factors that come into that. It has the national institutions, all sorts of different things going on. It's more legible, I think, maybe more legible than tangible'.

In Glasgow, a more direct citing of the intangible components recurred. As Senior Policy Adviser 2 stated, *'The difference between Glasgow and Edinburgh is that those contradictions happen in rapid succession from corner to corner and in public. Whereas Edinburgh doesn't like to show it so much. It likes to push it to the edge...the identity and character of Glasgow is not just a physical thing, it's about the contradictions and the frozen dreams and the mishmash...Glasgow's identity is about playing it out in public. It's not always pretty. It's not always nice. It's not even always honest.'*¹⁰

Having outlined the hierarchy of the tangible and intangible components in identifying Glasgow's urban character, it is necessary to examine in more detail what the research found these intangible qualities to be, and the role they played in shaping the city's identity.

6.3.2 Culture, Usage and Attitudes as Urban Identity

¹⁰ It must be noted that the focus of the research was on Glasgow and not a comparative case study between the two cities

The Social Construction of Place and Identity

According to Senior Landscape Architect 2: *'The association of culture with [cities] and what that comes to represent is arguably very important, and it is an aspect of identity and how people define place and themselves relative to it.'* This calls attention to the role indigenous cultures play in identifying the intangible components of urban character through the attitude, interaction and use of place by people. As participants have highlighted, the built form in and of itself does not wholly capture or express urban character. It is the role of people, and their interaction within the built environment, that is suggested as fundamental to a city's identity. As Senior Policy Adviser 4 said, *'I think cities do kind of express the character of the citizens who live in them, and it's about the aspirations and expression of civility of those people who live in them. It's like a consensual construction.'* These constructs were suggested as being created by people contextualising the inherent anonymity of the form and materiality of built environments and personalising these in numerous ways, such as through experiences, memories, and relationships. This was illustrated by Senior Policy Adviser 2 in reflecting that, cities are *'a kind of archaeology of social construction. It is the identity, it's the layers of identity. None of them are the identity of the city, but all of them are fragments of decisions and chances lost and opportunities made.'*

Furthermore, as Senior Architect 4 said, *'different groups of society use the city differently and think about their city differently. I think as a resident, as somebody who lives and works here, has emotional connection to the city, I look at it in a very particular way.'* The participant compared this with a friend new to Glasgow who, *'coming in as an outsider [and] who's now resident and living in the city views it a completely different way.'* This differing perception of a city is not of course unique to the case study, however the participant suggests that each place or city does provide its own set of contexts: social, cultural, economic. This helps frame a place and act as a canvass for this constructed identity, individually and collectively. Therefore, as participants highlighted, the consensual construct of a city is composed of multiple layers of identity, dependent on factors like place familiarity, but also demographics, ethnicity, education, economics. However, as Senior Policy Adviser 2 posited, these

identities do not of themselves represent a city's identity *per se* but contribute to the complex intangible character through, what Former Senior Planner 1 called, the '*cultural expression of the population.*'

The Good, the Bad and the 'Edgy' - the inclusion of diversity in urban character

As discussed, while the intangible identity that people contribute to urban character is myriad and complex, cities as a whole can still be associated, or indeed stereotyped, with certain traits and characteristics, such as Glasgow being '*a kind of edgy, kind of cheeky city*', according to Senior Planner 1. Although these traits offer limited scope in identifying the components of intangible urban character, they nevertheless need to be considered as they were repeatedly cited by participants and are important in the interplay between the tangible and intangible components and architectural outcomes discussed in sections 6.4 and 6.5, where they will be examined further.

Participants said that Glasgow was a '*gallus*' (bold), extrovert and '*edgy*' city that displays a certain '*swagger*' in its attitude. According to Senior Politician 1: '*There's something about the way in which Glaswegians inhabit the space of the city that's quite distinctive, I think...[an] urban swagger*'. Interviews also identified that incorporating attitudes into the city's overall collective construct allowed a richness of character and was, suggested Senior Policy Adviser 2, '*part of the power of Glasgow [in hosting] the presence of all these.*' Preserving the democracy of the diverse social constructs was seen by participants as an important contributory factor in the city's urban character, as was the need to guard against control and governance leading to the reduction of such social diversity. As Former Senior Planner 1 asserted:

'...you don't want to lose that quality (edgy) in a city. Everybody's got a right to be in the city and sometimes they may be doing things that you think as a middle class [person], you don't think that's particularly right. But you know, stuff it. That's what a city is about. Cities are quite edgy in some regard. And the minute you sweep that off the carpet, you'll lose part of that part as well.'

This was further emphasised by Senior Architect 6, who maintained that *‘there are certain places that make us feel good, and there are certain places that make us feel bad - two extremes. Good cities have a bit of both, because if it’s all black or white it’s not a good city.’* This underlined the general consensus in interviews that it is often when cities are denuded of these diverse components of intangible urban character that they become sterile and fail as places of human interaction and curiosity. The Broomielaw quarter in sub-case Study Area 1, mono purposed as a financial services district, was one such place identified as lacking this interaction and, as Senior Politician 1 admitted: *‘although the international finance district in that part of the city has been a big success in terms of jobs and investment, it clearly has failed in terms of a place. It’s not a good place in terms of a modern city.’*

Control and Governance in Defining a City’s Urban character

The interviews therefore explored that the social construction of a city can be limited in so far as it is controlled and governed by those seeking to administer the numerous, and often competing, needs and functions of a place, at both a national and local level. Issues of governance highlighted the *‘very complex question’* of *‘who defines what the city is, and who is it for’*, according to Senior Architect 4, who formerly worked in local government. Political agendas in urban governance were therefore highlighted by a number of participants. Senior Policy Adviser 2 contended that Glasgow is reflective of the political systems and power structures exercised by the Labour Party in Scotland for decades which *‘managed people’* and *‘controlled people.’* This included how this political control extended directly to the built environment where, according to Senior Architect 10, *‘every other city in the world it felt like, would do single aspect housing, but Glasgow, as its members were Old Labour, grew up in single-ends looking into the bins and they just saw it as a single-end and said: “you’re not doing it [single aspect housing].”’*

Interviews exposed tensions in the social, political, and even physical construct of Glasgow, and how these were heightened by competing ideas and perceptions of needs, as well as how these were expressed and delivered. As Senior Policy Adviser 2 stated, *‘people will use different frameworks to manage what essentially is an anxiety about the presence of others.’* Such tensions were

shown to be further complicated by the limits of governing bodies to capture, understand and physically express the diversity of social constructs. This was seen in a comment by Senior Architect 4, formerly in local government, expressing the opinion that: *'I guess it's a tangible expression of social, cultural, economic needs and therefore I just wonder as a society how we can input into that. And I'm just not sure that governments, or local government, or city government, necessarily get a handle on that and understand all that.'*

However, this understanding and allowing the expression of urban diversity was nevertheless argued as crucial in a city's changing and evolving urban character, as discussed in section 6.3.1 concerning the success of places that create a *'drag effect'* (Senior Architect 6) by encouraging people to linger and inhabit the city.

Inhibiting Intangible Character via Design Governance

The identification of the desirability of urbanism that encourages the lingering and interaction of citizens from diverse demographics and social constructs, aligns to the fact that people are, as Senior Architect 6 said, *'an incredibly social species.'* However, as he continued, *'the spaces and places we're creating disperse us, they don't congregate us.'* Interviews discussed this as being particularly relevant to the local character of Glasgow and the cultural interaction with the urban fabric, and was expressed by Senior Landscape Architect 1 in saying:

'I think because of the Glasgow character there's still an element of meeting people in the street and street culture in terms of chatting to people rather than in the house. It's not traditionally a sort of dinner party, friends round type of city, it's more meet people in the street, or in the shop, or in the pub kind of thing. So, I think the street is important.'

As well as emphasising the importance of the street as an urban connector, previously discussed in section 6.3.1, this cultural aspect of local character was seen as being under acknowledged by policy and built environment design. This was argued by Senior Planner 2 stating that, *'I believe that Glasgow is a very frustrated city in the sense that the very extroverted nature of Glaswegians does not yet find in Glasgow an urban environment that caters for that to be*

fully expressed.' The participant furthered the argument by citing the city's embracing, and the success of, events which allowed this extroverted nature a stage, for example in the many cultural and sporting events hosted, such as the Garden Festival, European City of Culture, and the Commonwealth Games, as well as the numerous local festivals that take place throughout the year. It is then, he contended, that *'you see the real Glasgow' - in pubs, in venues, musical venues, never, or very rarely, on the street.*' He continued, *'when it happens, in festivals, the West End Festival, or other things, this is where actually you see Glasgow, you recognise Glasgow.'* Therefore, the suggestion was that there had been an architectural failure to adequately respond to the city's intangible urban character.

This interaction between people and built environments was highlighted as dynamic and evolving. Senior Architect 5 argued: *'our city has to evolve, it can't just always doff its cap to what's gone before, it needs to allow someone else to doff their cap in the future.'* This urban evolution, involving the interplay between architecture, economics, culture, and so on, impacted on the character of citizens and how they define and socially construct the city and themselves. According to Senior Policy Adviser 4, *'people's perceptions of a place changes over time and their connections to it.'* Therefore, as Senior Policy Adviser 3 said, *'[Cities] always reflect local populations at a point in time.'* Part of this change and evolution in a contemporary context has been brought through global competition, which, in the opinion of the same participant, Glasgow, including in its imperialistic past, has *'benefitted hugely from; it exists because of a form of globalism.'* In a contemporary context, interviews pointed out that this has demanded both the infrastructure and skills of modern trends in commerce and education, and the cultural and lifestyle offerings that accompany this. This has resulted in a shift in perceptions of the city, according to Senior Landscape Architect 2 who said, *'I think people are often surprised when they arrive [in Glasgow]... it's changing relative to its negative image.'*

For Glasgow, once very much identified with traditional industry and some of the associated social ills, changing and modernising perceptions, both internally and externally, has been difficult, as pointed out by Senior Policy Adviser 3 when highlighting that it *'certainly takes a long time to shift the No Mean City or*

Second City of the Empire [perception]’. Much of this shift was identified by participants as being for the purposes of an external audience to attract economic investment, and, according to Former Senior Planner 1, ‘*goes back to the McKinsey report [in 1983] looking at office development, economic investment, financial services, banking.*’ However, according to some participants there was also an internal shift of perceptions among citizens which came, in part, from how the city was being used by themselves and others. An example of this was given by Senior Policy Adviser 1 when discussing the changes along the Clyde waterfront in Study Area 2, where she said that during the Commonwealth Games: ‘*there were loads of people running along the riverfront. There were loads of people in international gear who were obviously there for [the Games], and I would have said maybe not a million years ago that might’ve been quite a scary place to run.*’ Events like this, also illustrated by the Garden Festival, caused ‘*paradigm shifts*’, as mentioned earlier by Senior Architect 8, in perceptions of Glasgow as a whole, and in citizens of themselves and in their relationships with the city. According to Senior Architect 9, and mentioned by a number of participants, ‘*[Glasgow is] not post-industrial anymore. We’re becoming something different. That all plays in to how the city looks, feels, feels about itself, and how citizens feel about themselves.*’ Therefore, the suggestion was that the sense of identity from the intangible fabric, related to the city’s economic culture and the demise of traditional heavy industry and replacement with a more service-focused economy, had reframed and changed constructed identities and the character of citizens; and in so doing had ultimately shifted the city’s overall urban identity.

However, as participants discussed, the control and governance of cities influenced the construction of identity and has had different effects on populations. As cited already, ‘*everybody’s got a right to be in the city*’, according to Former Senior Planner 1, but, while many people have adapted to the new cultural and economic paradigms mentioned, others have been marginalised and disaffected. The implications of this for urban character was highlighted via interviews drawing out the importance of the demographic input to the city’s urban character. Policies concerning issues like Glasgow’s strategy seeking to grow the city centre’s residential population, were acknowledged by Senior Politician 1 as important to urban character through preserving or

enhancing demographic diversity recognising that policy must accommodate a mixed demographic, not just the affluent, as if this happened *'we would be de-Glasgowfying Glasgow.'*

6.3.3 Memories and Emotional Attachment

The Role of History and Nostalgia in Perceptions and Experience of Urban Identity

Interviews explored the ways in which nostalgia has interwoven with the city's history of abrupt and frequent cycles of demolition, displacement, and renewal of its built environment. Here Senior Architect 1 offered his thoughts on the relationship between the built environment and the local psyche where he described *'Glaswegians [as] very nostalgic. I think the idea of history and things falling down and disappearing and a reflection of one's mortality. I think Glaswegians are very poetic... And it's the hard as nails, but the tear coming down the side of the face. It's who we are, and I think the city is very much like that as well.'*

Here there was the suggestion that it was in the direct and indirect experiences and perceptions of aspects of the city's history through, for example, heavy industry and the impacts of urban renewal, that nostalgia largely resulted and became part of a generational, and perhaps through association, inter-generational, identity. Senior Architect 9 commented on the city's relationship with its industrial and physical existence: *'virtually every Glaswegian which you speak to will talk with a degree of nostalgia about that ebb and flow of the city's collective story, and it is part of its collective memory.'*

Imagining the City from Familiar and New Perspectives

The city's cycles of comprehensive redevelopment saw vast swathes of the tangible fabric destroyed with citizens dispersed, often to places outside Glasgow (see - Chapter Four). However, as interviews discovered, the emotional attachment to the city was often stronger than the memory of particular built environments, echoing the earlier points identified in establishing the hierarchy of the importance of the tangible and intangible components of urban character.

Again, the city's identity was argued as being embedded in its intangible components, as was explained by Senior Landscape Architect 2 when he said: *'there's a very strong cultural identity [in Glasgow] that arguably isn't actually quite rooted in the same way of physical place.'* In exploring this further, interviews discussed the dramatic severance from the built environment brought by policymakers as not necessarily having diminished memories and broader emotional attachments formed, even in childhood. As Senior Architect 4 remembered, *'we were decanted to a New Town and then I came back to Glasgow. It didn't make me any less Glaswegian. I still had a very strong connection to the city, maybe more than the place (i.e., former neighbourhood). I didn't remember very much about the neighbourhood but very much more the city. So, it disengaged me physically from the city, but didn't disengage me in a sensory way.'*

The relationship between the built environment and emotional attachment was also identified by some participants as being intrinsic and having created opportunities that strengthened urban character through imaginative constructs. Senior Policy Adviser 3 reflected: *'[Coming out of Central Station] emanates so many things which are mostly not to do with Glasgow...it's Chicago, it's gangsters, it's childhood memories...It's how you imagined as a child New York, or these sorts of places would be like.'* This therefore suggested that the built environment acted as an important frame for these emotional attachments, and as a conduit for the creation of imaginative perspectives and mental pictures of cities which helped to define a sense of place via individual and collective perspectives and imagination. Rather like Glasgow's role as a cinematic stand-in for other cities, as discussed by participants in section 6.2.1, the interviews identified that it was the interplay between the intangible and the tangible that created an urban character which, through elements of its uniqueness coupled with a wider generic physical identity, allowed imaginative perspectives of the city, and with this, memories and emotional attachments like those remembered by Senior Policy Adviser 3. It was this idea of what a city was, and what it offered, that strengthened its distinctiveness in the eyes of participants through imaginative and creative projection. This was therefore an important aspect of urban character, and it can be argued from the research that a city without this

is denied elements of its identity, as suggested by the Glaswegian author and artist, Alasdair Gray, in his novel, *Lanark*:

'...nobody imagines living here...think of Florence, Paris, London, New York. Nobody visiting them for the first time is a stranger because he's already visited them in paintings, novels, history books and films. But if a city hasn't been used by an artist not even the inhabitants live there imaginatively.' (Gray, 1981).

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has examined how the tangible and intangible components of urban character are identified within the case study. In relation to the tangible components, participants indicated that it was the wider elements of design that were of greatest importance to urban character, rather than architecture *per se*. The gridded street pattern in the city centre (sub-case Study Area 1) was identified as absolutely intrinsic to urban character. This guided and policed the built environment and was instrumental in the scale, legibility and rigour identified as forming the area's identity. Participants pointed to a solidity, permanence and confidence which exuded as a result of the grid's influence. This contrasted with sub-case Study Area 2, which the majority of interviewees discussed as lacking the components of sub-case Study Area 1, such as legibility, cohesion, and coherence. The area was viewed as devoid of the strong contextualisation found in sub-case Study Area 1, largely due to standalone buildings which failed to respond to each other, as well as natural attributes like the river Clyde.

The case study's tangible identity was also discussed in terms of the historical and cultural influences shaping the built environment. According to many participants, a legacy of ostentatious architecture stemmed from wealth created from the city's colonial past, with distinctive buildings identified as engendering a strong visual and emotional attachment to place (Lynch 1960). This resulted in a particularly strong '*design culture*' that led to architecture described by a participant as unique to the case study. Of particular importance here was the acknowledgement that the buildings identified in sub-case Study Area 1 as

contributing to the case study's tangible urban character, were in fact largely appropriations of international styles. Participants pointed to the processes of hybridisation and embedding of these as resulting in the localisation of this architecture (see - Lippard 1997; Faulconbridge 2009; Majerska-Paubicka 2020). This is especially important to the research within the context of debates concerning globalised approaches to the built environment, and to an extent adds further nuance to accusations that such approaches undermine the distinctive urban character of place (King 2004; Jacobs 2006; Sklair 2006; Faulconbridge 2009).

The intangible components of urban character were argued as crucial to the case study's urban character. The interaction between people and place was identified as of particular importance to the city's identity, and with the urban character of Glasgow being '*non-physical*' to an extent. Here a hierarchy of importance in the components of urban character was suggested, with the case study seen as particularly reliant on social and imaginative attachment in shaping its identity (Stokols and Shumaker 1981), rather than the architectural *per se*. This socio-cultural aspect of the case study's urban character was also seen as linked to the economic. Changing perceptions of the city, including by citizens, due to a shift in its purpose from predominately industrial to service based, was discussed. Here participants highlighted the evolving nature of place identity through the interconnections between the economic purpose of place and how this shapes and defines identity.

The following chapter, Chapter Seven, will now examine the ways in which the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character can result in built environment outcomes identified as integral to a city's unique identity.

7. Chapter Seven: Case Study - The Interplay Between the Tangible and Intangible Components of Urban Character and the Impacts on Built Environments

7.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the interplay between key tangible and intangible components of urban character and the ways in which this contributes to the uniqueness of built environments. This chapter's purpose is therefore to analyse the tangible and intangible components of urban character discussed in Chapter Six. This is in order to examine the extent, and ways in which, the interplay between tangible and intangible components is important in the design and planning processes of built environment professionals seeking to create uniqueness in Glasgow's built environment.

Two main sections explore this. Firstly, section 7.2 analyses the feel and ambience created by the interplay between some of the key tangible and intangible components of urban character identified in Chapter Six. This is to examine the tensions between the components to identify if and how their interplay created a perceived feel and ambience, and the ways in which this contributed to the city's urban character. Section 7.3 builds on this by examining the interplay between the broader tangible and intangible components, such as the case study's economic and political legacy, past and present design philosophies and approaches, social inclusion, and the contemporary commercial imperatives and professional discourses.

7.2 The Interplay Between the Tangible and Intangible and the ‘Feel’ and ‘Ambience’ Created

7.2.1 Legibility, Language and Form

Reading and Recognising Atmosphere in Built Environment Processes

The intangible components of urban character are often overlooked in design due to the difficulty in tethering what are seen as ambiguous qualities. As Senior Landscape Architect 1 highlighted:

‘You see this [feel and ambience] is all very interesting. Is it melancholy? Is it dynamic? - it’s a term often used about Glasgow, but then what does that mean in terms of physical design?’

The consideration of the feel and ambience of a place as a contextual design component of urban character was, *‘not a process that anybody I know ever goes through, but maybe should’*, according to the same participant. This lack of consideration and application of the atmospheric components, or *genius loci*, of place was further emphasised in the research findings by Senior Planner 2. The participant bemoaned the fact that, when asked to consider and respond to the wider character of place beyond the physical context, many built environment professionals were often unable to grasp the concept:

‘[I say] you need to respond to the character of the place, and people often ask me: “What do you mean? How do we respond to the character of the place?”’ - Senior Planner 2

This failure or reticence was, according to the same participant, often exacerbated due to clients that *‘don’t have a clue and [are] not interested [in a sense of place].’* This drew attention to the more obvious physical contextualisation of place often not being strengthened and embedded via design responses incorporating the sensory guidance found in the feel and ambience, and thereby allow the interplay between components in forming a place’s urban character. The importance of the holistic inclusion of the intangible and sensory components of urban character in design processes was

again emphasised by Senior Planner 2, where it was argued that there was the need for *'the tension [to be] absolutely removed from the physical character and moved towards the intangible character of a place.'*

The lack of understanding and incorporation of these elements found by the research was despite a policy context in which there has been a shift in Scotland, over the last 10 years, towards a more holistic approach to urban design. This shift is towards including intangible components and encouraging their interplay with the tangible elements in design considerations and processes. As was further pointed out by Senior Planner 2: *'Our planning system is moving towards a system that is not dictated by prescriptive rules, but it is defined by inviting designers to understand the place and to respond to it.'* This was partly reflected in a move from a land use to a place-based policy approach, initiated at national level and reflected in local design guidance (Scottish Government 2013a, b; GCC 2017a, b). However, despite this, interviews suggested that the extent to which the more subtle intangible and wider sensory design cues in place-making appeared to have remained peripheral or lacking a design understanding. As Senior Architect 6 commented: *'I've got some good friends in top practices, and they craft some good stuff, but they are just not awake to it [feel and ambience].'*

As well as a failure to recognise these components in design processes, participants also attributed this to these intangible elements being overridden by the seemingly more practical and business orientated aspects of design, at both a practice and educational level, with the economic drivers of the built environment taking priority. As a result, according to Senior Architect 6, *'we do not teach any of this stuff whatsoever...In fact, we desensitise designers to being human because it's about object making.'* Senior Planner 3 also drew attention to the financial imperatives involved, and this being exacerbated by a professional context where *'every square foot is a prisoner and it's less about architecture and more about gross to net.'* However, although the intangible aspects like feel and ambience were often absent, or at best marginal, within the professional context and within education, they were nevertheless discussed as having played a role for a number of interviewees during their training. This was in the context of, both architects and planners, being students at Glasgow

School of Art, where they said that the more intangible elements, including the atmosphere and *genius loci*, were taught in relation to a contextual approach to design. This finding was particularly interesting in relation to the city's strong '*design culture*' discussed in Chapter Six and could perhaps be a factor in its continuance.

The Role of Design Frameworks in Capturing Atmospheric Components of Urban Character

Despite the atmospheric components being marginalised, and therefore the opportunity for interplay with the tangible components limited, participants did however identify ways in which the feel and ambience was recognised and applied, to an extent theoretically, to architectural outcomes. Interviews discussed this through design frameworks and physical structural guidance in the production of certain places, and how this impacted on perceptions of the associated atmosphere. As well as this, and as a prerequisite to it, the recognition and reading of the atmospheric dimension of place, and its potential to contribute to the output of designers, planners, and policy makers, was explored by the research interviews.

While interviewees argued that there was a limited understanding and application of the components of feel and ambience across built environment professions more widely, there was nevertheless a recognition amongst most participants of the importance of the contribution of such sensory attributes to design processes in preserving and enhancing local urban character. For example, as Former Senior Planner 1 asserted:

'This [the feel and ambience] should be embedded in your training as a planner. And if you're a planner then you should understand places and you should understand, and try to understand, how places work, what makes them successful.'

The reading and design application of these intangible qualities by participants who sought to incorporate such sensory elements into their work, was identified as being done through physical frameworks which acted to create the structural context to allow the feel and ambience to breathe. This was applied particularly

through rules and mechanisms, where, according to Senior Architect 8, *'it tends to come from a set of guidelines that give priority to a number of things... clarity of choice and human scale, diversity, cohesion, order, balance.'* These mechanisms were used to design places which promoted *'comfortable'* and active environments, and that were intuitively legible and navigable and thereby allowed other intangible elements essential to the feel and ambience of place, such as the congregation and interaction of people which led to the *'drag effect'* discussed in Chapter Six. As Senior Architect 8 said, *'I think the feel and intangible aspects of being in a place that you're comfortable with is wrapped up in a lot of different things. [For example] can you navigate a place without the need for signs? People's navigation of a city should be intuitive and meandering.'* For this to happen, the physicality of the design needed to go beyond merely the composition of materiality in such a way that the *'whole becomes greater than the sum of the parts'*, according to the same participant. This approach of designing the physical components so that the composition enabled particular feel and ambience, was elaborated by Senior Architect 1 as being realised through the *'weight of materials and the feeling of space and the thing of that space [being] appropriate towards function...it's not just about bricks and mortar.'*

The qualities of *'choice'* and *'comfort'* were frequently cited by participants as essential outcomes of design frameworks that capture and enable the feel and ambience in built environments. According to Senior Architect 5, *'placemaking is about safety and security, comfort, visual interest - what is naturally there that you don't even know is there, but it's defined in the space you're in that makes you feel all of those things. You don't feel intimidated or imposed [upon] by what's around you, it just seems to form the space you're in.'* Furthermore, Senior Planner 2 said, *'creating a platform that allows choices to become tangible, that is probably when you have a successful place. When actually any simple individual is allowed to make a choice and to feel comfortable in that choice.'* This interplay between the tangible and intangible was further explained by the participant in the success, atmospherically, socially, and architecturally, of the tenemental form of many parts of Glasgow, where *'the tenements were successful because they generated a degree of choice that a Glaswegian architecture, to be successful, has to be able to match'* (See Figure

7.1). This suggested that it was the interplay between the tangible and intangible elements that contributed to atmosphere, and which therefore allowed an urban character to be sensed as well as seen. This successful reciprocal expression between the sensorial and the physical to enhance the uniqueness of place was captured by Senior Architect 1, who said that: *'you can say that if you're in a tenemental street then you feel you're in Glasgow. There are obvious [physical] things, but there's also kind of atmospheres.'*

Figure 7.1 Glasgow's tenemental streets generate the feel and ambience of the city - an example of the interplay between the city's tangible and intangible components

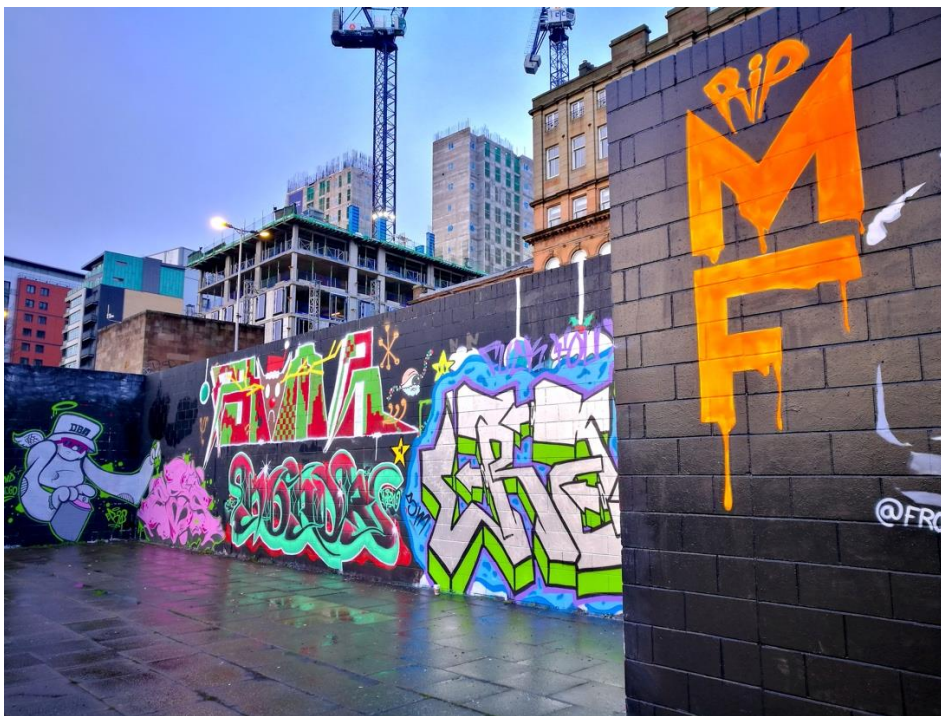


Source: Author's Own

Without such design frameworks it seemed from the interviews that important components of urban character can be lost, such as those examined in Chapter Six, which discussed the importance of preserving the demographic diversity of cities to protect and enhance distinctive identity. The feel and ambience of place was also highlighted by a number of participants as needing this democracy of social constructs. This was to allow this diversity to generate the feel and ambience of place via the *'energy'* that this created. Senior Architect 2 argued, cities are composed of light and shade, both literally and metaphorically, and require this complexity to maintain and express their unique atmospheres. *'If it's all black or white it's not a good city,'* according to the participant. This light and shade, he suggested, came essentially from function and use and how these were interpreted, socially, politically, morally, and were found in diverse urban activity like, red-light districts, industrial areas, retail, and leisure. Therefore, the indication was that built environments need diversity to create energy and interesting feel and ambience (see Figure 7.2).

The suggestion was that such diversity allows cities to flourish, but by preventing the subtleties that mixed use can bring to a place this can spell the ‘*death of culture [and] the death of cities*’, as Senior Architect 2 put it.

Figure 7.2 The need for cities to have diversity in culture and use to generate place-specific feel and ambience



Source: Author's Own

The differing design frameworks of the two study areas illustrated the effect that these structural elements played in creating the atmospheric components of place. Here, the interplay between the tangible environment discussed in Chapter Six, and the intangible sense of feel and ambience, contrasted.

Contrasting Frameworks

Sub-case Study Area 1

In Study Area 1 the lynchpin of the design framework was identified as the street grid pattern by all participants, regardless of profession. This urban design tool acted, according to Senior Architect 8, as an ‘*automatic control mechanism*’ for the physical ‘*cohesion*’, ‘*order*’ and ‘*balance*’ of the area. This allowed diversity of choice through the interaction of people attracted by active frontages and streetscapes. A feel and ambience were created which stemmed from a sense of ‘*comfort*’ brought by a critical mass of people encompassing a demographic

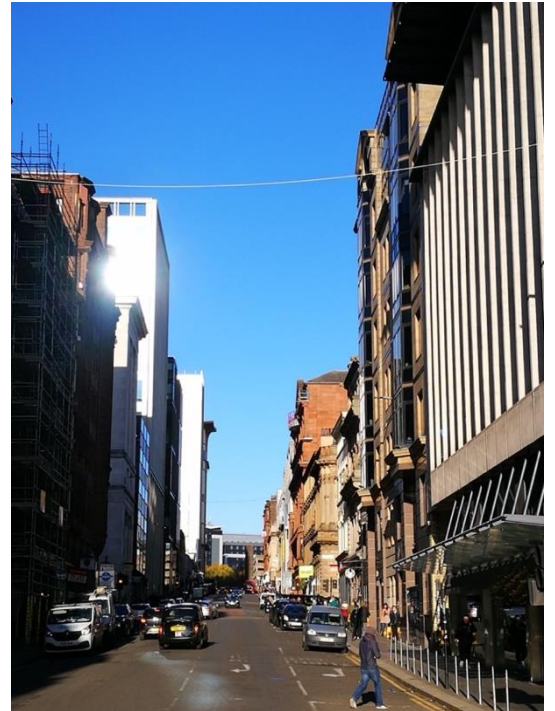
range where, as Senior Architect 5 said: *'you'd be happy to spend time in and around these buildings.'*

The gridded street pattern and the diversity of activity discovered within this ordered, controlled and easily navigable framework, meant that there was a broad range of experiential possibilities for users. This, interviews suggested, engendered a feel and ambience of familiarity and reassurance where:

'there's always plenty of choice of where to go. I hardly ever go the same route every time so as to have a different experience. And that's part of the interest of that area. So, people spot these things and see them, and it means something. The stone, the solidity of it and all that kind of thing.' - Senior Planner 5

Here, it is suggested that the outcomes of the interplay between the tangible and intangible components are recognised in an experiential sense which emanated from the architectural form and materiality (see Figures 7.3 & 7.4). This sense resulted in the participant consciously choosing certain routes and interacting with the built environment via an atmosphere which engendered *'interest'*. Therefore, the interplay between the tangible and intangible qualities produced a very specific perception and reading of urban character. This resonates with a point made by Senior Architect 8 when he said, *'I think intuitively most people would reflect on the different characteristics, and the different vibe, and the different feel, ambience, whatever, that you encounter in certain places.'*

Figures 7.3 & 7.4. Feel and ambience created via the interaction between people and the scale, materiality, and urban design layout of built environment



Source: Author's Own

Sub-Case Study Area 2

In contrast, Study Area 2 was cited as largely devoid of the components discussed in the creation of the feel and ambience in Study Area 1. Many of the factors relating to the area highlighted by participants in Chapter Six, recurred within the context of the feel and ambience. For example, and in contrast to Study Area 1, the lack of interaction was cited as having a negative impact. Study Area 2 was identified as lacking in the urban design components which encouraged a similar feel to the first study area, where rather than seeking to linger, *'you're in and out - you want to go to your event and leave'*, according to Senior Architect 2. This sentiment was echoed by others. Thus, one participant drew attention to there being, *'nothing to make you want to linger'*, (Senior Planner 1). Others noted this as being responsible for a feel and ambience. For example, Senior Architect 5, who said it was, *'disparate, open and kind of like these out-of-town retail parks or business park type [places].'* For Senior Planner 5 this was due to an absence of *'some basic design guidelines...which don't exist in this area...just modernist objects being plonked in space.'* (See Figure 7.5).

Figure 7.5. Sub-case Study Area 2. Identified as lacking the design guidelines of sub-case Study Area 1 to make people linger and therefore resulted in a ‘disparate’ feel and ambience



Source: Author's Own

The lack of basic design guidelines and framework was a recurring theme of the interviews. These were identified by the majority of participants as essential to create the structural context to allow the feel and ambience to breathe. For instance, as Senior Architect 8 said it gave *‘clarity of choice and human scale, diversity, cohesion, order, balance.’* Participants suggested that the absence of a design framework also resulted in the area lacking the intuitive legibility and navigability - seen by Senior Architect 8 as also an essential aspect in promoting comfortable atmosphere and encouraging human activity. The effect of this structural failure on the feel and ambience was summed up by Senior Architect 11 who explained that *‘it [Study Area 2] doesn’t have a legible sort of [feel]. I know it’s Glasgow, but it doesn’t feel like Glasgow.’* He continued by comparing the two sub-case study areas: *‘It changes so quickly from being about buildings that are part of a grid and part of the fabric, that has a sort of language and legibility, into something that’s just sort of shapes really.’* The area was therefore seen as weak in providing both the tangible and intangible components cited as integral in allowing an interplay necessary to create a strong local

identity. This identity was needed to reflect a physical and atmospheric sense of urban character conducive to ‘comfort’ and ‘choice’, and thereby human interaction. The interplay between these elements on place atmosphere was further emphasised by Senior Architect 4, who pointed out that: ‘[because of] *the unstructured nature of [Study Area 2] I think there’s quite a disconcerting element to that in the sense of wayfinding almost, and how you move, and that can be quite unsettling.*’ Senior Architect 1 went further and described this unsettling atmosphere as being ‘*Kubrick down there at night, it’s Clockwork Orange!*’

7.2.2 People and Place: Interaction in the Generation and Characterisation of Holistic Urban Character

Architectural Hierarchy of the Components of Urban Character

The role of people and their interaction with place to generate urban character in its holistic sense was continually returned to by participants. While architectural style was not seen as unimportant, it was the hierarchy of the aesthetic component of this in urban character that was revisited in the interviews. As Former Senior Planner 1 said, ‘[architecture is] *maybe not as important as we say, [but the] backdrop is important.*’ Again, it was emphasised that it was what the city offered beyond simply the design style of buildings *per se* that was key to the feel and ambience of urban character, with architecture serving more as a facilitating frame or setting for human interaction. As the same participant emphasised, ‘*it’s about people, how the people are allowed to interact and the places that they can interact with in a friendly and safe manner.*’ In effect, the participant argued that it was the space between buildings (Gehl, 1987) where the urban character was most importantly formed, with, as Senior Policy Adviser 3 put it, buildings acting as the ‘*background drumbeat.*’

In illustrating the interplay between buildings and people, the same Senior Policy Adviser (3) used the Merchant City district in Study Area 1. As discussed in Chapter Six, this urban quarter was repurposed from a warehouse area from the 1980s onwards to a cultural and leisure destination. The success of the area, according to the participant, was based on businesses having created a ‘*feeling of the space that you want to be there. You’re comfortable there.*’ The

buildings 'lend that, but they've got to work in a way that's engaging so that people could actually go and enjoy themselves.' Therefore, according to this participant, ultimately it was the interplay between these tangible and intangible components which resulted in an urban character, which again, was both seen and sensed.

In determining the hierarchy of the influence of architectural factors on the interplay with the intangible qualities brought by human interaction with place, the design aesthetics were further emphasised by policy and planning officials, but also architects, as not necessarily the most important contributing element compared with the need for architectural frameworks designed to facilitate a certain feel and ambience. As Senior Architect 5 said, *'our job is not always to make a statement cos not every building can'* and if *'something nestles and sits in...I think our job is done as architects.'* The frameworks were identified as not relying on what might be judged as great architecture aesthetically, but rather as acting as the *'backdrop'*, highlighted by Former Senior Planner 1. This same issue was emphasised by Senior Planner 1, who argued that *'Finnieston (area adjoining Study Area 2) is the bit that you've got that edgy urban, really vibrant feel. But it doesn't look that great. It's not stunning architecture. It's not the best public realm, but it works.'*

These contrasts resulting from the interplay between people and place, and how this affected the feel and ambience of place was further illustrated through the sub-case study areas.

Sub-Case Study Area 1

The research identified that again the feel and ambience of the area was created through a sense of safety and comfort generated by the physical environment. This stemmed, according to Senior Architect 2, from *'the physical form [being] completely connected to the space between the buildings in terms of the urban realm.'* The urban, or public, realm was seen as the crucial component which brought a feeling of comfort and security through its ability to engage people in different ways and to hold them. This again returned to the importance of the drag effect already highlighted by Senior Architect 6. In sub-case Study Area 1 this was explained as involving ground floor activation.

Therefore, the architectural choices were important in the sense of materiality, such as glass frontages to allow interest and light. As part of the sense of engagement and of people choosing to linger, the 24-hour nature of certain parts of the area, specifically the Merchant City, along with the demographic inclusivity, were highlighted by Senior Architect 6 in creating the sense of feel and ambience. It was the '*nature*' and '*grain*' of the area, according to the participant, that made parts of the study area more people-focused and thereby allowed them to '*colonise spaces.*'

Also key to the area's atmosphere was the variety and diversity of both the tangible and intangible components of urban character. The interest that this stimulated was focused on by Senior Planner 5 who reflected that: '*there's lots of different buildings, lots of different people. Lots of different things happening in those buildings, lots of different designs in buildings.*' The participant also noted that the area was subject to changes, architecturally and in uses, all of which he described as making '*that quite a stimulating place.*'

Sub-Case Study Area 2

Again, in contrast, this area was seen by participants as devoid of the components they considered intrinsic to creating a feel and ambience of comfort, safety, choice, and interest - components they suggested were found in sub-case Study Area 1. A lack of both the physical elements identified as encouraging people to linger, and the fact that the area was relatively mono-purposed, focused mainly on event provision, and therefore only populated at very specific times and for limited periods, was highlighted by participants. As Senior Architect 6 said, '*the intangible is created by people's presence around the clock. But here there isn't a little force field that holds you really close to it at night, because at night this place is really quite scary [and] that informs attitudes to everything.*' The area was further described by Senior Planner 5 as causing '*conflicting emotions.*' The participant spoke of the '*barrenness of it*' and it being '*quite inhospitable on a human scale.*' However, this atmosphere could morph when the entertainment campus was in-use, when, as the participant said, '*it is sometimes quite exciting...depending on the level of activity that's happening in those buildings.*'

While sub-case Study Area 2 emphasised many aspects which interviewees found to create a more negative feel and ambience, this was not confined only to this area. The Broomielaw area and International Finance Services District (IFSD) in sub-case Study Area 1 was identified as sharing a similar lack of interplay between the tangible and intangible components, which resulted in it being *'inactive, non-social'* and displaying *'a lack of care [and] lack of craft'*, according to Senior Architect 4. As with sub-case Study Area 2, it was highlighted as too mono-purposed and lacking diversity and therefore interest, with this being explained, by Senior Policy Adviser 4, as to do with there not being the opportunity for multiple interactive *'transactions'* between people and place, and also, what he termed the *'stickiness of a street'* in acting to provide choice and interest to hold people.

The Cultural Feeling of Space

The interviews suggested that one of the most important design dimensions of the built environment is to serve as a canvas or backdrop to the myriad uses and interactions of people. This, as Former Senior Planner 1 said, acted to generate a *'cultural feeling of the space.'* The cultural role of place as a stage was further emphasised in the interviews as being generated over a period of time, where, if the physical design frames were structured to engender certain feelings and atmospheres then, *'over the years culture will hopefully come...it's not so much the space itself but it's who is coming and creating those gigs of memory that allow culture'*, according to Senior Architect 5.

To encourage a culturally diverse colonising of place, via built environments that attract people to interact and linger, Senior Landscape Architect 1 suggested that, *'my idea would always be to provide a space that is open to interpretation, and then it would build its own character from that.'* Built environments that stimulated strong cultural input were therefore in part seen as those that acted almost as receptacles for human interaction and function as, according to Senior Architect 6, *'place has memory, place has intelligence, place has character. Place has all these things because places are about us. It's us and our personalities that stick to stuff.'* The participant continued by arguing that, *'space, for it to work, has to have meaning.'* And while this changed over time, meaning in space needed to remain because if denuded of

this *'it becomes dysfunctional and it becomes a negative element.'* Interviews therefore suggested that for such meaning to establish and continue people needed to be able to choose to use and inhabit a place. An essential part of this came from a feel and ambience generated by a diversity of interest and choice, comfort, safety, and so on, and which thereby led to a desire to be in, and linger in, a particular place. Indeed, participants argued that sub-case Study Area 2 was lacking these components and that therefore, as Senior Landscape Architect 2 said, it *'doesn't really create meaningful spaces.'*

The Importance of Demographic Inclusivity in Tangible Urban Character

As well as seeking to establish the ways in which the interplay between the tangible and intangible components created feel and ambience, such as through design frameworks and mechanisms, the research also explored how this interplay hosted and amplified atmosphere. Here, interviews honed on what many participants described as the dominant sense of *'energy'* associated with the city's intangible character. According to participants, this energy stemmed particularly from the physicality of certain spaces seen to capture the urban character through the demographic diversity of such places. Senior Architect 9 said, *'Glasgow's always been a city to my mind that's got a delightful curiosity about it. An energy and dynamism. It's a place that's got a very rich mix of high and low culture. So that's all part and parcel of its identity.'* He added that this intangible character came from an interplay between the physical and atmospheric as, *'it's not just how the place looks, but also how it operates and the vibe that it has.'*

Central Station (see Figure 7.6) in sub-case Study Area 1 was cited as an example of where this energy could be sensed, with Senior Policy Adviser 4 describing the area as, *'Glasgow in the raw.'* This energy resulted from the diversity of interaction and the demographic inclusivity of the area where, according to Senior Landscape Architect 1, this sense was captured in *'the hustle and bustle of Glasgow...people shouting and all the rest of it.'* The city's energy was amplified due, not only to the nature of the area's function (there are two main railway terminuses in the city centre), but also as a result of the built environment's scale. According to Senior Policy Adviser 3, this scale concentrated the atmosphere and therefore *'magnifies that point about this is*

where the city started - its grandest, its highest.' A similar feel and ambience hosted by the built environment was highlighted by Senior Architect 11, when he reflected on how a visitor might feel on first arriving in the city by train: *'I think as a first experience of coming into Glasgow leaving Central Station, which is a wonderful building, and then being dropped right on to Gordon Street is quite terrifying. It's so chaotic.'* This feeling of frenetic energy as being a particularly defining aspect of the city's atmosphere generated by the tangible and intangible interplay, was echoed by a local senior politician when they argued that there:

'Is that sense of something going on, that there's a buzz in the city...there's a distinctive urban life, city life in Glasgow. It's intangible in that sense of not necessarily something you can touch, but people do get a sense of it, that Glasgow city centre is recognisably Glasgow. It's not interchangeable, it's not bland, which some other city centres run the risk of.'

Figure 7.6. Central Station. Examples of the interplay between the tangible architectural scale and grandeur amplifying the intangible energy to generate feel and ambience of place



Source: Author's Own

The Urban Narratives of Citizens and the Meaning Given to Place

As part of the demographic diversity of place, and in building on the idea of ‘*urban connectors*’, discussed by Senior Architect 4 in Chapter Six, the importance of urban narratives in the creation of place identity was highlighted by participants. Senior Landscape Architect 1 reflected that, ‘*maybe places where there are stories is important*’ in capturing the essence of the city. This sense of the city being imbued with the narratives of ordinary citizens, rather than only those in positions of political and commercial influence, was also explored by Senior Policy Adviser 2. The participant suggested the interplay between stories and the urban fabric as being written in the character of sub-case Study Area 1: ‘*I think those layers of stories, and frozen dreams, and fragmented ideas, and tensions and contradictions are all there. And the grid hosts all of it. The grid is like a library.*’

As examined in Chapter Six in relation to the identification of the intangible components of urban character, such urban narratives were seen as being expressed on the streets, with Glasgow described by several participants as a place where, despite the climate, a fairly street-orientated culture existed. As Senior Architect 4 said: ‘*people inhabit streets and parks because they lived in tenements that had no private outdoor spaces. So, it was very much the street was your place, your space, your social space [as well as] art galleries and libraries.*’ Here the suggestion was of a direct interplay between the built environment and the cultural and atmospheric components of the city. The indication was that the impact of a particularly Glaswegian urban style and density of living created the cultural feeling of space. This could perhaps be likened to the city’s built environment switching on the social DNA of citizens. The implication is that through the particularly cohesive nature of the case study’s residential urban fabric the development of a more socially interactive city resulted; a trait, along with extroversion, that was seen by the majority of participants as particularly associated with Glasgow’s urban character.

7.2.3 Expectation and Urbanism

A Sense of Experiential Anticipation from Physical Place

What can be interpreted as an experiential anticipation and expectation related to the interplay between the city's physical form and the atmosphere generated, was discussed by participants. There was the suggestion that certain built environments were infused with the energy and culture of the city. This was articulated by Senior Policy Adviser 3 when contemplating the ambience created by some of the commercial buildings of the city's Victorian era: *'Again [there's] the sense of anything is possible in Glasgow. At the time there was great wealth and great opportunity to express that through the buildings.'* Experiential anticipation referenced the feel and ambience which emanated from the scale and grandeur of the architecture that gave the participant a sense of an urban energy. Here the direct connection to the interplay between the tangible and intangible in creating the city's atmosphere was again made. As well as this connection, participants returned to the *'energy'* identified as intrinsic to Glasgow's intangible urban character. Senior Policy Adviser 3 explained that the city emanated a sense of an urban landscape full of *'dynamism'* and *'energy'*, where *'you feel like you're in a city...it's the only place in Scotland, in my view, that you feel like you're in a city.'* This was in part due to scale and an urban design which created a feel of urbanism where, according to the same participant *'the relentless grid, the feeling of getting off the train or bus and walking to the West End to meet up with pals you'd think, "Christ this is going on forever..."'*

This energy was also discussed in terms of *'the sense of self and sense of place'*, where the tangible and intangible interplay heightened an experiential anticipation that was *'supercharged by points in time [with] events [and] activities that happen'*, according to Senior Architect 9. The architectural setting for such events, such as the city's main civic space, George Square, was seen by the participant as symbiotic with these experiences, with protests or festivals being, *'as much part of that authentic collective memory and sense of identity as what the physical environment is about as well.'* The suggestion was that the choosing of such places for certain events was therefore not necessarily

based solely on a practical and logistical level, with the interplay between the tangible and intangible components used to heighten the experience through a particular urban context, backdrop, and symbolism.

Similarly, participants spoke of an expectation associated with certain places and buildings. The suggestion was that a part of the urban narrative was written by individual and collective experiences of the city in which, as Senior Architect 8 said:

'there's something about identity that's wrapped up in tradition and memory, and all these things that make great places are about an association with things that make people feel that they are in a special place, even though they might not be able to articulate that.'

For example, according to Senior Architect 9, the Barrowlands music venue, highlighted in the previous chapter as a particular place which absorbed and captured the city's intangible urban character, had strong memories and therefore was a building where *'there's already a sense of heightened expectation.'* Here, the same participant also mentioned the city's major football stadiums as being *'receptacle[s] for deep, ingrained, positive and negative memories'* and therefore as built environments associated with an atmosphere of expectation. These expectations were therefore suggested as affecting the perceptions of these built environments, even although they had been extensively rebuilt several times over the years. The fact that these venues were not necessarily still in their original form further alludes to the experiential expectation of certain places.

This expectation engendered by the physical environment was also discussed in relation to Central Station, with its *'monumental scale'* which acted as a *'key announcement point'* according to Senior Policy Adviser 4. Again, the building and surrounding area was identified by several participants as triggering emotional responses associated with not only returning to the city from time away, but more intrinsically to its physical role as a stage for the city's intangible components, whereby it acted partly as a *'transient space'*, due to its

function, but more notably as '*a gathering space, a meeting space...a safe space*', according to Senior Architect 5.

These buildings cited by participants were discussed as examples of built environments infused with an energy associated with experiences and memories synonymous with Glasgow, and as examples of where the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of the city created a certain feel and ambience particular to cultural expression. The suggestion was that this infusion was a way in which buildings and spaces take on the '*meaning*' highlighted by most participants as crucial for places by ensuring people choose to inhabit and linger.

7.3 The Interplay Between the Broader Tangible and Intangible Components on Architectural Outcomes

The interplay, or at times absence of it, between social, political, economic, commercial, and cultural factors, and the subsequent outcomes on, and past and present attitudes towards, built environments, were found by the research to be viewed as intrinsic in forming a city's holistic urban character. Therefore, in order to explore the ways in which this broader interplay affected urban development and built environment outcomes, the research examined key factors and forces at play which influenced, or had the potential to influence, urban character in Glasgow more widely, and within the sub-case studies specifically.

7.3.1 Urban Development and the Case for 'Conservative Surgery'

According to Senior Architect 9, '*cities, physically, socially, culturally, economically, are clearly a summation of what's gone before.*' The same participant argued the relational importance of Patrick Geddes' *triad principle of past, present and future, or "possible"*, in urban design and planning. Geddes posited that buildings needed to be set, '*contextually within their historical significance and cultural meaning within local traditions and customs*' (Law 2005: 5.1) to understand the importance of continuity in place creation so as to

'value the accumulated historical and cultural legacy, and to progressively improve upon it' (ibid: 4.6) through, what he called, *'conservative surgery'* (Tyrwhitt, 1947; Mairet, 1957, cited in Law 2005). It was through such a layered approach that this urban 'summation' could be evidenced, for example in the *'ebb and flow of a city's economic journey'*, with such influences and forces being *'detectable and legible within the city and within how the city looks'*, according to Senior Architect 9. Therefore, the infrastructural and sociological interplay between the tangible and intangible components, and the diagnostic relevance and importance of this interplay in the evolution of a city's holistic urban character could be apparent at different epochs, and the ways in which these influenced urban developments. This interplay, or at times, absence of it, between social, economic, commercial and cultural factors, and the subsequent outcomes on, and attitudes towards, the built environment, past and present, were found by the research to be viewed as intrinsic in forming a city's holistic urban character. Therefore, in order to explore the ways in which this broader interplay affected built environment outcomes, the research examined key factors and forces, including the economic and political, at play which influenced, or had the potential to influence, the urban development and character of the case study and sub-case study areas.

7.3.2 Socio-political and Economic Changes in the Built Environment

Senior Architect 9 explained that *'you can map and chart from Glasgow's medieval past through to the merchants and the trading across the Atlantic, through to the hubbub of the late 19th century, early 20th century, as an economic and industrial powerhouse, through to the turbulent late 20th century, to wherever we're at now.'* In mapping the economic and political journey, the built environment revealed Glasgow's psychological state at epochs and profiled the city's related levels of confidence. Here, the interplay between architectural expression and the city's wider economic, political, cultural and social fortunes was manifested through times of great wealth and confidence, and by contrast in an existential crisis brought by the trauma of industrial, and accompanying political, decline and subsequent social impacts.

The research discussed the city's attitude at times of great commercial success, where a desire to ostentatiously project Glasgow's political and economic importance to the world through its built environment, and to express this at a civic level for its population, was part of the psyche of the city's forefathers. This, particularly Victorian, attitude was summed up by Senior Architect 2 who pointed out that *'money was being made and they could invest that, and to me that's what the Glaswegian sense is, the generosity of the people, that socialist part, and the generosity of the space that they gave you [particularly in relation to the parks]. And that's what Glasgow has always done, that civic gesture to its own people and to others that come.'* This commercial success was further expressed in the city centre of sub-case Study Area 1 through buildings and spaces which displayed a political and civic attitude. Senior Policy Advisor 3 stated, the City Chambers *'was designed deliberately and consciously to embody the qualities that Glasgow's leaders saw in it at the time, which were: wealth, trade, Unionism, Protestantism, and this sense of no prospect of an end [to its wealth and power].'* And, as the participant continued, *'its grand and fabulous, and people's jaws still drop...'* Indeed, such was the city's political and economic status that the City Chambers was built to express Glasgow more as a city state than the country's second city after the capital, Edinburgh. Senior Policy Advisor 3 argued that *'It's the absolute embodiment of that sense of the civic expressed. So, it's not a local government building, it was seen as Glasgow's parliament, Glasgow's living room.'* This identification of Glasgow's use of 'decorated sheds' relates to Venturi's (1972) analysis of how society is architecturally represented through symbolism in design - discussed in detail throughout Chapter Two. It emphasises the importance of the city's architectural fabric in representing the socio-cultural, political and economic position and perspective of those shaping urban development at the time. This is of particular importance in addressing RQ2 of the thesis, i.e., the extent and ways in which the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character is important in the design and planning processes of built environment professionals seeking to create uniqueness in Glasgow's built environment.

However, the interplay between the built environment and the socio-political and economic conditions during the latter half of the 20th Century provided a

stark contrasting manifestation in the physical outcomes of Glasgow. This, argued Senior Architect 8, was exacerbated by a misunderstanding and misreading of the interplay between socio-economic forces and the built environment, where buildings were blamed for issues relating to multiple deprivation, rather than the underlying economic and political structural causes. As the participant said:

'People were getting taken out of communities that they understood. They were getting knocked down and they were getting put into high rise buildings and things like that. The point about that, I think, is that attitudes in the East End, where there's more deprivation, were totally different from the West End, where the same housing stock was thought to be aspirational simply because the winds were blowing all the pollution over this side. It was almost like people blamed the building stock for the deprivation, rather than the underlying reasons for it.'

This attitudinal misunderstanding of the interplay between the tangible and intangible components had profound impacts on the built environment, and therefore on people's lives. Several participants illustrated this using the city's Gorbals neighbourhood, where Senior Architect 10 highlighted a *tabula rasa* approach to the built environment which saw *'a community erased, rebuilt, erased again and then rebuilt.'* This close relationship between the physical environment and the psychosocial, and already examined in Chapters Two and Three in relation to literature discussing the ways in which people connect with place, and the importance of the physical environment expressing the human aspects of place (Neill 2004; Southworth and Ruggeri 2010; Campelo et al 2014; Sepe and Pitt 2014) was emphasised by the participant in arguing that this wholesale destruction of place resulted in, *'a trauma of communities being displaced, architectural morphologies and typologies being overlaid and failing.'* Indeed, so severe was this architectural intervention in people's lives that the participant referred to Scotland's former Chief Medical Officer, Harry Burns' assertion that the trauma caused by such displacement was *'equivalent to the indigenous Aboriginal Indians, in terms of suicide rates, trauma to the community, health and wellbeing.'*

The failure of past political and built environment processes to recognise the potential effects of tangible and intangible interplay resulted in what Senior Architect 10 said was a '*generational identity*.' As discussed in Chapter Four, the post-war approach of Glasgow's planners and politicians was of urban renewal, often involving the destruction of entire neighbourhoods. Comprehensive Development Areas (CCG 1951; Urban 2018) involving the demolition of inner-city districts and residential dispersal to peripheral estates (CCG 1945) and New Towns (CVRP 1946b) resulted in the rupturing of the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character, often via urban development based on a zonal approach to planning (1945; 1951) which resulted in a mono-purposing of use and prevented such interplay. Senior Architect 9's previous comments advocating the importance of Patrick Geddes' triad principle of past, present and future, and 'conservative surgery' to provide urban continuity underlined this. This was particularly so when, in the case of the Gorbals, the repeated erasing of the built environment, and failure to '*value the accumulated historical and cultural legacy to progressively improve upon it*' (Tyrwhitt, 1947; Mairet, 1957, cited in Law 2005) eventually led to a reinstatement of the neighbourhood's original urban design. As Senior Architect 9 pointed out, the area is now '*returning back to the ideas of street and square and park*.'

7.3.3 Urban Development in the Sub-case Study Areas

Participants highlighted the sub-case study areas as illustrating the city's sense of self during these different political and economic eras. As discussed, sub-case Study Area 1 was associated with a confidence and hubris of the Victorian age and expressed in the grandeur of buildings. Senior Planner 5 said, this was '*a reflection of the different drivers of the economy and how they've changed over the last 200 years*.' Sub-case Study Area 2 was argued as being equally expressive of the city in a contemporary context, with a projection of the economic, political and cultural times, and of the city's sense of its place in a globalised economy. However, and despite its historic role in contributing to the city's wealth and cultural identity through shipbuilding, sub-case Study Area 2's *tabula rasa* approach meant it was, the same participant said, '*more like a slice in time, just the last 20, 30 years*' and therefore lacking '*the diversity of*

buildings, or indeed the chronological diversity or the economic diversity.' The interviewee also talked of the contrast with the city centre (sub-case Study Area 1) with sub-case Study Area 2 capturing *'a moment in Glasgow's history when the city was stumbling around with what to do with itself, when the docks had shut, and the shipbuilding had gone, and heavy engineering had gone, and we needed to do something, so let's do it quick. Let's just chuck stuff in there. And then you kind of stand back and think, oh, was that the right thing to do?'* This sense of an existential crisis was further emphasised by Senior Planner 2, also a former architect, with the area's built environment being *'evidence of that cultural crisis... We don't know anymore who we are. We don't know how to achieve what we want to achieve... can we create a shiny new building that is going to fix it? It doesn't work.'* Architecture is, the participant continued, a reflection of *'when we are strong [and] when we are weak.'*

The contrasting approaches and rationales for the urban development of the two sub-case study areas was further explained by Senior Architect 2, who had also worked within the city's planning department. In approaching design in sub-case Study Area 1, the participant emphasised physical character areas and the need to respond to the street grid, and the accompanying architectural scale and typology. The suggestion was that urban development needed close attention to the understanding of *'the grain of the place'* and *'what makes it special'*, including in planning terms and listed buildings. Therefore, sub-case Study Area 1's urban development was informed by components like existing built heritage, as well as the diverse commercial imperatives of the area - both in terms of use and of the economics driving development. This, the participant said, combined with the design framework of function, topography and scale. These references to the grain and unique qualities and components of place by the participant echo arguments examined in the literature review in Chapter Two. These relate to urban morphology and design, and *'consonance in urban form'* (Sanders and Baker 2016: 214) which emphasised the importance of a contextual approach towards existing and new development in placemaking (Caliskan and Marshall 2011; Sanders and Baker 2016). In relation to sub-case Study Area 2, the participant argued that, while a development framework was seemingly absent, one did exist. This was informed by very different factors and was driven by the Expressway (dual carriage road) and the river. The participant added that

fundamental to the area's development was a globally focused approach to economic activity that was more mono-purposed, and was largely without the planning constraints and complex land ownership patterns of an already highly developed area like sub-case Study Area 1.

7.3.4 Contextual Guidance in the urban development of the sub-case study areas

The examination of the contrast in approaches to urban development in the sub-case study areas further drew out the ways in which the existing, or lack of, contextual frameworks shaped such development. Participants discussed the varying design responses initiated by the sub-case study areas in terms of constraints, or absence of them. Sub-case Study Area 1 was identified as being contextually constrained, primarily due to the density of development, the listed built heritage, and the grid layout of the streets. However, this was discussed in interviews as a positive factor in relation to creativity and the ability to develop and contemporise the area's urban character. Senior Architect 1 explained that having constraints made architects respond better as they had to '*work within a cube [and] maximise creativity.*' The participant argued that if architects have '*too much freedom the wheels come off a bit.*' Senior Architect 10 said that '*having the grid is liberating*', again emphasising that restrictions caused by the contextual framework helped creativity by giving a '*restrictive line to react against.*'

In explaining the urban development of sub-case Study Area 1, Senior Architect 5, again echoing the literature relating to urban morphology and 'consonance in urban form' (Caliskan and Marshall 2011; Sanders and Baker 2016) drew attention to the dialogue and creative guidance given by the constraints. The process of creating and continuing streetscape was '*incredibly important*' according to the participant, as was the '*rhythm, scale, proportions [and] solid to void.*' Particularly key to the area's architectural development were (and had historically been) what the participant described as '*rules that have been adopted that are able to be*

replicated in a contemporary way.' An illustration of these 'rules' was given by Senior Architect 8 in highlighting that they saw the *'best of Glaswegian architecture, from the Victorian point of view, being an absolute slave to the repetition of the components that make it work.'* This repetition was *'part of a dialogue that's understandable and familiar'*, according to the same participant. Furthermore, and returning to some of the components of tangible urban character examined in Chapter Six, participants reiterated contextual points around the scale and proportion, as well as the *'muscularity'* and *'permanence'* mentioned by a number of interviewees in describing sub-case Study Area 1. Participants also identified sub-case Study Area 1 as less forgiving of architecture lacking contextual sensitivity and awareness as the constraints provided a *'strong framework'*, according to Senior Policy Adviser 3. Senior Architect 8 argued that this framework meant that clues, such as the grid and block structure of streets, along with scale and proportion, were there to be read, and that architecture which failed to interpret these clues was guilty of *'ignoring the guidance.'*

In contrast, sub-case Study Area 2 was, due to the urban renewal approach taken, identified by the majority of participants as largely devoid of the contextual constraints found in sub-case Study Area 1. In particular, these related to density, listed built heritage, street pattern and repetitious design style precedents. Participants pointed to the absence of architectural constraints which resulted in a different response and approach to urban development. Senior Policy Adviser 3 said that there was *'nothing much to respond to.'* This, suggested Senior Architect 5, meant it was possible to *'do whatever you like, and no one would necessarily question it.'* This underlined that without the constraints highlighted in sub-case Study Area 1 to respond to, urban development and design was likely to result in very different built environment outcomes. Furthermore, interviews suggested that without the constraints found in sub-case Study Area 1 the threshold or standard of architecture acceptable could be lower in Study Area 2. This was due to a lack of quality with which to immediately inform, influence and compare.

Participants also discussed this further in relation to planning, in terms of the context influencing decisions on what is built. For example, sub-case Study Area 1 contained numerous listed buildings and conservation areas, whereas with sub-case Study Area 2 being, as Senior Architect 2 described it, more of a '*blank canvass*', planning consideration was less related to the historical design importance and influence of listed buildings. Senior Planner 2 suggested that urban development and design in sub-case Study Area 2 did not necessarily have to consider how to, '*knit together*' new built environments with existing. This again emphasised the comment by Senior Architect 5, that urban design and development had fewer contextual considerations and constraints than in sub-case Study Area 1 as there was no immediate and obvious imperative to connect, integrate or 'knit' the area to established architectural heritage and form. This again reiterates Geddes' point concerning the importance of cities as continuums (cited in Law 2005) and explains why Study Area 1 was seen by participants as characterising Glasgow's urban character more than Study Area 2. This can be seen as being via processes of urban morphology, explored in the literature review, concerning how the concept can guide urban development in creating built environments able to contemporise the uniqueness of place via the existing tangible and intangible components of urban character.

7.3.5 The river Clyde and the urban development of the sub-case study areas

'Glasgow made the Clyde, and the Clyde made Glasgow.' This frequently quoted saying refers to the symbiotic relationship between the city and its river. However, according to a number of participants, since the decline of shipbuilding, and associated industries, there have been slow and limited attempts to re-engage with a part of the city once central to Glasgow's identity and character. The research highlighted that within either of the sub-case study areas there was little to show the river's historical relevance to the city's tangible and intangible urban character and acknowledge its traditional economic and emotional importance. Senior Architect 4 said:

'I don't think there's been a huge amount done on the river or on the waterfront within the city centre that has given anything back to the city. There're very few things that, given the nature, given the history, industrial history of the river, there is very little there that would tell you that, or gives you that feeling of history and a sense of place, and not doing anything to sort the river out and making it literally this sort of emotional centre of what the city is, or was. And the river is almost, at the moment, a by-product of what the city is.'

This suggested a denial of the riverside's industrial legacy and was particularly acute in sub-case Study Area 2, where shipbuilding was concentrated. It was contrasted with cities which have used a more interpretive approach to acknowledge historical and cultural legacies and progressively adapt and ensure a continuum, as argued by Geddes and discussed earlier by Senior Architect 9. For example, as the participant said. *'the infilling of the Queens Docks completely denied the presence of what had gone before. And again, we can reflect on what has happened at Hafen City in Hamburg or Albert docks Liverpool. There are cities that have responded, reflected on that big industry, the big expansive space and thought right, how are we going to repopulate that with our post-industrial urban setting that will bed in and be a place you want to hang out and be in.'* Indeed, there was a sense that, through a failure to understand the interplay between the emotional, social, economic and historical resonance in urban development, the importance of which was explored in Chapter Two (Neill 2004; Southworth and Ruggeri 2010; Campelo et al 2014; Sepe and Pitt 2014) by architectural designers an opportunity had been missed. Senior Landscape Architect 1 expressed frustration with the approach taken to the urban development in sub-case Study Area 2 and the inability *'to carry on that feeling of mercantile shipping, density, street connecting to the river. It's been completely blown out of the water with the Armadillo. * It was [Norman] Foster coming in, probably did a design on the back of a fag packet on a flight to New York without even seeing the site.'*

*Colloquial name for Clyde Auditorium (events venue)

However, while the majority of participants felt the urban development of sub-case Study Area 2 was a missed opportunity, in terms of architecture and urban design evocative of the city's tangible character, it was seen as expressing a side of Glasgow's intangible character. Senior Architect 4 said the '*whole reinvention of the city in tourism, conferences, etc is part of the city's identity.*' Despite the built environment *per se* being generally viewed negatively, it was argued by Senior Architect 10 that the area was '*what Glasgow is about*', in the sense that '*it's about getting people to the city and giving them a great experience with providing them with a wonderful place (in terms of infrastructure) to have a conference (and music event).*' Sub-case Study Area 2's strategic role as a component of contemporary economic reinvention and relevance was also discussed as being a part of the city's resilience and adaptation to the decline of industry and rise of a service and knowledge-based globalised economy. As discussed in Chapter Four, this strategy was central to the city's late 20th century economic strategy. Glasgow's 'ostentatious' and gregarious character was seen as having a place for '*shouty*' object buildings which, according to Senior Architect 10, can act as '*urban jewellery that says we can do music, we can host events, or we can do big things or show off*'. However, in terms of urban design, the participant added, '*can [you] say it's Glasgow? It certainly doesn't relate to climate or typology or whatever, but in terms of spirit, it's just, I guess, a space for that kind of eclecticism.*'

7.3.6 Architecture versus Building

The research found a distinction between what was framed as architecture versus building. Senior Planner 2, also a former architect, described built environment designers as falling into two categories, with those able to read place and respond to the interplay between the tangible and intangible contextual components, and others that do not understand this placemaking approach and are, he contended, '*building buildings but they are not architects.*' As with a failure to understand the atmospheric feel of place, an inability to adopt a more contextual approach was highlighted as a factor in urban design which lacked a distinctive architectural response, and that therefore failed to contribute to unique local urban character. Senior Architect 6

attributed this to *'poor thinking, poor architecture, and consequently poor place.'*

According to Senior Policy Adviser 1, this was connected to issues concerning the education of built environment professions, where she suggested that *'perhaps we're not teaching architecture in the right way.'* This educational failing was echoed by other participants, including architects, who also raised this building versus architecture debate. Senior Architect 10 discussed this within the context of the importance of the *'whole idea of art in architecture.'* He argued that *'the struggle with contemporary architectural education is it doesn't support fully that art component of the conceptual development, and you feel somehow inhibited to make statements which are unique or kind of innovative.'* The participant contrasted Scotland with other European countries, in that *'when you look at French, Swiss and German practices, it's an expectation when someone employs you that you're going to make poetry, or a poem, or something aspirational.'* The participant furthered Senior Planner 2's contention that, devoid of the contextualisation brought through an interplay between tangible and intangible components, architecture fails to be anything more than building. The distinction was described by Senior Architect 10 as being that *'the whole central tenant of architecture [rather than] mere building, is concept. It's intellectual, it's visionary, it's ambitious...if you remove art from architecture it's just building.'* In terms of this developing and sustaining local urban character, the participant felt that *'fundamentally a city like Glasgow is like a giant work of art because it was conceptual in intent; visions, dreams, ghosts of where we are. So, I think the overarching vision and dream of the place is so key to the spirit, the character.'*

In exploring the underlying reasons for the low hierarchical importance of art in architecture, the standing and leadership of the architectural profession in built environment processes was highlighted. This standing was seen as being related mainly to commercial pressures and architectural leadership and discourse. As Senior Architect 8 pointed out, *'there are a ton of reasons why a building is the way it is.'* According to the participant, a combination of internal and external commercial pressures played a significant part in architectural design, in the sense that most clients demanded a building be rooted in cost, while

nevertheless having certain design aspirations, as well as asking architects *'to do things that are fairly significant on really low fees.'* In defending architectural outcomes, the same participant cited *'political pressure and development pressure, [and] a planning department that maybe is too easily manipulated.'* However, it should be noted that this is a charge more generally refuted by the city's planning department, where, according to Senior Planner 3, the council *'always tried to protect what's unique about the city.'*

These commercial and political pressures were cited as sometimes responsible for curbing architectural design, with Senior Architect 8 insisting that *'if architects were able to do exactly what they thought was right, then it would be a totally different output.'* However, not all practices felt as commercially compromised, and away from more corporate commissions there were, according to Senior Architect 7, clients that *'are very proud of their cities and want these spaces to be very rooted in their cities.'* Nevertheless, commercial pressures were prevalent and compounded by what Senior Architect 8 said was, *'an architect's position in the decision-making process.'* Here there is a correlation with wider criticisms found in academic literature around architects not being *'trained to be alert to significant relations of authority, economics, power, group decision-making processes [and] management'* (Cuff 1991: 45). Indeed, Senior Planner 2, also a former architect, argued, *'architects are no longer leading the discourse on the city. This discourse is led by other actors, which means that these kinds of conversation are becoming less and less relevant.'* However, the same participant added that, *'architects are also the very people that created their own problem.'* This, the participant said, was largely due to the profession having *'lost the capability of standing up for what they believe in.'*

While levelling this charge at the profession more widely, Senior Planner 2's earlier categorisation of architects versus builders, recognised that there are practices that strive to convince clients of the merits of architecture that contributes to the city's urban character. For example, Senior Architect 2 spoke of the need to balance fulfilling commercial needs with persuading a client towards a broader architectural contribution. According to the participant the success of such persuasion was in part dependent on the type of client. This

echoed what Senior Architect 7 previously said about having clients proud of their cities, and that want the unique urban character reflected in their architectural commissions. Here there is the suggestion that the responsibility of place-specific design is left largely to architects themselves. This was highlighted by Senior Architect 2 in pointing out that, '*some clients don't understand, and it's up to you as some clients will not be interested in the architecture, they'll be interested in the commercial.*' However, while the participant recognised the imperative of meeting a client's brief, he added that they would also seek to '*give the client something they didn't know they wanted...and if he understands that and you've got a sympathetic client...*' This suggested that even with architects able and willing to contextualise their work via the components of urban character, ultimately this design approach is dependent on a client's interest in the built environment beyond purely the functional and financial. Furthermore, Senior Architect 2 highlighted that the ability of architects to influence the built environment could be complicated or frustrated due to contractual relationships as, '*if you are not in charge and you are working for the contractor, [then] the architect becomes a subcontractor*' and therefore may be lower down the hierarchy of decision-making.

The city's strong design culture, discussed in Chapter Six in a largely historical context, was again highlighted in relation to contemporary designers, who were, according to Senior Planner 2's categorisation, able to engage with the interplay between tangible and intangible components of the built environment, or not. For example, Senior Architect 4 explained how the interplay between the intangible and tangible components influenced their work through, what he described as, '*symbolism, scale and statement.*' According to the participant, symbolism was '*very much about elements of memory*', with scale referring to materiality and detail, and how stone can be used in Glasgow in a carefully crafted way. Statement was concerned, not with designers themselves, but a projection of the city, and '*transferring that statement of ambition.*' This interplay between symbolism, scale and statement was summed up as being '*about presence and attitude to surroundings.*' Furthermore, the participant explained that the understanding and application of this interplay resulted from urban points of reference, as well as an awareness and openness to Glasgow

embedding *'you into the nature of what you feel the city is about...and therefore to me, it's an element, it's an inspiration.'*

This difference between a holistic and contextual place-making architecture versus that of a more detached application of an autonomous production of a building, was a theme further referenced by participants, both in planning and architecture. Architects discussed an approach based in responding to the city. For example, Senior Architect 7 said, *'all our buildings are very place-specific...they are very much in response to the surroundings; they take references from the history of the site and elements from the city.'* This was echoed by Senior Architect 2 in stating that the: *'prime drivers of us as a practice is trying to understand the context of where we are...you're always looking for a building to have its own identity.'* The participant explained this as a need to *'understand the grain of that place [and] understanding the character areas of the place [as] the function and identity of the city is always its architecture.'*

7.3.7 The Role and Interpretation of 'Placemaking' Policy in Building and Architecture

With *'the differentiator between building and architecture [being] that conceptual component'*, as argued by Senior Architect 10, the ways in which a city's urban character can be identified and created was, the research found, intrinsically linked to a conceptual input based in a holistic understanding of the city. This was suggested as reliant on an approach of using interplay between the tangible and intangible and as Senior Policy Adviser 1 said: *'the joining up of everything that contributes to a place.'* A central part of this joining up of everything was the concept of placemaking. Despite the term being a central tenant of national and local government policy (Scottish Government 2013a, b; GCC 2017b), research interviews found that it was ill-defined. Therefore, the suggestion by the majority of participants was that the concept was open to varied interpretation. Participants also expressed a degree of irritation, in the sense of it being seen as an urban design panacea, which Senior Planner 2 said was *'sold recently as a new invention, something that everyone is trying to chase...this amazing trick.'* The same participant stressed that good design was simply *'about recognising the place'* and in doing so creating *'those cultural*

conditions that are conducive to a place', rather than being wholly a matter of the physical design modification of place alone. The participant further argued that placemaking resulted from people engaging '*directly and taking ownership of their place [to] generate a better environment where [they] can be happier in the way they live, they work, they play.*'

Senior Policy Adviser 3 said that as part of this recognition of place, built environment responses needed to be '*part of a wider whole, as opposed to being in isolation.*' Here the suggestion was that placemaking was seen as an approach that ensured the built environment acted as the driver and facilitator of a cohesive society through the interplay of all the components of place. To achieve this, according to the same participant, service resources like health, justice, social, cultural, employment, and so on, needed to be pooled and coordinated. Most apparent in these arguments around holistic placemaking were the health benefits, such as active lifestyles and correlations around hope and meaning in people's lives, with the view that '*place has a massive role to play in that*', according to Senior Policy Adviser 3. Indeed, the built environment was described by Senior Architect 10 as being '*a mirror of people in place*', and '*if you take meaning out of architecture and urban environments*' the same can happen in people's lives.

Therefore, despite the research identifying a degree of interpretive vagueness attached to the term placemaking, the general merits of the concept were seen as an important influence at both a design and political level. The built environment was recognised as having a direct impact on the wellbeing of the individual, the community, and the economy. According to Senior Politician 1, the interplay between these components and the physical environment, and '*the way that places are constructed and the way that buildings and people interact really matter and they are not ignored.*' Furthermore, as the same participant said, place was no longer viewed as '*coincidental*' but as '*something that is fundamental to people's outcomes in life and their opportunities.*' This therefore underlined the majority of participants' view that there was a symbiotic relationship and interplay between the tangible and intangible components of place, and that this was intrinsic to successful and meaningful built environments.

7.3.8 The Designing of Place to Bring People and Place Together

Designing Tangible Space for Intangible Use

In seeking to create built environments that respond to the diverse and dynamic needs and aspirations of cities, as well as the enhancement and development of their overall identity '*a physical environment response on its own is not enough*', according to Senior Policy Adviser 2. Success in distinctive urbanism and placemaking goes beyond purely a designed configuration of space. Senior Planner 2 argued that it is an '*extremely narrow minded*' approach to simply focus on the '*modification of the physical character of the place.*' According to the participant, placemaking was in fact about, '*every modification of the city fabric that allows life to be brought into evidence.*' Senior Architect 9 explained that this tangible and intangible interplay of components underpinned a city's urban character and distinctive identity and was rooted '*in the people that occupy it, in the way in which we use the buildings and the spaces, the culture and how we come together.*'

As participants discussed in examining feel and ambience, this successful modification of place came through design which gave place meaning and thereby the intention and desire for it to be inhabited and occupied. The suggestion was that similarly to recognising and being informed by the atmospheric components of urban character in design, the interplay between the broader tangible and intangible aspects was achieved partly through a programmatic approach to the physicality of place. This again promoted qualities such as '*comfort*' and '*choice*', and which allowed people to '*actually do their stuff and feel comfortable and enjoy it*', as Senior Architect 1 put it.

If built environments were to be comfortable and enjoyable, and therefore '*people centric*' and '*full of life*', the physical environment needed to be approached from a placemaking perspective of intended arrangements, according to Senior Architect 6. The same architect said: '*I know some good architects that think it's about arranging a series of bits of architecture. No, it*

isn't. It's arranging a series of functions that inhabit the architecture that bring life to the spaces in between buildings.' This therefore indicated that it was the organisation of the physical environment that influenced what happened in particular places, rather than solely the buildings themselves. This was discussed within a context of environmental determinism by Senior Architect 9 who, while not agreeing with the concept, did agree with '*environmental probabilism*'. This probabilism was argued as an ability to '*design environments that will make it more probable for human interaction or more probable for people to stop and dwell, or not, depending on how you organise the space.*' This organisation, or programming, of the urban environment was, the participant said:

'Rooted in the re-emergence and reapplication of good European urban practice, in terms of an appreciation of what are the components of a good street. How do we make a street active [so] that people engage, buildings engage at ground level with the street? Get the basics right and the urban life will appropriate that in an interesting and dynamic way.'

Here, according to the participant, there was a '*kind of dichotomy between something that's distinctively Glaswegian, and that is undeniably human-centred, which is more all-encompassing.*' The participant described the latter as the enduring qualities of good urban design that responded to '*human needs and psychology...that make it more probable that people will spend time, will feel welcome, will feel that they can make the place their own.*' Rather than '*shouting Glasgow*', as the interviewee put it, these were universals that responded to the '*needs of most of the seven billion people on the planet, in terms of a place to sit, a place to dwell.*'

It was through the organisation of cities and architecture that made it more probable for human interaction to flourish and for '*communities to come together and have a sense of place, [and] a sense of community to thrive.*' In a more Glasgow-specific context, Senior Architect 9 cited the Govanhill area of the city as a place where there was '*a sense of belonging, coming together,*

culture, shared stuff, that still persists even when you've got really diverse populations.' Here, the successful community was partly attributed to an interplay between people and the built environment, with a '*massively diverse population living in the main within Glaswegian tenements [which have] been appropriated in a very, very rich and diverse way.'* Therefore, this suggested an interplay between the tangible and intangible components, based on the resilient and adaptable form of the built environment, had allowed the urban character of the neighbourhood to sustain and evolve. Furthermore, this reflected cities as dynamic entities which shift and change over time. As with the feel and atmosphere discussed in section 7.2.2., the city's tenemental urban fabric was posited as playing a part in the social DNA of citizens due to the density of living. Senior Landscape Architect 1 added to this idea: '*people inhabit streets and parks because they lived in tenements that had no private outdoor spaces.'* This interplay was also highlighted by Former Senior Planner 1 in reflecting that living in a tenement '*must do something to the psyche, in terms of communal living and how people actually deal with one another socially, and then how you engage with people.'*

With technical advancements in construction and engineering, contemporary architecture has been able to push the boundaries of what is possible in building form and aesthetics. While such freedom can result in interesting and potentially unique architecture, and is often used for city branding, as discussed in relation to Study Area 2 in Chapter Six, the use of what is often an ostentatious style was also viewed as problematic in terms of this interplay between people and buildings. Senior Architect 6 drew attention to the ways that such buildings interact at street level: '*the architect [often] doesn't understand those three metres or doesn't care. [However] it's about experience, experience at different ranges, experiences of different things, and as you get closer it's about opportunities for life to colonise the place because that's where the cultural aspects of the place get revealed.'* It was therefore the lack of appreciation of how buildings engage with people at ground level to foster the desire to inhabit and linger, and therefore bring meaning, life and identity to place which could be missed by such an architectural approach.

Senior Architect 6 said, *'I can live with tall buildings that do crazy things because the architect can, but where it hits the ground, where it impacts people directly, when it's to do with the tactile nature of it, the permeability of it [that is where it is problematic].'* This disconnect with the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of place was emphasised by the participant in relation to Glasgow. He highlighted that: *'People [Glaswegians] are quite outgoing, they're very gregarious. So how does your architecture allow that to happen. You can forgive a lot of a building if it interacts and brings life to a place.'* This was underlined by Senior Landscape Architect 1, who also talked of designers needing to *'step back a little bit, and that goes against the ostentatious side of it...but you want just to create a space that people will interpret in their own way...you are creating this idea of a stage that people are going to play out their lives on.'* Here the suggestion was, that devoid of an interaction between people and place, built environments ceased to be representative of the uniqueness of particular places, and thereby became architecturally generic.

7.3.9 Architecture as a Reflection of Citizens

Architecture that captured the imagination of citizens and reflected their identity and character, was discussed by participants. This aspect of an interplay between the tangible and intangible was framed as an urban mirror, in that architecture reflected the collective character of people through design that responded to this intangible component. Participants frequently described the collective Glaswegian character as *'extrovert'* and *'ostentatious'*, with such traits having influenced the design inspiration and output of architects, past and present. For example, as Senior Architect 7 pointed out, the city's main civic space, George Square, was framed with *'flamboyant'* buildings, such as the City Chambers and the Merchants' House, along with statuary of the city's collective story which celebrated Glasgow's successes and contributions. This design tradition was also, according to the participant, found in contemporary architecture, citing the Theatre Royal extension as an example of *'exuberant'* architecture *'that's got pizzazz!'* (See Figure 6.9). This interplay between the tangible and intangible components was emphasised by Senior Planner 2, who argued that *'recognising the place is the first and most*

important driver for any design, not just in physical terms but in actually intangible cultural terms and to respond to that.' This was further described by the participant as *'carving out the opportunity to stitch [a] building to its place.'* Senior Architect 7 described this process as, *'making things a bit more flashy than they maybe need to be'*, with the city's intangible character reflected as *'Glaswegians like to have their buildings to show what we have.'*

The idea of people's character being influenced, and perhaps enabled, by buildings was also discussed. The behaviour of Glaswegians was described, by Senior Policy Adviser 2 as being *'quite ritual based'*, in terms of enjoying the opportunity to get dressed up and socialise in a way that accentuated the occasion. As part of this ritual, the participant said, *'image is important, style is important, they like a bit of jazz and they like a bit of banter.'* The built environment was, according to the same policy adviser, also part of this, with architecture acting as a stage set which encouraged extrovert and gregarious nature to play out. The participant used a city hotel with a highly designed modern interior as an example: *'Citizen M is a jazzy type of place, and I think the built environment in Glasgow enables behaviours.'* Senior Architect 10 talked similarly of the city as being a place where people get *'excited about certain things'*, and the need for *'capturing people's imagination [being] central to whatever we're doing in the city.'*

An exemplar of this excitement and imagination was, according to Senior Landscape Architect 1, the 1988 Garden Festival. This highly popular temporary event provided a built environment where the interplay between people and architectures enabled a celebration of local behavioural traits of image consciousness, style and extroversion, and was, as Senior Architect 8 argued in Chapter Six, one of the most significant catalysts in shifting the city's cultural and economic fortunes. According to Senior Landscape Architect 1, the consideration and application of the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character resulted in an event *'that really tapped into what Glasgow is all about...and it just seemed to capture the essence of the place.'* Here the suggestion was that this cognisance and application of the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character was essential in designing built environments which

physicalised the socio-cultural aspects of the case study, already highlighted in Chapter Six. As Senior Planner 2 previously argued: *'Glasgow is a very frustrated city, in the sense that the very extroverted nature of Glaswegians does not yet find in Glasgow an urban environment that caters for that to be fully expressed.'* However, the Garden Festival was seen by participants as a place where the essence of the city was encapsulated in the built environment, and you could, as Senior Planner 2 said, *'see Glasgow, you [could] recognise Glasgow'*, and that this *'generated the best expression in the heart.'*

7.4 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the interplay between the components of urban character and how this can form built environment outcomes identifiable as integral to the unique identity of a city. In exploring the interplay participants reiterated that the urban character of place is more than just physical (Campelo *et al* 2014; Sepe and Pitt 2014; Ziyae 2017). A holistic identification of urban character was discussed as incorporating the intangible components of the concept. What can be termed design frameworks was explained as a method for physicalising aspects like the feel and ambience of a place. This was via design that gave a set of guidelines that made a place, such as scale, diversity, cohesion, order, and balance. This promoted places which were comfortable by being intuitively legible and navigable, encouraging the congregation and interaction of people essential to the feel and ambience of place (Sepe and Pitt 2014). Here, there was the suggestion that the interplay between urban character's components led to built environments which could be sensed beyond the visual.

The interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character was illustrated via the identification of the case study's *'energy'*. This was highlighted by several participants as a particular intangible component of the city resulting from a demographic diversity, which through an interplay with the tangible architecture, was enabled and amplified. This interplay between the components of urban character was further discussed by participants in identifying the case study's *'street culture'*. With the city's

built environment consisting of a high density tenemental form, citizens had a particular tradition of using public spaces and buildings due to a lack of private outdoor space. Participants indicated that this interplay between the tangible built environment and the socio-cultural led to a cultural expression evident in the city's urban character. Furthermore, this suggested that this interplay between the socio-cultural and physical components of urban character transferred to certain buildings, to an extent, and imbued them with a sense of presence (Thrift 2000; Jacobs 2006).

The majority of participants pointed to the importance of the role of the intangible components of urban character in designing places with strong and distinctive identity, and that there was the need to use all aspects of a city's DNA to do this (Anholt 2010). Tensions were highlighted between those built environment professionals able and willing to understand and incorporate these intangible components into built environment processes, and those unable or unwilling to do so. Here a distinction was made by a number of participants between those described as simply building buildings, but who were not in fact architects due to a failure to use the wider contextualisation delivered via the intangible components of urban character.

Chapter Eight will now turn to an examination of the factors impacting the components of urban character, particularly economic competition between cities stemming from the forces of globalisation. This is to analyse how these factors drive, constrain, or prevent the concept's role in built environment processes.

Chapter 8: Case Study - The Forces Acting on Urban Character and How these Impact the Built Environment

8.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter relates to research objective four in examining how urban character is considered and applied in urban policy and architectural design. More particularly, the chapter analyses of the impacts a globalised approach to the built environment has had on the ways in which the case study's urban character is driven, constrained, or prevented. This is done within the context of the practical and economic requirements of modern cities to establish the relevance of the concept of urban character and its application in preserving and 'contemporising' the built environment. The chapter forms part of the thesis' overall examination of the concept, and its role in policy and design processes, by interrogating the globalisation factors at play in determining built environment outcomes.

The chapter's main section, 8.2, is divided into five subsections. Section 8.2.1 focuses on the impacts of globalisation on Glasgow's urban character resulting from architectural branding and attitudes to place identity, and contemporary design processes. The power relations between the key actors determining the contemporary built environment, and their discursive and practical approaches, are explored in section 8.2.2. Section 8.2.3 examines shifts in attitudes towards the built environment by international corporations and institutions, and the ways in which this has directly impacted architectural outcomes. As part of this attitudinal shift, section 8.2.4 explores the potential role that the ethos and approach of different design practices can have on the built environment's urban character. The final subsection, 8.2.5, examines the ways in which modern, particularly corporate, architecture sits within established urban landscapes, particularly through processes of hybridisation and embedding, and how such architecture potentially becomes part of a city's urban character.

Section 8.3. summarises the chapter and introduces the final chapter, Chapter 9, which discusses and concludes the thesis.

8.2. Globalisation and the Challenges to Place Identity

8.2.1. The Globalised Approach

A Disengagement of People and Place

Academic literature (see for example Sklair 2006; Adam 2008) cites a globalised, often corporate-led, approach to the built environment as posing challenges to distinctive place identity and to the tangible and intangible components of urban character which contribute to such identity. These challenges are therefore explored further to establish the ways in which this was evidenced within the context of the case study.

Participants from those interviewed across the built environment professions said that the phenomenon has had a significant impact on the urban character of the case study area, in terms of the key overarching research themes of the tangible built environment and the intangible relationships between people and place. With the exception of two participants, both from larger commercial architectural practices, attitudes towards the contemporary corporate globalisation of the built environment were discussed as largely having had a negative impact on the city by, as Senior Architect 4 said, *'diluting localism, place, history, memory, for wider commercial gain.'* The participant elaborated that the globalisation of cities significantly contributed to an erosion of place and the creation of placelessness by, *'taking away some of that robustness and care and craft'* in the built environment. This, the same participant said, resulted in cities becoming *'very homogenised [and] standardised'*, and pointed to a challenge to distinct urbanism which came from a failure to observe, or a lack of interest in, the local tangible components of place discussed in Chapters Six and Seven of this thesis. According to Senior Architect 6, these components were often dismissed by clients, developers, and some architects responsible for globalised environments as, *'stuff that is not quantifiable in terms of a spreadsheet.'*

The same Senior Architect, who has a particular professional focus on place-making, stated that this globalised approach denied the need for distinctive place in people's lives, something he argued was an essential element of the built environment. The participant emphasised the human importance of strong place identity, and the need to defend it: *'one of the worst things that can happen to a person is amnesia. Therefore, why do we create amnesiac places?'* Such places were created by those who *'don't understand the role of identity, the role of emotional attachment, the role of memory'* - Senior Architect 6. The sentiments expressed by the architect were reflective of the wider collective views of all but two of the interviewees in the study. This collective view agreed that globalisation has not only impacted directly on the built environment but has also **affected and challenged relationships between the physical environment and the people using and interacting with it**. In the words of Senior Architect 4, globalised built environments led to a *'disengagement'* between people and such places. Participants therefore indicated that the challenges brought by a globalised approach and attitude to the built environment can not only adversely impact distinctive architectural identity, but also affect the more intangible aspects of cities by weakening the emotional relationships between people and place. This is examined further in the next section.

Globalised 'Disengagement' in the Study Areas

Study Area 2 was frequently cited as an example of such a globalised environment which disengaged people and affected their emotional relationships with place. As Senior Policy Adviser 4 said: it *'lacks that fine scale'* and was therefore *'very difficult to have an emotional connection with.'* The area was discussed by all but two participants, again, both from larger commercially focused architectural practices, as an example of where the built environment was globally interchangeable. This meant a building like Foster and Partners Clyde Auditorium, (See Figure 8.1) a prominent architectural presence in the area, could be taken down and rebuilt anywhere as it did not respond to nor *'care about context'*, according to Senior Planner 2. However, Senior Architect 8 who was involved in the masterplanning of the area and design of one of the key

buildings, disagreed and said that: *'I think there's a uniqueness about the structures. When you marry them off together, they become a part of what you associate with that place.'* His opinion was that context comes, not only from fitting in with the wider urban contextual design precedents, or a historic narrative of the area, but from the area's built environment generating its own context through time. As the participant said, the buildings *'sit well in that new environment because they're creating a new context for going forward.'* This view was echoed by Senior Architect 3, who stated that: *'these buildings have created their own sense of place because of their composition, the Hydro, Armadillo...'* This suggested that buildings which were not immediately seen to fit contextually in a place can do so through processes of embedding and hybridisation. These are important concepts to urban character (Faulconbridge 2009), particularly within the context of globalisation, and will be examined later in this chapter.

Nevertheless, with the exception of these two participants, the overall opinion of the built environment professionals interviewed saw sub-case Study Area 2 as diluting or ignoring the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of the city's urban character due to globalised architectural agendas. These agendas were uninterested in responding to context and thereby failed to create meaningful places crucial in making people want to linger and inhabit so that, as Senior Architect 6 put it, *'there's a chance cultural exchange may happen'* (as examined in detail in Chapters Six and Seven). Senior Planner 2, whose professional role specialises in the design aspects of planning, said Study Area 2, *'fails to lead the story of the place and to respond to the story of the place'*. This exclusion of meaning and narrative resulted in place becoming *'dysfunctional'* and where *'it becomes a negative element'*, according to Senior Architect 6.

The International Financial Services District (IFSD), contained within sub-case Study Area 1, was also highlighted by participants as displaying the impacts of globalisation and the ways in which this approach resulted in the *'disengagement'*, previously highlighted by Senior Architect 4. Senior Policy Adviser 3, who formerly worked in the city's planning department, drew attention to the fact that this area was a globalised place and *'not about*

Glasgow or Scotland but people all over the world, so the buildings and the uses they are put to are now shaped by those forces, not by any particular direct natural, physical or human assets.' The suggestion was that while the buildings were located geographically in the city, neither the physical environment nor the employment activities of people inhabiting them were particularly dependent on Glasgow *per se*. The wider interviews supported this, with both the built environment and people's connection to it discussed as being impacted negatively by a globalised built environment approach, with the area reduced to functionality, largely devoid of any particular place-specific architectural expression or emotional attachment by people. The effects of such built environments were further highlighted by Senior Architect 6. He argued that in relation to Study Area 2: *'People just want to get out...there's nothing to hold you. People just get in their cars and on the motorway. It's losing an opportunity from an economic point of view and a place point of view. Because these people just go.'* This emphasised the functionality of the area and the absence of the architectural components needed to hold people so that, as the same participant discussed earlier, cultural interaction and exchange was possible, and thereby the interplay between people and place which generated the intangible aspects of the city's urban character. The relationship between built environments and the economic wellbeing of cities was also stated by the participant. Here he highlighted the reciprocal opportunities between place and economics. This will be discussed further in the following section of this chapter.

Figure 8.1 Study Area 2 | Foster + Partners' Clyde Auditorium 'Armadillo'
- Generic globalised architecture, or unique structure creating urban identity via new context



Source: Author's Own

Globalisation's Challenge to Urban 'DNA'

Research interviews indicated that the loss of the uniqueness of a place's identity, through the globalisation of the built environment, could ironically have the potential to jeopardise the city's ability to fulfil policy objectives aimed at attracting global investment. National and local policy sought to enhance a city's international economic attractiveness via a range of assets, including its built environment (CDC 1986; Arts Council 1994; Scottish Government 2011, 2013a, b; GCC 2017a, b). Senior Planner 3, from their perspective of working within the city council, drew attention to this and the combined role of the city's tangible and intangible qualities: *'when you look at how the city sells itself as an investment location, it is about the quality of the built environment. It's cultural and civic and leisure opportunities.'* This point concerning the importance of the built environment as part of an offering in the economic competitiveness and wider success of the city, was also picked up by Senior Planner 2 when he talked of the impact of undermining local urban character: *'if a city doesn't have a DNA and is trying to replicate other DNA and replicating models that do not belong to that place, it will sooner or later fail.'* The participant clarified this by arguing that if the *'city knows about his (sic) own DNA it can only grow in the right direction.'* This suggested the idea that without an understanding of the essential tangible and intangible components of a place's urban character needed to replicate the city's unique identity, it was prone to built environments created from an alien DNA, and which could therefore attack, not only its architectural landscape, but its socio-cultural and economic wellbeing.

Therefore, rather than allowing a purely perfunctory and generic globalised environment to dominate, interviews pointed to the need for the unique attributes of the case study's tangible and intangible qualities to be defended on a broad cultural basis, and as essential tools of its economic wellbeing in adapting to global commercial practices and competition. This was argued by a number of participants, particularly Senior Planner 3 when he previously explained that the quality of the built environment was intrinsically linked to the economic and broader cultural aspects of the city's fortunes, and that by undermining these Glasgow's economic wellbeing would be weakened in the long

term. The long-term economic benefits of built environments rooted in place identity was further emphasised by Senior Planner 2. He pointed out that companies are becoming aware that a recognition and sensitivity to the specifics of place in built environments is good for business, particularly in relation to attracting and retaining skilled workforces. This shift in corporate attitudes to the broader benefits of built environments is discussed further in section 8.2.3.

The impacts of globalisation on distinctive place were further emphasised by Senior Landscape Architect 1 when he said that if you were standing in a generic globalised built environment, you would not know if you were in Glasgow, Beijing, or New York as *'it wouldn't have any essence of the place about it.'* Participants talked of sub-case Study Area 2 as very much a generic globalised place in this sense. For example, Senior Policy Adviser 3 felt that much of the area's architecture was of relatively poor quality and likely to need significant redevelopment, *'probably in my lifetime.'* The argument made by Senior Planner 2 concerning *'trying to replicate other [urban] DNA...that do not belong to that place'* and the potential for a place to fail as a result, was also further drawn out by participants. Senior Policy Adviser 3 emphasised this contextual DNA of the city and argued that *'as a piece of the city there seemed to be something at odds with the grain'* and quoted a colleague that had described areas like this as a *'virus.'*

The participant's virus analogy suggested that the globalised built environment of sub-case Study Area 2 was depleted of the essential structural cells used in the forming of the city's wider urban DNA. These structural cells were examined in Chapters Six and Seven via the tangible and intangible components of urban character. For example, interviews identified the importance in sub-case Study Area 1 of the structural guidance and harmony given by the urban grid plan, the engagement and interaction and the so called *'drag effect'* (Senior Architect 6) of certain buildings and spaces with people, as well as the contextual architectural scale and materiality and general sense of place derived from this. Interviews identified these as some of the fundamental building blocks, or structural cells, of the city's urban character and built environment DNA which contributed to parts of sub-case Study Area 1's distinctiveness and its appeal on an economic and cultural level. In particular, the data pointed to the interaction

between people and place as being particularly central to Glasgow's hierarchy of identity.

The likening therefore of area 2 to an urban virus emphasised the contrasts between the study areas and the challenges brought by a globalised approach to urban design and planning. Participants spoke of sub-case Study Area 2 as being largely devoid of the physical elements of the city's DNA identified in Study Area 1 and thereby repelling the vitality of place brought through human engagement and interaction. Senior Architect 6, with a particular professional focus on place-making, reiterated his assertion that places need to make people want to *'linger'* so as to give the *'chance for cultural exchange'* to happen. However, a number of participants said that sub-case Study Area 2 was a place that people didn't want to linger. Senior Architect 5 said, *'you're in and out - you want to go to your event and leave.'* The area was described by Senior Architect 11 as almost being a foreign body that *'doesn't feel like Glasgow.'* Therefore, within the context of Senior Planner 3 drawing attention to the intrinsic link between the tangible and intangible components of place, in terms of the quality of the built environment coupled with the cultural aspects offered by a city, the interviews pointed to sub-case Study Area 2 lacking the understanding of this contextual relationship, and therefore weaker in providing the essential tools in how *'the city sells itself as an investment location'* (Senior Planner 3). While the data indicated sub-case Study Area 2 as being successful economically, this was nevertheless largely confined to limited periods of activation when events were taking place at the Scottish Events Campus, according to Senior Planner 5. Therefore, according to the participant, and a number of others, the intangible qualities created by the presence of people as part of the city's cultural and civic offering to economic investment, were reduced. Furthermore, Senior Architect 11's statement that the area *'doesn't feel like Glasgow'* gave the impression of an isolated architectural entity dominated by a perfunctory and generic globalised environment, contextually detached from the wider city as a consequence of its failure to draw on the local tangible and intangible DNA.

The contextual detachment indicated here, both in terms of the physical environment and of human interaction with it, suggests that cities act as hosts to globalised built environments, which are to an extent parasitical in extracting

and overwhelming the useful elements of place and eventually destroying the very qualities that attracted it in the first place. The detachment brought by globalisation in places like sub-case Study Area 2, as well as in the relationship between globalised business and place generally, was described as '*the most violent process to take away the relation between the people and the place*', by Senior Planner 2. The participant said that decisions rooted in global agendas were made by people not interested in the way that cities were experienced, and reduced people to numbers and consumers where '*you are a sponge that we [multinational corporations] can squeeze.*' The suggestion was that globalisation created a disassociation between business and place that had led to decisions which ultimately affected local place character being '*controlled remotely and not from Scotland*', Senior Policy Adviser 3 said. This was exacerbated, according to Senior Planner 3 by corporate agendas which '*are not interested in what you do and the way you experience the city.*' It was this distancing of decision-making from the integral aspects and functions contributing to local urban character which all but two participants, the same architects from larger more corporate-focused design practices, attributed to a major attenuation of the distinct identity of the physical environment.

Interviews therefore drew attention to the challenges brought by a globalised approach to the built environment and its intrinsic links to Glasgow's tangible and intangible urban character. The research indicated participants strongly believed that the architectural outcomes of these challenges were essential to the city's purpose and sense of self through the relationships between the built environment and its cultural and economic wellbeing and viability. The economic and cultural life of the city could not be detached from each other and were, as stated in policy and expressed by many of the participants, interlinked and of mutual and reciprocal benefit. The physical and cultural urban character of the city had the potential to attract international economic investment but needed to be protected from being overwhelmed by the globalisation it sought to attract. Indeed, Senior Architect 8, again using a DNA analogy, emphasised the effects that contextual detachment resulting from forces like built environment globalisation can have on identity, and the need to ensure a sense of context and continuity for a city's urban character to thrive:

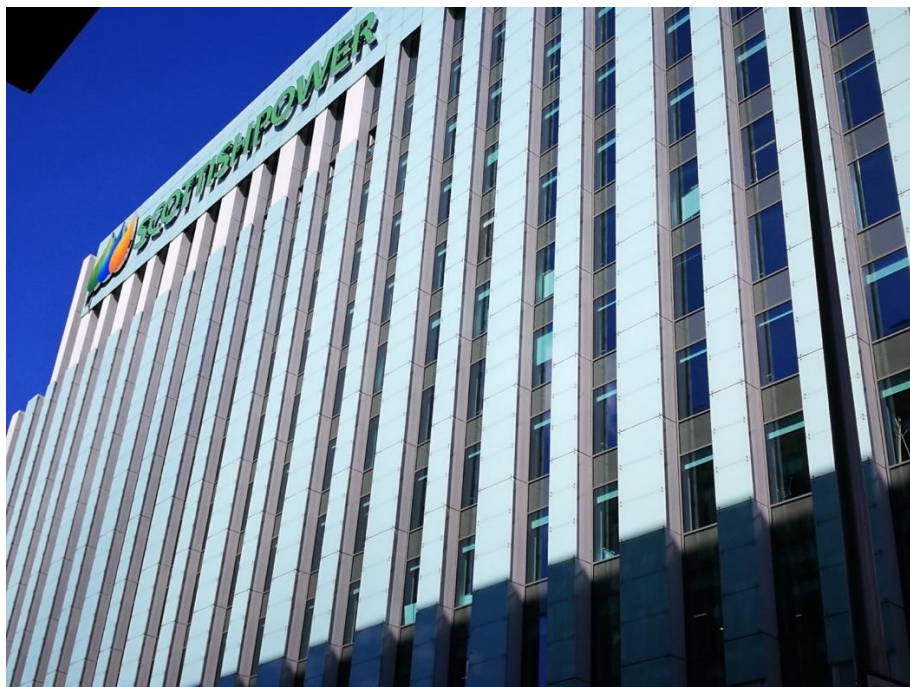
'If I didn't have any knowledge of my parents, their parents and their parents before them and how they had become characteristically Glaswegian and the elements of their background and upbringing, and I was simply devoid of that knowledge, then I would be an orphan. And I would have to create that identity for myself. The fact that I know all that gives me the opportunity to respond to it or to ignore it. If you don't have that as part of your DNA, then you don't have that opportunity.' - Senior Architect 8

8.2.2. City Aspirations and the Power Relations of Globalisation

Despite this majority consensus amongst participants of a negative view of a globalised approach to the city fabric and its urban character, there was nevertheless a slight contradictory recognition that attracting employment to the city via globalised business networks was important and generally desirable. Senior Architect 4 summed up the admission from across all the professions interviewed: that politically Glasgow had sought to attract this kind of economic activity to fit *'into the nature of what the city wants to be.'* Indeed, a Senior Politician welcomed the move by companies to raise their presence and visibility in the city and said that it was a *'good thing'* that the US bank, JP Morgan, would have a sign on top of their new offices, *'so that we visibly have a part of the city where there is certainly economic vibrancy.'* With this however there was also a potential compromise towards the built environment's local urban character due to a recognition that international companies often brand their architecture. This was for the purpose of projecting a *'transferable image'*, as Senior Architect 4 said. Here the participant mentioned a prominent office in sub-case Study Area 1 which is the headquarters of the utility company, Scottish Power (See Figure 8.2). The company is owned by the Spanish conglomerate Iberola, who, the architect speculated, are likely to want their *'building in Madrid to look like the building in Glasgow so that people know it is Iberola.'* Senior Architect 7, involved in the project, discussed the issue of image transferability and brand awareness, where the original design had to be modified as the client had said that: *'it's not corporate enough for us, it's too Glaswegian.'* While the designers recognised the company brief of a corporate

style, they did seek to ‘root it in Glasgow and “Glaswegianise” it, as much as we could.’

Figure 8.2 Scottish Power HQ | Multinational client seeking corporate architectural image transferability - however local architects also seeking to root the building in Glasgow



Source: Author's Own

This compromise highlighted the power relations between the city and global corporations in shaping built environments, with the balance of power held by multinationals, but with certain local practices, such as the one involved in the Scottish Power building, seeking influence through counter-hegemonic design, as far as possible. In dealing with such issues from within the city council, Senior Planner 3 said, powerful companies are likely to ‘*influence the outcome*’ of built environments due to a desire for corporate architectural branding. The participant acknowledged this corporate power and said that there is ‘*a realisation of the global market, particularly in relation to the office sector*’ that ultimately companies are mobile and ‘*if they don’t invest in Glasgow, they’re quite capable of uprooting and investing somewhere else.*’ This indicated that urban economic policy aimed at attracting international investment will, to varying degrees, lead to a compromise of a city’s urban character and place identity. Therefore, the suggestion was that, at best, the determining of such built environments was a compromise between an international branded style and attempts by planners and designers to assert their role and inform the city’s architectural discourse by, ‘*standing up for what*

they believe in', as discussed in Chapter Seven by Senior Planner 2. However, as the participant also previously argued, this was something which many in the built environment professions had *'lost the capability'* to do.

8.2.3. Changing Corporate Culture

The Business of Recognising Place

As discussed above, multinational corporations, in particular, hold considerable influence over the built environment and this has led to an increasingly globalised approach to place and architectural production in the case study. However, the research also revealed the beginnings of a change in attitudes to this approach. Interviews drew attention to the emergence of a shift in discourse and design aspiration based on a recognition of the importance of place and the built environment to business interests. Senior Architect 9, involved in creating urban strategies for cities, including Glasgow, said that there was now an understanding by business sectors, such as in the knowledge economy, academia, and corporate finance, *'that to attract and retain talent it's absolutely crucial to locate in cities that are going to be attractive in the retention of that talent.'*

A number of participants drew attention to this attitudinal change of some multinational companies towards the built environment's role in relation to their business interests. Interviews signalled the start of a paradigm shift away from a globalised reproduction of architectural branding and a hegemonic projection of corporate success, as discussed in the previous sections. Senior Architect 9 stated: *'Rather than trying to pretend that you're something you're not, it's about trying to actually create a narrative and a design response that enables that authentic place making and place setting to thrive.'* This departure from a globalised approach to the built environment was identified by the same architect as being replaced by an attitude of, *'how can we occupy working environments within a city environment that are going to then be inspiring, attractive and engage with the types of staff and talent, but also the types of clients, that these organisations want?'*

This appreciation of the wider value of place, and its intrinsic relationship with the economic and cultural wellbeing of a city, was discussed by participants from across the built environment professionals interviewed. Senior Planner 2, noting this shift from within the city's planning department, spoke of there being a '*rediscovery*' of place-specific design: '*I've seen a change of trend in the last few years...the change that is happening is there's more and more big corporations realising that an anonymous response to place is not exactly paying off.*' The participant drew attention to the intrinsic link between place and the benefits for business brought through a more holistic engagement with the built environment and its contribution to the wider urban character of a city: '*Sometimes it's actually paying off to be more sensitive, to be more cognisant, to acknowledge that there is an identity they need to deal with to merge with an existing fabric, to knit together their own needs with the character of the place*' - Senior Planner 2.

The reappraisal of the role of the built environment's contribution by some corporations and institutions was explained by Senior Architect 9, who had worked directly with the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow on a project which had a brief of distinctive place-specific design. The participant said that the project was, '*absolutely grounded in this demand to celebrate the great assets that the city has, and make sure that it's not an identikit science park on the greenfield site on the edge of anywheresville...but absolutely rooted in the place, in the city...*'. However, this change in attitude was not seen as having pervaded all global institutions. In contrast to the approach taken by the University of Strathclyde, the University of Glasgow was criticised as using design which perpetuated a globalised approach. Senior Architect 7, whose practice is known particularly for its work in fusing the historic built environment with the contemporary, said that the University's new quarter was, '*a great disappointment to me because they say they are a worldwide university, we are part of the global market or whatever, and I know that from an educational viewpoint that's great, but they've chosen architects for their new Western campus which are global architects.*' The participant pointed out that the practices engaged have offices all over the world and '*they do a corporate style, and what I've seen of the Western campus site you could be anywhere.*'

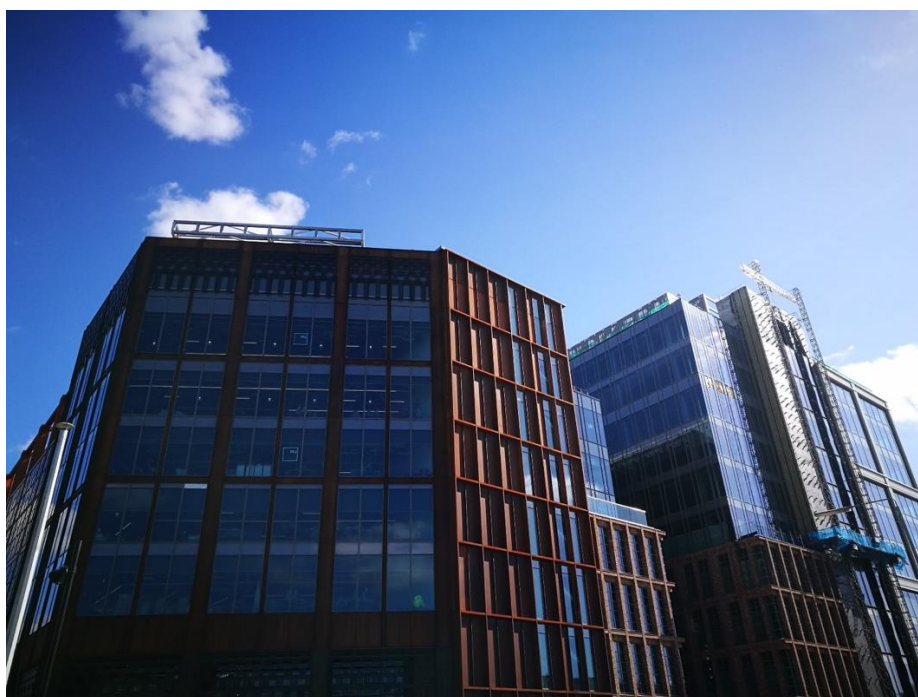
Senior Planner 4 also expressed disappointment in the globalised approach taken and a failure to work with, and to contemporise, the urban character of the area: *'It's grim stuff that's been commissioned from engineering firms that have taken on a few architects. And this is, it's another example of, you know, ken't yer father [nepotism] stuff. And the whole thing I think is appalling. Absolutely disgraceful.'* These contrasts between two higher education institutions highlighted tensions found in the different discourses and approaches to place and urban character. In particular, the comments by the architect and planner cited above drew attention to how attitudes and approaches to the built environment can vary depending on the type of practice engaged. These differences are of key importance in architectural outcomes and urban character and will be examined in more detail later in this chapter within the context of local versus international design practices.

Another example of this attitudinal move away from globalised built environments, and the reasoning behind this, was provided by Senior Architect 10. The participant was involved in a major project by Barclays Bank in the city (see Figure 8.3). The background to the Bank's decision to relocate from London was explained by the participant as being taken partly on the basis of Glasgow offering a better work and lifestyle balance. According to the participant, workforce retention was difficult in London due to long commuting distances. Therefore, in order to improve employee retention and attract a relevant workforce, lifestyle was an important aspect of the business strategy; with the workplace built environment central to this. The same participant said that the target employee for a company like Barclays was a *'millennial workforce who are very brand smart, who are anti-bank...they don't want to work for a bank, and so the bank is not a bank.'* The bank therefore becomes *'a college, it's a destination, it's a marketplace and you just happen to work there as well.'* The architect said that this approach had a direct impact on the architectural brief in that it was designed to appeal to *'mobile, urban, metropolitan, brand savvy millennials, old person that thinks they're a young and groovy skater!'*

This contrasted with the globalised approach traditionally adopted by international finance companies, where a certain neo-liberal idea of glass and

steel was used to create a built environment which projected corporate power and virility and was largely detached from its geography and the culture within which it sits (see - King 2004; Jacobs 2006; Sklair 2006; Eldemery 2009; Faulconbridge 2009; Rapoport 2013). Indeed, as Senior Architect 10 said: *'They didn't want anything shiny...they wanted to create a place that looked as if it had been there or had evolved incrementally.'* This shift in the corporate role of the built environment illustrated the points made previously by Senior Planner 3. These concerned the tangible and intangible aspects of the case study and the intrinsic links between the architectural nature of place and the economic and cultural success, where a city sells itself as an investment location based on *'the quality of the built environment [and] it's cultural and civic and leisure opportunities'* (Senior Planner 3).

Figure 8.3 Barclays Bank Campus - cited as representing a shift in corporate attitudes to built environments



Source: Author's Own

The Shifting Political Discourse of Built Environments

Interviews indicated that national and local authority planning policy also played a role in shifting the corporate approach to architecture and place (Scottish Government 2013a, b; 2017a, b). Senior Politician 1 echoed what the built environment participants said, in terms of detecting an attitudinal shift by business towards place and architecture. The participant claimed that this had

partly resulted from the city's planning department '*actively encouraging those conversations and saying if you want to come and invest in the city in a way that adds value for our citizens, rather than just your own profit margins, then we welcome you.*' Investors were, the participant said, encouraged to '*do something that's actually distinctive and adds value to the cityscape.*' The participant further stated that '*planners will send designs back, saying to the developers to look at the designs, particularly during the pre-planning process.*' (See Figure 8.4 as example of negotiation between planning and developer). The politician's comments suggested that the city's local authority was actively pursuing national and local policy and encouraging and facilitating applications that demonstrated a commitment to creating more holistic and place-specific built environments, rather than those with a generic globalised approach. Senior Planners 2 and 3 also discussed this policy drive, with Senior Planner 2 stating that: *Our planning system is moving towards a system that is not dictated by prescriptive rules, but it is defined by inviting designers to understand the place and to respond to it. Easier said than done. However, the bottom line is that there are buildings that have been actually making an effort. They tried to make an effort in reading those characters.*'

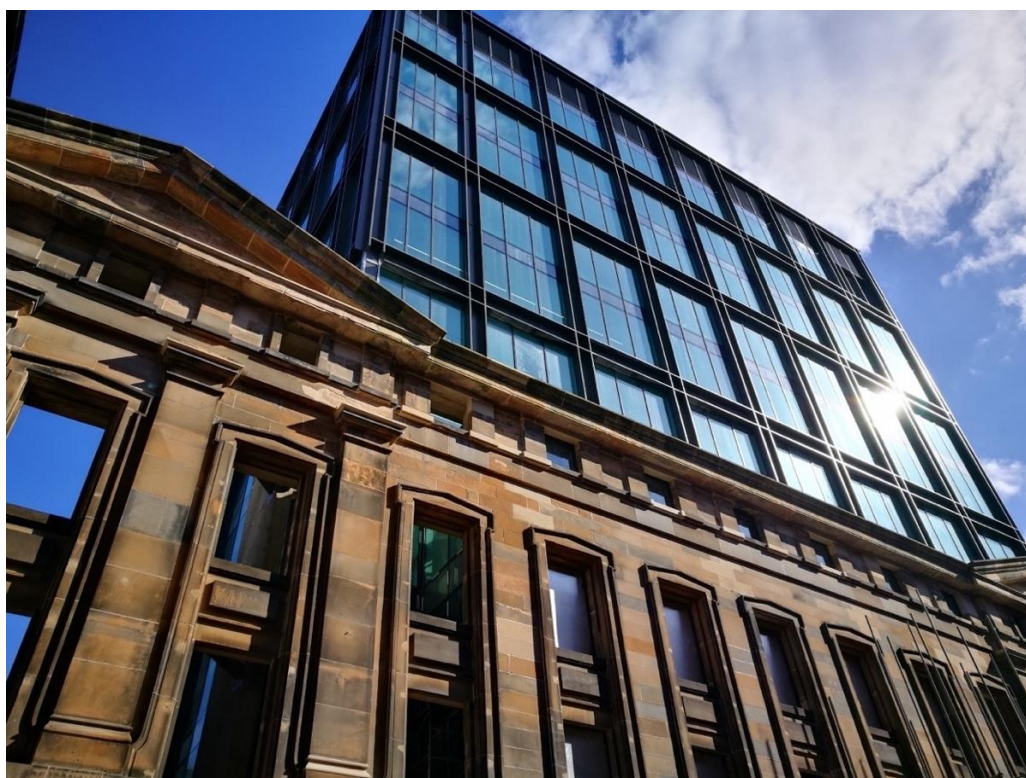
Ultimately however, as most participants emphasised, it was the realisation of the business benefits brought by place-specific design which was key in shifting the primacy of the globalisation paradigm towards design more rooted in local urban character. The contrasts in attitudes towards the built environments of the universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde showed the role of designers was crucial in facilitating this shift, both through discourse and the application of design. Participants drew attention to the different outcomes which resulted from different client briefs and architectural firms whose ethos towards the built environment's role was either rooted in a place-specific, or globalised, approach.

Furthermore, some of the research interviews suggested the potential for a shift in the power dynamics between the built environment professions and business clients, with more of an alignment of interests emerging between those actors who sought to achieve similar aims in place-making. Senior Architect 1 drew attention to a coalescing of approaches and attitudes to place-specific design,

and a reappraisal of local architectural identity found in movements like Critical Regionalism: *'I'd like to think that we are going through a whole process where clients and architects and designers and planners understand the value in that [Critical Regionalism type approach].'*

Nevertheless, despite these shifts in attitudes, via discourse and design, participants revealed tensions remained between built environment professionals and developers. These were based largely in the ways in which economic built environment models were geared to maximise profits and sought to minimise a client's financial investment. This often perpetuated a compromised approach to architectural outcomes through, for example, disputes involving value engineering in such aspects as, the choice of materials and the retention and incorporation of elements of the built heritage. These tensions between the actors involved in these processes will be examined further later in this chapter.

Figure 8.4 Example of contemporary architecture and existing built heritage. Policy required retention rather than demolition of existing heritage, against original developer brief



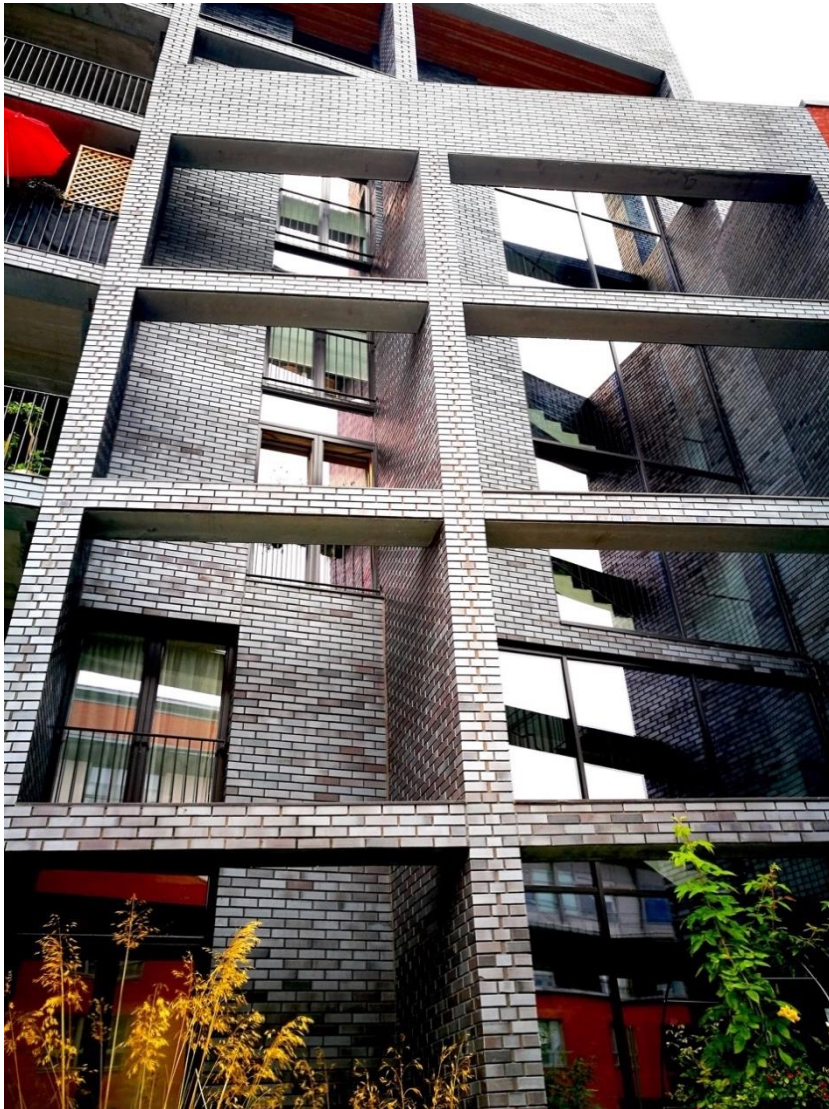
Source: Author's Own

8.2.4. International versus Local Architectural Practices

Another theme discussed in the interviews was how a more place-specific design was being adopted. The potential for different built environment outcomes, depending on the type of architectural practice, was illustrated through the interviews which compared the design approaches of two of the case study's universities. In particular, there was the suggestion that the architectural ethos, and therefore output, of different practices, depending on factors like whether a firm was local or international, had a significant impact on built environment outcomes, including the role of the city's urban character in influencing these. Participants discussed whether local architects potentially brought important understandings and nuances of urban character to their architecture, which were either missed or ignored by practices not indigenous to an area.

Former Senior Planner 1 argued that this local understanding and sensitivity can be '*part of the culture of the city [and] part of the cultural identity.*' The participant named the particular Glasgow architectural practices of "Elder and Canon" and "Page and Park" as producing contemporary design rooted in the city, as they had '*grown as the city has grown as an architectural entity.*' (See Figure 8.5).

Figure 8.5 Example of Elder + Canon design (New Gorbals). Described as being ‘rooted in the city’.



Source: Author's Own

According to Former Senior Planner 1, being sensitive and attuned to the architectural, cultural, and social fabric of the city meant that local practices could be skilled at reading and interpreting the built environment, and therefore able to design in a nuanced way which preserved and contemporised the city's urban character: *'Enhancement to me means you get a high-quality modern building... For instance, Elder and Canon in the Garnethill conservation part of the city, designed three concrete buildings. And I think those will probably be listed at some point in time.'*

Interviews drew further attention to the role that the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the historical, cultural, social, and economic narratives of the city played in architectural discourse and design outcomes. Senior Architect 10 drew out and explained the importance of these elements in their work, and how these informed their design on a cultural and social level:

'I like the baggage of Glasgow in terms of the broken bits and the sort of slightly dark side. For me [it's] celebrating what's specific about the city. So rather than being beautiful I would rather it was slightly terrifying, meaningful...what we want is something magnificent and loud and proud...or so quiet that it's existential and poetic. So, for me I just like to explore these ideas of extremes.'

As well as the cultural aspects informing a place-specific approach, the participant cited a social understanding of the city's quotidian life in terms of the *'character rituals, the day-to-day life of the city in terms of how people live.'* The participant discussed the importance to their work of taking cognisance of place and how people live relative to climate, social, political, and economic factors. However, rather than a 'one-size-fits-all' approach stemming from this holistic design perspective, the participant explained that every project was nuanced differently depending on the above factors, as well as specific geographic variables like the rivers or hills. According to the participant, an awareness and attention to these meant that if you are *'listening enough,...and asking the right questions and putting the right answers forward, the cumulative effect would be that you get a building that belongs to the city, rather than one-dimensional.'* This suggested that designers experientially immersed in the daily existence of the city, and involved in a creative dialogue with it, could draw on this to create holistic built environments which reflected and responded to the cultural, social, economic, and climatic needs of place. The indication was that it was the designer's awareness of, and relationship with, these factors that had the potential to result in architecture rooted in local urban character, rather than the production of *'one-dimensional'* design more associated with a globalised approach.

As part of this awareness and attention to the more intangible local social and cultural elements, the tangible architectural legacy of Glasgow was cited as

influential. Senior Architect 1 discussed the industrial architectural character of parts of the city, and that certain local architects drew on this. For example, he suggested that local urban character can be reflected if you *'just take a typical Glaswegian warehouse architecture and extend that into some sort of a modern idiom.'* According to the participant, local architects often had a *'different sensibility'* to these elements compared to those less familiar with the city. Senior Planner 1, from within the local authority, argued that such knowledge and sensibility were key to retaining and enhancing the city's urban character. The participant suggested that potentially there should be rules that help local architects compete with larger international firms for projects, so that *'local ideas, local materials, the understanding of the city, how people are attached to that area'* has a better chance of being incorporated in design to *'avoid generic anywhere architecture.'*

As with interview discussions of the potential design sensitivity by local architects to the intangible socio-cultural components of the city, discussions concerning the tangible elements indicated that, equally, an approach informed by local knowledge, awareness and appreciation of these factors were likely to influence the architectural thinking of many indigenous practices. For example, factors like the former uses of place and their traditional form, However, due to larger multi-national firms holding a competitive edge, for example by having procurement departments (Senior Architect 6; Senior Landscape Architect 2), smaller and medium-sized local practices were often unsuccessful in winning large-scale, higher-profile projects, such as those in sub-case Study Area 2.

The Role of Urban Character as an Investment

Research interviews focused on the potential awareness and sensitivity brought by local architects also indicated that they were able to advocate the value of local urban character's incorporation into projects. This was not just from a cultural stance, but as part of shifting discourse away from a globalised approach founded in the concept's direct financial worth to business. Senior Architect 7, from a practice with a particular reputation and expertise in the repurposing and contemporising of heritage buildings, explained the role that local architects can play in influencing a more place-specific approach: *'I think that what we have to do with a lot of our clients is to persuade them to invest*

maybe a little bit more, [and] you've got to offset that with the benefit for them.' The participant pointed out that, while urban character was worthwhile for cultural and aesthetic reasons, ultimately clients needed an economic case to be receptive to an architect's ideas in this respect: *'It can't just be a nice red brick and concrete panelling because it looks nice, it's because the planners will then allow you to do something that's out with the guidelines or something that's a little bit dense on the site.'*

The same participant cited an example where they were able to persuade a client to invest more by illustrating the economic benefits via the planning process allowing more height: *'...luckily our client listened to us, the planners were really supportive of it...[and] we were able to convince the planners to go higher.'* Senior Architect 7 pointed out that *'we could just have done the big glass box thing there because it was a brownfield site, but there was a piece of the existing wall left that hadn't been demolished.'* The client had wanted the red brick wall demolished, but the architects had argued for its retention. The design was able to then integrate the wall into the overall project so that *'a piece of history was remaining and the material palette for the rest of the building was incorporating red brick'* - Senior Architect 7.

Although Senior Planner 2 previously argued that many architects had, *'lost the capability of standing up for what they believe in'*, interviews indicated that there were nevertheless architects able and willing to lead the architectural discourse and facilitate a shift away from a globalised approach to a more place-specific design informed by local urban character. Interviews pointed to the importance of the relationships between the different built environment professions in shaping this move to place-specific design. This was through a strong knowledge of the historical and cultural components of place, particularly by designers, combined with the ability to financially incentivise clients and developers. This was indicated as potentially being achieved through design discourse and planning policy and processes, to provide the levels of investment required to incorporate these components of urban character. Furthermore, the research pointed to a refutation of globalisation's economic argument for a repetitious and standardised approach (see Cheshmehzangi 2020; Majerska-Paubicka 2020), with place-specific design demonstrating its interconnectedness

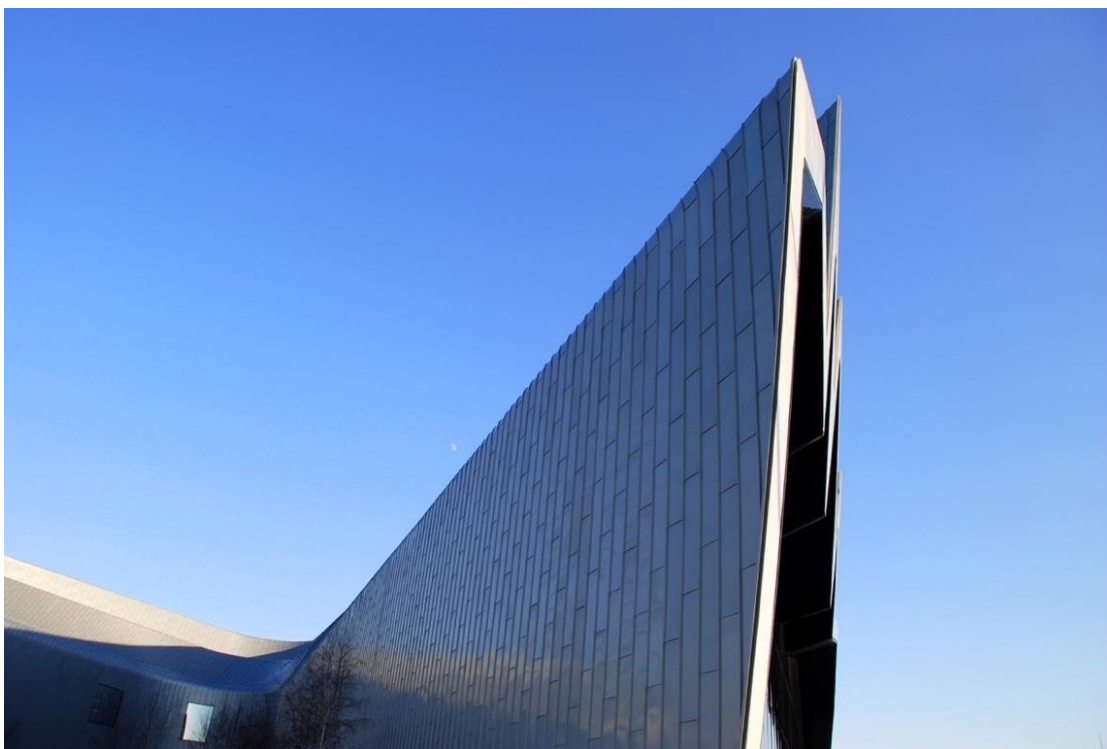
with the fiscal and wider value to clients in other ways. For example, through planning flexibility towards design height and density, as well as the longer term

benefits of workforce satisfaction, suggested by Senior Architect 10 as motivating the previously discussed Barclays Bank development.

The Convenience of Geography

Although interviews indicated a majority view that local architects were potentially well placed to be aware of, and receptive to, the incorporation of urban character into their designs, this was not parochial towards architecture and practices from other countries, and recognised the talent contained within some of these global firms. As Senior Architect 2 pointed out, designers like Zaha Hadid Architects, responsible for the Riverside Museum in Study Area 2 (see Figure 8.6), were '*exceptionally talented architects*' and their designs had resulted in '*reasonably good-looking buildings*' in the city.

Figure 8.6 Zaha Hadid Architects Riverside Museum. Local recognition of talent from around the world contributing to Glasgow's built environment



Source: Author's Own

Rather than where an architect was physically based being the most important factor in ensuring distinctive place-specific design, Senior Architect 11 argued

that it was the attitude and approach of architects which was essential: *'I think it's good to promote local architects. But I don't think it's the be-all and end-all. I think we're a very European city and we can handle a variety of attitudes. I*

suppose what you need to avoid is that sort of globalised approach to architecture. So, that's not so much about the architect, it's more about the commercial take on architecture.' This emphasis on the attitude and approach of designers was echoed by a number of other participants. Senior Architect 8 said, that while accepting the importance of a local understanding of place, this was *'not to the exclusion of ideas coming from different places. There's validity in that as well.'* Again, the participant emphasised that it was the approach taken by the architects, rather than where they were based, that was key to design sensitive and responsive to local urban character and place making: *'I'd like to think an internationally based practice who wanted to work in this environment were being invited to do so because they could demonstrate that underlying desire to analyse, explore and understand.'*

Participants therefore indicated that it was not necessarily the fact that an architectural practice was international, or based in a different country from the project, which made its design output globalised and generic. Rather, it was the design ethos and approach to place, and whether the particular characteristics of a city, or specific site within it, were recognised and used as an influence to produce contextualised built environments incorporating and expressing the components of local urban character. Furthermore, the international influence of design from out with the city was in itself an important element of the city's identity and should therefore be welcomed. And while interviews pointed to local practices being in a position to understand and draw on the city's urban character through an immediate proximity to, and awareness of, its tangible built environment, and its intangible elements like its cultural, social, economic, and historic narratives, this was not seen as exclusive to local architectural practices just because of the convenience of geography.

8.2.5. The Processes of Hybridisation and Localisation in Urban Character

This chapter has focused thus far on globalisation's contemporary approach to the built environment. However, participants also drew attention to the phenomenon's historical influence on the city's tangible urban character. This section therefore examines the importance of the historical role of globalisation in understanding how such an architectural approach has hybridised and embedded in cities over time, and how these processes continue in the contemporary built environment.

Furthermore, in exploring globalisation in the city's architectural heritage, the changing and contemporary perceptions of the case study's urban character were examined. This focused on the ways in which the perceptions and acceptance of more contemporary and globalised built environments were influenced through the intangible elements of place. These intangible elements included the interaction of people with contemporary and globalised built environments, and the individual and collective memories which attached to these places as a result. The impact of the changing aspirations of citizens, and the relevant actors involved in built environment processes, concerning the city's economic and cultural identity, was also explored.

The Localisation and Hybridisation of Globalisation

According to Senior Policy Adviser 3, Glasgow has '*benefited hugely from globalism; it exists because of a form of globalism.*' This referred to the city's past role as a centre for engineering and manufacturing during British imperialism, and that Glasgow had as a result historically influenced, and been influenced by, global forces through economic interaction and the reciprocal cultural exchange which resulted from this. The contribution of these historical global influences has already been discussed in Chapter Six with reference to identifying components of urban character, however these were also examined within the context of globalisation and how such international influences have been hybridised to embed and form a core architectural element of Glasgow's tangible urban character. Senior Architect 9 drew out the influences this historical global interaction has had on the city's tangible urban character:

‘Most of what we glory as Glasgow’s architecture is essentially an internationally global style of one epoch or another over the last 300 years. So, let’s not pretend that the stuff here is absolutely and individually Glaswegian.’ Former Senior Planner 1 previously echoed this reference to the city’s appropriated international architectural landscape, and stated that, *‘the buildings we’ve got are a complete range of different ideas coming from different parts of the world.’* (See Figures 8.7 - 8.10).

Figures 8.7 - 8.10 Glasgow’s Appropriation of International Architectural Styles



Source: Author’s Own

The processes of this hybridisation and embedding of international design styles found in the city were explained by Senior Architect 9: *'Some of it [the architecture] is Glaswegian by dint of the fact that it's composed and been built out of local stone.'* Although the contribution of basic architectural materials was particularly apparent, this was only one element of this hybridisation process. The same participant said that there were more *'sophisticated ways of responding'* so that international styles were hybridised. For example, Senior Architect 4 pointed out that there was not always a need to replicate sandstone - a material Chapter Six indicated was an integral feature of the city's physical urban character - but that it was more about replicating the *'grain and the scale'* of the city. The participant said that there are *'things you can do that respect place and character'* and that it is *'very much about embedding in place.'* Senior Architect 6 stated that the key to this process was in *'understanding what you're doing and why you're doing it. I think if you understand what you're doing you can actually be wilful, you can actually subvert things.'* The participant drew a comparison with Picasso mastering the accepted method and style of painting, to then develop his own unique approach.

Here a number of participants suggested that in taking the basic wider forms of architectural styles, potentially including globalised approaches, it was possible to then design in such a way as to nuance and incorporate the components of local urban character into a city's design. For example, Senior Planner 3 illustrated the role of scale and context to this hybridisation, citing some of the modernist architecture in Study Area 1. The participant opined that there were examples of buildings which were, *'very clever in the sense that, although they are of a vintage from the 70s and 80s, they have tried to integrate themselves - in some cases with their juxtaposition with listed buildings and presented a building which understands its context.'* This drew attention to design responsive to specific place, but which nevertheless used globalised styles of, for example, modernism.

Developing this idea of the ways in which international architectural styles can be adapted to a city in such a way as to localise them, Senior Architect 1 talked

of the capturing of the *genius loci* of place, for example by responding to site-specific features to take advantage of influences like views or light. Senior Architect 9 discussed the way in which two of Glasgow's most famous architects, Alexander 'Greek' Thomson and Charles Rennie Macintosh, took inspiration from around the world but that their work was still '*a Glaswegian's intervention or interpretation of a real hodgepodge of architectural styles.*' The same participant explained how a style not indigenous to a city or country can be localised by drawing on local urban character, such as topographical features. The participant stated that '*there is some architecture and some buildings that will respond positively and deliberately or intuitively to place.*' This idea of an intuitive response was also touched on by Senior Landscape Architect 1. He suggested that the hybridising and embedding of globalised styles historically was also done on a sub-conscious level at times, where those replicating international styles were not necessarily seeking to integrate or nuance the architecture but: '*...when they built the buildings in Glasgow, they thought that they were designing things like they'd seen everywhere else but in fact because of the way in which they were doing it, a lot of specific Glasgow character was being incorporated into it.*'

Senior Architect 6 cited the example of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson's St Vincent Street church in Glasgow (see Figure 8.11), which, according to the participant, although incorporating styles ranging across classical Greek, Hindu and Egyptian, '*the architectural drama is because Thomson's then been able to be ingenious about how he's organised that building to then amplify that drama with the steep sloping site.*' This suggested that it was the architect's skill in adapting these styles to sit in a Glasgow-specific context which hybridised the building to make it 'of' the city, rather than an incongruous and out-of-place piece of architecture supplanted from another time and landscape. This further emphasised the data relating to points discussed in Chapter Six which identified that, although much of the architecture found in the city centre was a global appropriation of architectural styles, these styles were, as Former Senior Planner 1 previously said, '*held together by the grid iron, held together by the materiality.*' The fact that this adoption and adaption of global styles was so prevalent in the city meant that this had become, '*so consistent that it defines the character of the place*', as Senior Planner 2 stated previously.

The suggestion was therefore that, although many of the basic historic architectural styles may not be indigenous to the city, it was in the ways in which these had been reproduced, taking cognisance of local factors like topography, climate, scale, materials and urban planning and patterns, which resulted in the built environment becoming unique to the city and forming part of its urban character. This was despite the fact that much of the architecture was rooted in design from other cities and countries; a sort of ‘*European pattern* [book]’, as described by Senior Policy Adviser 1. The data also further illustrated the points made by participants concerning the view that it was the architectural approach to place, and a recognition and acknowledgement of local urban character, along with an ability to nuance and incorporate these components into design, which was a key component in the city’s urban character rather than necessarily building styles *per se*.

Figure 8.11 Alexander ‘Greek’ Thomson’s St Vincent Street Church | an example of international styles hybridised and embedded in the city to form part of its urban character



Source: Author’s Own

Tensions in Recognising Urban Character in Globalised and Modern Architecture

In discussing the importing of generic buildings as part of a globalised architectural approach, Senior Policy Adviser 1, with a background in built heritage and planning, speculated that this was in fact part of the process of the embedding of the built environment. It was, the participant said, just a '*modern version of the Grand Tour.*' A number of participants suggested that built environments have always undergone a process of embedding, with many buildings and architectural styles taking time to become accepted and appreciated. For example, the Victorian buildings in the city were, according to Senior Architect 9, not necessarily liked by a lot of people at the time. The participant agreed that time embedded architecture in the local psyche and speculated that, although many now appreciate the architectural quality and the embellishment of the Victorian commercial architecture in Glasgow, when it was first built and '*was straight out of the wrapper, it was a bit, oh that's not to my liking or that's not the neo-Georgian stuff that we were doing over here.*' This changing of perceptions and appreciation of buildings was highlighted earlier by Senior Architect 6, who pointed out that Paris' Eiffel Tower was disliked for the first 30 years and that now if you suggested demolishing it to a Parisian they would, '*gut you!*'

Participant interviews also drew attention to tensions in attitudinal discourse between the wider actors involved in the built environment, and particularly the approach of planning and architectural heritage concerning newer architecture. Senior Policy Adviser 1, involved in the preservation of the country's built heritage, stated that due to this approach of allowing for an embedding process, new buildings were not generally listed if they were under 30 years old in order to give them time to '*settle*'. This, the same participant said, was '*a rule of thumb rather than a rule, rule.*' Senior Architect 6, who was officially responsible for Glasgow's built heritage for a number of years, said that this attitude and approach towards more modern architecture meant that buildings that may have become more widely appreciated over time could be lost. The participant talked of the '*struggle*' in trying to encourage officials and politicians to appreciate buildings from the 1950s and 60s. If, the participant said, it was '*not curly-wurley architecture [or] pre-1900s or whatever*', it was

very difficult to get the building listed, even although the participant argued that often the buildings represented '*a cultural statement of where we are*', and that '*there is quality there*' that needed to be recognised.

Interviews indicating that the built environment needed time to settle and embed to be appreciated more generally, suggested that even globalised architecture could potentially become part of local urban character, to an extent. The suggestion was, that if built environment processes in the city were able to hybridise these contemporary international styles in the same way as, for example, the Victorian architects had done, then they had the potential to be viewed as important components of Glasgow's urban character. Again, it was the awareness and sensitivity to the local factors and components of urban character, and the ability to nuance and incorporate these into local architectural production and reproduction, which was integral to the tangible urban character of the case study.

The research found that the role of the intangible elements of urban character in embedding newer and globalised architecture in the built environment were also essential. Here, the data drew attention to the built environment as a reflection and projection of people's expectations and aspirations. Senior Architect 4 said that architecture of quality, and which people admire, was part of the built environment becoming embedded in the city. It was, the participant said, this element of quality, rather than the designing of a '*big statement building, but that is actually bad, [that people] buy into because then it sorts of fits into the nature of what the city wants to be.*' Senior Architect 11 said that such buildings can embed in the city's psyche as '*people are proud of those buildings*' as they represent '*investment*' and are '*recognisable.*'

Interviews therefore suggested an evolution of perceptions of the city's urban character over time. This linked to findings in Chapter Six, which indicated that, due to the city's economy recalibrating from a predominately heavy engineering and manufacturing base to being service orientated, the constructed identity of citizens had been reframed and therefore shifted the city's overall urban identity and character. As Senior Architect 9, with a focus on developing urban strategies previously, said: '**[Glasgow is] not post-industrial anymore. We're becoming something different. That all plays in to how the city looks, feels,**

feels about itself, and how citizens feel about themselves.' This pointed to the architectural quality mentioned by Senior Architect 4 acting as a reflection of contemporary expectations and aspirations of citizens, and politicians, of their city and how this was represented in a more globalised architectural form to reflect its current economic direction and status; for example, in seeking to attract international banks like JP Morgan Chase and Barclays.

The research further indicated that integral to this embedding process of modern and globalised architecture through the intangible aspects of urban character, were the individual and collective memories generated through the interaction of people with such built environments. As well as the economic narratives of the city, interviews suggested that the wider social and cultural interactions between people and new and globalised built environments were significant in the embedding processes. Interviews suggested that while globalised architecture and places were often accused of not being physically contextualised and place-sensitive in their design approach, they could, as Senior Policy Adviser 4 said, '*become of*' Glasgow through the generation of collective memory over time.

For example, the Hydro arena in sub-case Study Area 2, agreed by the majority of participants as being archetypal globalised architecture, was, according to Senior Architect 9, '*probably by dint of its success and acclaim now part of a lot of Glaswegians' collective memory.*' These memories had been created by people attending the Commonwealth Games and events like music concerts. Therefore, even although the venue and wider built environment of Study Area 2 was identified by interviewees as an environment lacking in wider contextualisation and place-making, even places like these '*develop a patina of memory over time, where because things occur in that place, they then get embedded down*', as Senior Architect 9 said.

However, while the participant suggested that this therefore meant '*that something that is not necessarily 'of' the place [could] become part of the wider collective memory*', these globalised places were '*not as deeply ingrained, or as authentic, or as indisputably part of the city*' as other places,

for example those interviewees identified in sub-case Study Area 1. The suggestion was, that while such globalised architecture could become part of a city's urban character, this was limited. As interviews have indicated throughout the research, this was partly due to the shortcomings of this globalised approach to place and architecture. In particular, although a built environment in sub-case Study Area 2, including the Hydro and wider Scottish Event Campus, was able to generate interaction, as discussed in previous chapters examining the components of urban character, this was restricted and confined to short periods when the venues were in use. Furthermore, such environments often displayed a limited inclusion in the city's life due to an absence of the necessary design components to make people linger after attending the venues, as well as the physical disconnect with the wider city - again identified in Chapters Six and Seven.

8.3. Conclusion

The chapter found that globalised approaches to the built environment can result in a disconnect between people and place. Participants highlighted that places which fail to take cognisance of intangible components, like history and memory, and focus solely on the commercial potential of built environments, leads to erosion of urban character and the creation of non-place (Auge 1995). There was a suggestion that there is often a parasitical relationship between multinational corporations and the built environment, and cities more generally. Interviews identified that places overwhelmed by a globalised approach to built environments, concerned only with fulfilling the immediate needs of commerce and consumption (Arefi 1999) were in danger of undermining the place attributes and urban character which attracted such investment in the first place. This related to what a participant described as attempts to replicate the urban DNA of other places, rather than use that found locally.

Furthermore, interviews highlighted the link between commercial wellbeing and place identity, with the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character identified as crucial in attracting economic investment. This was discussed as due to multinational corporations being drawn to places for reasons related to cultural and leisure offerings, which were part of

business strategies focused on attracting and retaining a skilled workforce. The growing recognition of the wider role of built environments was highlighted by participants as the beginnings of a paradigm shift in the attitude of some international corporations to the value of place identity and distinctive urban character. Nevertheless, the research found that given the power of companies in influencing built environments (Pugalis and McGuinness 2013) the urban character of place was likely to be compromised due to the desire for architectural corporate branding and image transferability.

As initially highlighted in Chapter Six, many participants again argued that a globalised approach to built environment processes challenged place identity and the components of urban character. However, the processes of hybridisation and embedding of the case study's appropriation of international architectural styles was identified as being strongly representative of its tangible urban character. Therefore, the suggestion was that although globalised approaches to built environments were often described as undermining urban character, it also has the potential to in fact create it. A number of participants suggested that architectural styles and approaches, including globalised, could be locally nuanced via hybridisation and embedding processes and thereby result in distinctive design reflective and expressive of local identity and urban character. These tangible design processes could, participants indicated, be further augmented via the more intangible components of place attachment formed through, in particular, cultural use of buildings, for example in music and leisure venues.

The following chapter, Chapter 9, concludes this thesis. It relates the empirical findings to the research questions and academic literature. The thesis' contribution to knowledge is presented, as are the implications for planning policy and design practice. The limitations of the study and potential for further research are also discussed.

9. Chapter 9: Discussion and Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

This is the final chapter of the thesis. It discusses the empirical findings presented in chapters 6 - 8 in relation to existing research on the concept of urban character as reviewed in chapters 2 - 4. This is in order to address the research questions:

RQ1: To what extent, and in what ways, are the tangible and intangible components of urban character characterised, and how does this create uniqueness in a city's built environment?

RQ2: In what ways, and to what extent, is the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character important in the design and planning processes of built environment professionals seeking to create uniqueness in Glasgow's built environment?

RQ3: What are the main factors, including globalisation, impacting on urban character, and how do these affect the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of the concept?

The overall aim of the study is assessed in this chapter. This aim is to analyse the interplay between the components of urban character and how this interplay influences perceptions of built environment outcomes. Its focus is the perceptions of this interplay held by design, planning and associated professions, and their understanding of the ways in which key forces, such as globalisation, impact on the urban character in Glasgow. There is a particular emphasis on the relationship between the tangible and intangible components of the concept of urban character. The thesis' contribution to knowledge is outlined within the context of the overall aim and research questions, as well as in relation to design practice and planning policy implications. The study's limitations and the potential for further research, are also discussed.

9.2 Addressing the Research Questions

This thesis has examined and analysed how the tangible and intangible components of urban character are identified; how the interplay between these can result in locally unique architectural outcomes; and the concept's general role in built environment processes. What factors impact urban character, and how, have also been explored. This section will now summarise the analysis' findings under each of the research questions.

RQ1:

To what extent and in what ways are the tangible and intangible components of urban character characterised, and how does this create uniqueness in a city's built environment?

Tangible Components

The research has drawn out that the characterisation of the tangible components of urban character go beyond the buildings and architecture themselves, an issue that we have seen discussed more broadly in the literature, for example, Lynch 1960; Jacobs 1961; Rowe 1978. Participants have highlighted that the case study's physical identity comes as much from the context and the broader elements of urban design and relates to the theories of urban morphology and consonance of urban form, as well as postmodernist thinking around the Townscape Movement discussed in Chapter Two and posited by authors such as Cullen 1961; Caliskan and Marshal 2011; Sanders and Baker 2016. The research confirms that it is, as Cullen (1961) argued, the nuancing of elements like scale and style, texture and colour, character and individuality and juxtaposing these that incorporate the physical components of urban character which help create distinctive built environments.

This contextual deconstruction and identifying of the tangible components of urban character, as argued by scholars like Jacobs (1960) Lynch (1960) Cullen

(1961) has been best illustrated in this research through the contrasts between the two sub-case study areas. It was in sub-case Study Area 1 that participants overwhelmingly identified the case study's urban character and the components which constituted this. By contrast it was the absence of the components found in sub-case Study Area 1 which defined the lack of or diluted elements of urban character in sub-case Study Area 2. The combination and interaction between various physical aspects of the city, including geological and topographical, and how design had responded to these, formed the basis of the distinctiveness of the built environment in sub-case Study Area 1, and which the research found was identified as making Glasgow's tangible urban character. For example, the importance of the city's drumlins, or hills, to Glasgow's identity was frequently highlighted as giving this area powerful view corridors. This interacted with the Victorian street grid pattern and meant that the views of the surrounding hills were seen by participants as making the area very identifiable as Glasgow. It was the absence of this architectural response to natural elements like the river Clyde in sub-case Study Area 2 which was identified as one of the key aspects making the area's urban character less identifiable.

The research findings strongly suggested that the grid pattern was absolutely intrinsic to the case study's urban character, and that in terms of identifying the tangible urban character was the single most important component. The urban grid was central to all participants' description of sub-case Study Area 1's physical identity. Its importance was described as the key structural device which gave the area its solidity and robustness. There was a consensus around the grid not only being a fundamental component of urban character *per se*, but of its seminal role in acting as the structural coherence for the area's built environment. The grid was described as being a sort of jigsaw that provided contextual guidance to the creation and inserting of buildings. As well as this legibility (see - Lynch 1960), the grid produced the components of solidity, comfort, scale, and a rhythm to the streetscape - all of which were highlighted as core tangible elements of the case study's urban character. This underlined the importance of urban morphology and the contextual compatibility that this brings, particularly when adding new buildings to an area in such a way as to recognise urban character and practically apply the concept to contemporary architecture (Caliskan and Marshall 2011; Sanders and Baker 2016). Furthermore,

the grid was identified as being fundamental to the identification and forming of the area's urban character and that it acted as an '*underpinning comfort blanket*.' The grid was found to be so crucial in this respect that where it had been undermined by the policy of Comprehensive Development Areas, such as in the Charing X neighbourhood of sub-case Study Area 1, the identity and character became fragmented and weakened. Here, it can be argued that this post-war approach to urban development prevailed in informing sub-case Study Area 2; an approach largely identified as a failure by participants in relation to this part of sub-case Study Area 1.

Furthermore, the grid was seen as providing a structural rigour to sub-case Study Area 1. This suggested the component had an almost transformational influence in embedding architecture into the case study's urban character. This was as the area's architecture was identified as largely appropriations of styles from around the world, but which were however so consistently applied within the grid that they were integral in defining Glasgow's urban character. The strong indication was that it was the influence of the grid which was largely responsible for this, and that its role was essential in bonding and holding together these international styles of architecture to make them identifiable as of Glasgow. This emphasised the pivotal role of the grid in the case study's urban character and that it was this broader element of urban design that played a fundamental role in influencing architectural elements like scale and massing, and thereby in identifying the area's overall tangible identity.

This role of broader urban design rather than architectural style, augmented by the research findings concerning the intangible components of the case study related to the social construction of place, have a particular bearing on arguments in the literature concerning the impacts of globalisation on the distinctiveness of built environments, and to an extent nuance these. This is discussed further in this section and under RQ 3.

The research has also confirmed and built on the importance and understanding of cultural and economic history in identifying the case study's urban character. As part of its colonial past the city generated

significant wealth which was expressed through its built environment. This wealth saw an approach of grandiose and distinctive architectural rigour dominate sub-case Study Area 1's built environment. The economic and political culture of the era were the prevalent forces shaping urban development. This allowed the city's architects to develop and ply their trade locally and supplied the desire and funding for architecture symbolising the economic success of the city. This was through the imperialistic practices of the mainly Victorian era. Buildings heavy with this symbolism expressed the case study's history and purpose and the ways in which this shifted over time, as discussed more generally by Venturi (1972). The architectural legacy of this was highlighted as having resulted in a distinctive tangible urban character, and one which generated familiarity and emotional attachment; a theme also examined in the literature review (see - Lynch 1960; Relph 1976; Carmona and Tiesdell 2007; Southworth and Ruggeri 2010; Sepe and Pitt 2014).

Furthermore, the city's appropriation of international architectural styles was underpinned by this Victorian wealth and fostered a design culture within the city. Architects like Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Alexander Thomson developed styles which were rooted in parallel movements like Art-Nouveau and a Japanese style but that were nevertheless unique, partly due to local factors and influences like climate, light, materiality, and industrial context. The research therefore found that wealth, and the confidence and opportunity this engendered, was central to the creation of the built environment, and one in which distinctive tangible components of urban character could be identified through the symbolism discussed more generally by authors such as Lynch (1960) and Venturi (1972).

Intangible Components

The importance of people and how they interact with place was viewed by most participants as being at the heart of the case study's urban character. This reflected themes explored in the literature and planning reviews concerning the ways in which people connect with place, as well as debates surrounding the importance of the human aspects of place being expressed in the built environment, as discussed by, amongst others, Neill

2004; Southworth and Ruggeri 2010; Campelo *et al* 2014; Sepe and Pitt 2014; Ziyae 2017. There was a broad consensus as to the role people play in urban character, and that this can be crucial in identifying how it forms. This was encapsulated as the urban character of the city being less about buildings *per se*, but more to do with how people interact with spaces and buildings, and how this interaction is influenced by built environments. This showed that meaning in architecture was important to people and was a key component in shaping how environments were perceived and used. This therefore suggests architecture's role is in large part as a facilitator allowing people to play out their lives, rather than necessarily as the defining component in urban character.

Further to this, a particularly interesting and important finding of the research was that this human factor in defining the city's urban character could be seen in hierarchical terms, as well as that the tangible elements in identifying place identity were limited. The case study's urban character was often said to be non-physical, to an extent. This was expressed as Glasgow having a very strong cultural identity which was less rooted in the physicality of the city. This suggested that the importance of people is higher than buildings as a component in the city's urban character, as well as being central to the atmospheric aspects of the concept and the creation of what Campelo *et al* identify as the '*shared sense of the spirit of the place*' (2014). The interaction between people and place was identified as particularly important in the hierarchy of Glasgow's urban character, with the strong indication that this was more important to the city than, by comparison, its neighbour Edinburgh, with this city's identity being more reliant on the tangibility of landmark buildings.

What is particularly important here, is the study's finding that of the physical buildings identified as important to the case study's urban character, it was those which promoted public congregation and interaction and the creation of shared memories that were highlighted, such as music venues, art galleries, botanical gardens. This aligned to literature discussed in Chapter Two related to urban character stemming from shared experiences, such as '*social imageability*' (Stokols and

Shumaker 1981, cited in Sepe and Pitt 2014) and '*locational socialization*' (Milligan 1998, cited in Sepe and Pitt 2014) and strongly suggests that Glasgow's urban character is particularly reliant on experiential components and emotional attachment.

This focus on the intangible aspects brought by people to the case study's urban character was further highlighted as evolving the city's identity through perception of what the city is, and how this is changing. Glasgow was described as no longer being post-industrial, and as having evolved beyond this. This was important as it affected how the city looked, its feel and ambience, as well as how citizens view the city and themselves. Here there was an important insight into the idea that the sense of identity of citizens was profoundly interwoven with, in particular, economic culture of place. Within the context of the case study, this indicated that the fundamental shift that has taken place which has seen the city move from an economy based on traditional heavy engineering to a more service-focused one, has reframed and changed the constructed identity of citizens and their self-perception. This therefore suggested that as the identity of citizens has evolved in tandem with the economic purpose and physical landscape of the case study, the overall urban character of the city and its identification, including by citizens themselves, has also shifted and evolved. This was a highly significant point related to the symbiotic relationship between people and place in the identification of urban character and as Campelo *et al* argue a '*sense of place as a combination of social constructions interacting with physical settings*' (2014: 156). Here again, the findings nuance an overemphasis on the importance of architectural style and design *per se* and directs the understanding of urban character towards the holistic approach found through the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of the concept - argued by this thesis as essential in identifying urban character and understanding its role.

RQ 2: In what ways, and to what extent, is the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character important in the design and planning processes of built environment professionals seeking to create uniqueness in Glasgow's built environment

The research addressed this question via two overarching thematic groupings. Firstly, the feel and ambience created by the interplay between the components of urban character was examined to identify built environment outcomes seen as contributing to the case study's uniqueness of identity. The broader economic, social, cultural, and institutional components were then examined.

Feel and Ambience

The consideration of the interplay between the tangible and intangible components, and design responses to these, was highlighted in the findings as crucial in the forming of places displaying the unique character of cities. This agreed with authors such as Lynch (1960), Relph (1976), Southworth and Ruggeri (2010), Campelo *et al* (2014) in arguing that place identity is more than simply physical and is, as this thesis contends, best when a holistic encapsulation of the interplay between tangible and intangible components.

Within the context of the architectural outcomes resulting from the interplay between the components of feel and ambience and the physical built environment, the research found that this involved the legibility, language and form of place. As part of this, what can be described as design frameworks were a method of capturing, incorporating and physically responding to elements like feel and ambience. Such design frameworks gave a set of guidelines that made a place. These included scale, diversity, cohesion, order, and balance. These in turn made people feel comfortable in the environment they were in. Such places were intuitively legible and navigable, allowing other intangible elements essential to the feel and ambience of place, such as the congregation and interaction of people.

'Choice' and 'comfort' were frequently cited as outcomes of design frameworks that capture and enable the feel and ambience in built environments. Therefore, literature positing that the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character should be understood as essential in built environment processes and included as design and planning tools, as posited by, for example, Neill 2004, Sepe and Pitt 2014 and Ziyae 2017, was underlined by the research findings.

Examples of where these design frameworks and guidelines had successfully been applied to produce built environments via the interplay between the tangible and intangible components, were Glasgow's tenements. The tenemental form was described as successful in this as it brought together the atmospheric, social and architectural components through design which allowed choice. Of particular value to this research's findings was that the interplay between the physical and non-physical components was highlighted as capturing the essence of place in tenemental streets. These streets and spaces were described as giving the sense of being in Glasgow via an atmosphere the buildings generated. This therefore provided an example of the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character leading to a sense of place beyond simply the recognition and identification of architectural fabric. **Here the research findings suggested that urban character can be sensed, as well as seen,** and that through such interplay between the tangible and intangible components the ambience of a place generated via its people, its culture and traditions can be architecturally reflected and realised.

The study areas again illustrated how interplay can create identifiable urban forms seen as unique in the case study's identity. The grid in sub-case Study Area 1, according to a participant, provided an automatic control mechanism which gave the physical cohesion, order and balance highlighted as crucial in allowing the feel and ambience of place to be expressed physically. This fostered diversity of choice as it promoted the interaction of people with place by providing a broad range of experiential possibilities. The majority of participants identified sub-case Study Area 2 as devoid of this cohesion, order, and balance due to a lack of qualities like choice and resulted in a

place in which people did not want to linger and interact. Therefore, as Latham posits, such places lack the necessary interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character, and are therefore, '*voided of aura... [and are]...estranged from the human, from society.*' Such places are '*reduced to that which is useful for humanity; it is endowed with an instrumental existence but none of its own*' (1999, cited in Karrholm 2014: 73).

As the research found in the identifying of the components of urban character in relation to RQ1, there was also a hierarchy in the importance of the interplay between components in forming identifiable architectural outcomes. Buildings were often viewed as the drumbeat in the background that should primarily facilitate spaces to be colonised by people. It was the space between buildings (Gehl 2011) that created urban character and meaningful places. This hierarchy emphasising the importance of the intangible elements brought by the interaction between people and places was further explained in the context of the case study. The city's demographic diversity was viewed as crucial to urban character, with Glasgow's mix of high and low culture being essential. Here, the thesis found that '*energy*' was a defining aspect of the city's urban character and was created by this diversity. The suggestion was that this was often enabled and amplified by the architecture and emanated from the scale and density found in areas like the streets around Central Station in sub-case Study Area 1.

Again, the grid was emphasised as at the heart of this interplay. An analogy was drawn between the grid and a library that collected the stories of people, their dreams and ideas, as well as tensions. The thesis further drew out that this was part of the city's '*street culture*' where people inhabit streets, parks, galleries, and museums because they traditionally lived in tenements that had little outdoor space. This indicated the importance of the way in which people connect with place and reflected debates within literature concerning the importance of the physical environment expressing and enabling the human aspects of place interaction, explored by, for example, Neill 2004; Southworth and Ruggeri 2010; Campelo *et al* 2014; Sepe

and Pitt 2014. This interplay suggested that place can be infused with energy and form part of the experiential aspects of the case study to create a certain feel and ambience particular to its cultural expression. This demonstrated how the interplay between components formed identifiable outcomes seen as integral to the city's unique identity via meaningful places in which people choose to linger and inhabit, and thereby imbue buildings with a presence (Jacobs 2006).

Broader Components

The interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character was also identified in the broader aspects of the case study's built environment, particularly via the attitude, approach, and ability of architectural designers to recognise and use the components. The research indicated that this approach of architects towards the interplay between the components in forming identifiable built environment outcomes was essential. It was stressed that there was a tension between architecture able to understand and express this, and that unable to. A distinction was made between architects that comprehend, embrace and are able to incorporate this interplay to create architecture rooted in urban character, and those either unable or unwilling to. It was argued that without this ability to sense and use this interplay, such architects may well be, as one participant put it, '*building buildings but they are not architects.*' For the built environment to reflect and create specific urban character, concept was identified as central to design. To fulfil this conceptual approach the architectural process needed to be '*intellectual*', '*visionary*' and '*ambitious*' and that if art was removed from this conceptual process, then architecture was demoted to just building. In the specific context of the case study, art was fundamental in capturing the essence of its urban character in architectural terms, with the city being described as a work of art due to it being conceptual in intent, and reflective of the visions, dreams, and ghosts of place. The suggestion was that an overarching vision was essential in capturing the spirit and character of place. This was therefore important to the research's examination of the interplay between the components of urban character in relation to how this was integral to the unique identity of cities. It was via an understanding and inclusive approach of built

environment professionals to a holistic identification of urban character that the research found resulted in architecture embedded in the broad components of urban character, and thereby expressive of the particularities of place (Frampton 1983).

This contextual approach echoed arguments in the literature, particularly relating to authentic and inauthentic approaches to design, highlighted by Ellui 1967; Southworth and Ruggeri 2010; and Sepe and Pitt 2014 where, for urban character and place identity to thrive, a place needed to be '*unique, distinctive, and rooted in the local*' (Southworth and Ruggeri 2010, cited in Sepe and Pitt 2014: 222). Here, the findings pointed to the interplay between the tangible and intangible components as essential in creating identifiable built environments unique to a city. This was achieved by rooting design in the local components of urban character via the city's '*fine grain or culture of the locality*' (Evans et al 2011: 40). Furthermore, the joining up of all the components that contribute to place, via a holistic approach to urban character, highlighted the need to recognise the importance of the interplay of components in built environment design, and that this was not as simple as being the physical design modification of place alone. Indeed, the findings suggested that a comprehensive inclusion of all the relevant components of urban character in this interplay was needed. This was so that design was cognisant of and enabled the diversity of life through built environments. This also included the close relationships between the intangible social components and the tangible architectural in post-design and construction via the ways in which people occupy and use buildings and spaces. The findings drew out how the local culture of usage affects the holistic urban character of place. This was via the interplay between the tangible and intangible components through the reciprocal production of social and material life - discussed in Chapter Three (Law and Mol 1995; Thrift 2000, cited in Jacobs 2006).

The findings therefore suggested that overall, what can be termed the DNA of a city - often referred to as such in the literature (see Anholt 2010) as well as by participants in this research - should be found in its built environment through the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of

urban character. Without this, the city failed to capture the unique aspects related to its sense of place, as was argued as being the case in sub-case Study Area 2. These components have been discussed as both the pre and post-design and planning processes. The inclusion of these components, together and interactively, is fundamental to identifiable built environment outcomes which can be seen as integral to a city's holistic and unique identity.

This is interesting to note within the context of the temporal shift in policy and planning approaches from the post-war era to the contemporary. As discussed at length in Chapter Four, the period of urban renewal following WWII was politically centralised. It was the vision of local and national government which largely dictated Glasgow's urban development, with the involvement of a wider section of built environment professionals and the public only being sought in recent years. This therefore highlights a fundamental shift in who and how the city's urban development is shaped, at least rhetorically. Importantly, this shift aligns more closely with the study's findings in relation to the hierarchical importance of people and their interactions with the built environment in Glasgow's urban character.

RQ 3: What are the main factors, including globalisation, impacting on urban character, and how do these affect the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of the concept?

In addressing this question, the research analysed the disengaging effects physical environments which fail to take cognisance of the relationships between people and place can have. The majority of those interviewed suggested that there is a direct causal link between the physicality of such built environments, often the outcomes of a globalised approach to architecture - identified by participants as lacking the urban character essential to distinctive place identity - and a severing of the bonds between people and place (see - Sklair 2006; Adam 2008; Sepe and Pitt 2014). As a participant said, globalisation can have the effect of '*diluting localism, place, history, memory, for wider commercial gain.*'

The intrinsic nature of this relationship between the tangible and intangible components of the built environment extended to a city's economic wellbeing. Here attention was drawn to a city's cultural and leisure offerings as being a key tool in its ability to attract international economic investment. In this context, the built environment and such offerings were inherently linked. Cities overwhelmed by globalised built environments, and which therefore failed to defend the local urban character of place, ironically risked losing their attractiveness as places for economic investment due to an erosion of the interplay between these tangible and intangible elements which gave both cultural and architectural distinctiveness. Here there was the suggestion of a parasitical element to the corporate globalisation of the built environment, where if a city tries to replicate the DNA of other cities and imposes urban models which are inappropriate for that particular place, then a city's broader wellbeing is undermined. This could see a city becoming a victim of its own success by attracting investment which demanded globalised built environments, but which as a consequence led to them being overwhelmed by such environments and losing their urban DNA and become non-places (Auge 1995).

The research highlighted the foundations of this globalised approach to the built environment as being laid in a revanchist urbanism taking hold in Glasgow. Policy initiated in the 1980s and 90s, originally designed to attract economically regenerative festivals like the European City of Culture, saw accusations of an increasing disconnect between the built environment and the broader needs and desires of people. A 'culture war' (Mitchell 2000: 8) was argued as being fought to create neoliberal urban design sanitised of Glasgow's wider demographic. Here, citizens not seen as sufficiently consumerist were discouraged from interaction with these new city spaces. This absence of such interplay between the tangible built environment and intangible socio-cultural components of urban character was discussed throughout the research as of fundamental importance to the identity of Glasgow. Glasgow's urban character was seen as particularly dependent on the intangible socio-cultural components brought by people, including the need for the city to retain its 'edgy' quality. Therefore, the prevention or dilution of the interplay between the built environment and its citizens via revanchist urbanism had the potential to impact significantly on the city's urban character.

Furthermore, tensions were found between those in the built environment professions who highlighted the tangible and intangible failings of a globalised approach, but who nevertheless recognised the importance of this investment to the case study. Here it was recognised that, in seeking to attract such global economic players, but to defend the city's local urban character, a degree of compromise, at best, was inevitable given that, as Pugalis and McGuinness argue, the built environment is to an extent at '*the mercy of capitalists*' (2013: 351). This highlighted the power relations between companies that demanded a homogenous corporate architectural branding and image transferability to their buildings (Adam 2008), and attempts by planners and architects to counter this, as far as possible, with a more place-specific approach to design - discussed by authors such as Ellin 1996; King 2004; Sklair 2006; and within policy planning like the City Development Plan (GCC 2017a, b). It was acknowledged that the balance of power was largely with companies, who are therefore likely to have a significant influence on built environment outcomes due to a desire for corporate architectural branding. This was particularly at play in sub-case Study Area 1, with the city centre subject to significant multinational corporations seeking to make their brand presence recognisable via what was described by participants as globalised architecture. However, in contrast to the wholesale globalised approach to the development of sub-case Study Area 2, due to issues discussed throughout the thesis, such as land ownership, obsolescence, and dereliction, as well as the changing land needs triggered by shifts in the political economy of the city, the urban development of sub-case Study Area 1 was better able to assimilate the globalised architecture due to such factors as urban design and conservation planning policies.

As highlighted by the literature (Tiesdell 2009; Doucet 2013) in Chapter Five, the research found that the power relations between the public and private sector in the case study were imbalanced due to the city's post-war economic history (detailed in Chapter Four). This resulted in the local authority's position being perceived as weak in its ability to influence the built environment, thereby relegating it to a role of approving and facilitating planning applications. This was identified by the research as being responsible for sub-case Study Area 2's isolated status, both in terms of the built environment's response to the

signifiers of urban character found in sub-case Study Area 1, as well as the former's connectivity failure with the wider city.

However, in what arguably indicated the beginnings of a paradigm shift, an attitudinal change from certain companies and institutions towards the built environment was argued as taking place. This was based on the recognition of the importance of distinctive place to the success of business, and the increasingly competitive nature of attracting and retaining skilled workforces argued as being a factor in the reappraisal of built environments (see - Jarratt *et al* 2019). This reappraisal had begun to appreciate the strategic business advantages brought by strong relationships between people and place, in terms of the wider cultural and leisure aspects and how this enhanced employee satisfaction, and consequently the recruiting and retention of a skilled workforce.

Moreover, in examining the attitudinal shift away from a purely globalised design approach, the findings pointed to the importance of built environment professions in steering design towards an approach more rooted in place-specific architecture. The research discussed architects as producers of culture and therefore having a need to go beyond the commercial requirements of a market-based model of urban development (Moussavi, 2009). This was seen as important for the built environment to allow a diverse range of choices in the use of and interaction with place. This holistic approach advocating the incorporation of both a commercial and cultural responsibility of architects, was highlighted as essential in ensuring that the urban character of Glasgow was preserved and enhanced. This was identified by participants as deliverable via the creation of places in which people sought to linger and which went beyond solely functionality - see Chapters Six and Seven for examples. The relevant actors in the design, planning and policy professions had a pivotal role to play in shaping the discourse and outcomes of architectural projects. It was indicated that built environment professionals had a role, or even duty, to advocate for and persuade clients and developers of the ways in which place-specific design can be financially beneficial. Here there was an emphasis on the need to demonstrate the economic worth of such a design approach by highlighting financial incentives that this potentially triggered in the planning process.

The merits and advantages of locally based designers, versus multinational practices, formed part of the findings relating to how architectural discourse and production steered the shift identified as taking place in the corporate approach to the built environment. The care and attention of certain multinational architectural practices to projects in the city was called in to question. The suggestion was that such global firms often failed to be sensitive to, or incorporate, the tangible and intangible components of local urban character, and that local architects were potentially better placed to do this. This is reflected in the literature which identifies the dominance of globalised approaches to design, and practices such as '*designing at a distance*' (Faulconbridge 2009: 2541) argued as removing the nuances of local urban character in architectural production (Eldemery 2009; Rapoport 2013). However, it was the ethos and attitude to place and architectural production which was the key factor in creating place-specific built environments rooted in local urban character, rather than where a design practice was physically based.

As discussed in relation to RQ1 concerning the identification of the components of urban character, the ways in which international design and globalised approaches can become part of a city's urban character due to the processes of hybridisation and embedding, was further highlighted. These processes were discussed as leading to sub-case Study Area 1's built environment being viewed as strongly identifiable as the traditional tangible urban character of the case study. However, sub-case Study Area 2's globalised architecture was seen as having failed in this respect. The indication was that it was the ways in which buildings were incorporated and nuanced in a place, through tangible and intangible elements, for example in the scale and materiality, or cognisance of socio-cultural and climatic factors, which was important to architecture's potential ability to be place-specific, rather than necessarily the overall style or school of design *per se* (Faulconbridge 2009; Majerska-Paubicka 2020).

The processes through which people directly interact with the built environment on a social and cultural level were also found to be a driving force in architectural hybridisation and embedding (Law and Mol 1995; Lippard 1997; Thrift 2000; Short 2004; Faulconbridge 2009; Majerska-Paubicka 2020). Here the role of collective memory formed through the interaction with built

environments, for example by attending cultural and sporting events, was discussed. Participants suggested that, as with older venues which did not seemingly display or evoke a particular architectural expression of urban character, places associated with certain events were nevertheless likely to embed in a city's psyche over time. However, although this could embed even globalised architectural environments like those identified in Study Area 2, the extent to which these became part of local urban character was limited due to a design approach which marginalised the concept and often caused a disconnect, physically and emotionally, with the wider city.

The processes of embedding and hybridisation were of importance in relation to RQ3 and the research more widely. Globalised approaches to the built environment were potentially nuanced by these processes, with the phenomenon's homogenising impact on urban character and place identity mitigated. Indeed, in the case study the hybridisation of international styles and the localised embedding of these was found to be crucial in identifying the city's urban character. The impact of these processes on globalised built environments, and charges that such approaches inevitably lead to a homogenisation of architecture and erosion of urban character (see, for example - King 2004; Jacobs 2006; Sklair 2006; Faulconbridge 2009) need to be further nuanced and seen more closely within the context of the processes of embedding and hybridisation. As Lippard (1997) argues in relation to the impacts of globalisation: *'...more complex processes may also be at work which might constitute the evolution of a new sense of place which reflects modern-day mobilities and a process of hybridisation'* (cited in Jarratt *et al* 2019: 409).

Furthermore, the research findings suggested that even although the powerful forces of globalisation undoubtedly challenge local place identity and urban character, and although globalisation is accused of being a significant reason for the loss of place identity, this can, to some extent, be mitigated as the phenomenon nevertheless provides opportunity for innovation and a cross-fertilisation of design ideas. El Zeini posits that, it is **standardisation that is the real enemy of place identity**, with globalisation having the potential to enlarge design via international engagement, and thereby be visually cultured (El Zeini 2017: 2). The ways in which international architecture is reproduced (technically

and via broader considerations like climate and materiality) in particular places, and the ways in which people interact with it and inhabit it, and thereby generate individual and collective memories (see - Stokols and Shumaker 1981; Milligan 1998; Law and Mol 1999; Thrift 2000) nuance these globalised challenges to place identity more than has perhaps been recognised.

Within the case study at least, the holistic understanding of the components of urban character, and the ways in which these interact, are demonstrated by the empirical findings as having been historically essential in dealing with the realities and practicalities of the impacts of globalisation via its Victorian forerunner, as seen in Study Area 1's appropriation of international styles. A holistic approach to urban character, via the consideration and role of the concept's components, historically produced built environments by architects like Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Alexander Thomson which were unique, but which were nevertheless rooted in international design. A similar contemporary approach incorporating the distinctiveness of a holistic encapsulation of urban character within the contextual imperatives of globalisation, was seen as essential in place identity, and as the duty of built environment professionals. The holistic approach advocated by this study to the identification of urban character and how this is used in policy and architectural design, is therefore crucial to understanding the factors impacting urban character and how the concept is driven, constrained, or prevented in the built environment.

9.3 Contribution to Knowledge

This section outlines the academic contribution of the thesis in relation to the key findings of the research.

Firstly, as discussed within the literature, urban character is an elusive concept (Relph 1976; Dovey *et al* 2009). Defining and identifying such place identity is seen as a task with almost infinite results and dependent on a multitude of variations, such as who is asked, from what perspective, and within what context (Relph 1976; Evans *et al* 2011; Sepe and Pitt 2014). Given this seemingly infinite pursuit, a need for further research to examine the concept was identified by the study. The key contribution to knowledge which the thesis

makes rests in how it explores and, crucially, reduces the established dichotomy between the tangible and intangible components of the concept of urban character. This allows for a more holistic definition of the concept to be built, which in turn facilitates a richer, more developed understanding of the role of urban character in built environment processes.

The wider aims of planning policy (Scottish Gov't 2013a,b; GCC 2017a,b) as well as a general desire within design practice, evidenced in research interviews, to create places more inclusive of the broader needs and desires of citizens beyond solely commercial and corporate agendas, examined by scholars such as King 2004; Sklair 2006; Sepe and Pitt 2014, also makes the identification of the components of the case study's urban character, and their interplay, important (see also section 9.4). Through interviews with built environment professionals: architects, planners, and policy makers, this study provides a strong insight into the ways in which the components of place can be identified, and how urban character's role can and should influence the theoretical and practical aspects of design and planning. These interviews are particularly insightful to the deconstruction of the components of urban character. This aids the analysis of how this aim of developing inclusive places reflective of wider citizens' needs, argued by this thesis as essential (Sepe and Pitt 2014; Ziyae 2018), can be achieved.

Within the case study, this holistic identification is important in the context of challenges to place identity. The defining and identification of urban character and its role has shifted due, in large part, to the dominance of the commercial drivers in the built environment, and cities more widely. This dominance marginalises urban character, and thereby creates an imbalance in built environments (Ellin 1996; King 2004; Sklair 2006). This thesis therefore argues that if the case study, and cities more generally, are to defend their unique identities from being overwhelmed by solely commercial and corporate interests, this imbalance needs to be addressed so that the wider social and cultural aspects of the city can be expressed and facilitated in built environments.

The research therefore problematised the dichotomy between the tangible and intangible components. This was to reduce tensions between these components and better understand how the overall concept of urban character contributes to the more inclusive and diverse built environments identified by, for example, Anholt 2010; Campelo *et al* 2014; Sepe and Pitt 2014; Jarratt *et al* 2019. In particular, this thesis adds to the understanding of how the intangible components are identified, and especially the ways in which hard to tether elements like the feel and ambience of place, described as non-measurable (Berque 1999, cited in Sepe and Pitt 2014) can be physicalised through design (Neill 2004). This research offers an analysis of how design can use methods and techniques to respond, encapsulate and physicalise such elements. Here the empirical findings - see 7.2, offer design frameworks as a set of guidelines related to scale, diversity, cohesion, order, and balance which result in people feeling comfortable in a place. These guidelines are described as being intuitively legible and navigable (see Lynch 1960) and encourage, and set the scene for, people to congregate and linger, and thereby create a feel and ambience in a place. Furthermore, this deconstruction of the components of urban character and the methods and techniques used in identifying and incorporating these, supports the importance of contextual design and the concept of '*consonance in urban form*' (Sanders and Baker 2016) discussed in section 2.6.2 in Chapter Two. This concept addresses the ways in which architectural features as tangible representations of the economic, cultural, and political context can be identified, measured, and assessed so as to be applied to urban design (Venturi 1972; *ibid*).

This thesis therefore argues that the tangible components of architectural design can create the intangible elements like the feel and ambience of a place, and equally, the intangible atmospheric components can inform a place's physical design, as explored by Valera 1997; Neill 2004; Sepe and Pitt 2014; Ziyaaee 2018. This aids the understanding of how place can avoid what the literature describes as inauthentic approaches to place-making (Ellui 1967) and potential non-place (Relph 1976; Auge 1995). Such inauthentic places are argued as resulting from a failure to be cognisant and inclusive of the diverse components and needs of place (Ellui 1967; Auge 1995; Arefi 1999). This stems from being overly focused on functionality, objective organisation, and manipulative planning (*ibid*), as

well as a loss of meaning due to excessively seeking to fulfil the immediate needs of business and commerce (Arefi 1999) via a revanchist urbanism seeking to sever and prevent the interplay between the intangible socio-cultural and tangible built environment components of cities (McLeod 2002). Therefore, this thesis develops the understanding of how built environments can use the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of urban character and a city's DNA (Anholt 2010) to be unique, distinctive, and rooted in local qualities (Southworth and Ruggeri 2010) and therefore avoid such inauthentic approaches and outcomes.

This thesis also contributes to knowledge relating to the hierarchy of the importance of the components of urban character to place identity. Thus, the case study's identity was found to be particularly reliant on the social and emotional aspects of urban character, more than the physical and architectural. This supports assertions that aspects of place identity come from the meaning given to their environment beyond merely how objects are placed in a cityscape (Healey 2010). It highlights the limitations of identifying urban character solely through the tangible components, and again supports literature advocating the essential nature of a holistic approach to the concept if distinctive built environments particular to a place are to be defended and developed, as authors such as Valera 1997; Campelo *et al* 2014; Sepe and Pitt 2014; Ziyadee 2018, suggest they should. Findings further confirm arguments positing the essential contribution to place via ambience and the importance of the atmosphere and *genius loci* in providing a shared sense of the spirit of place, highlighted by, for example Healey 2010; Sepe and Pitt 2014; Jarratt *et al* 2019. In examining the ways in which the case study's identity is described, the findings indicate that Glasgow's identity is firmly rooted in human interactions and that of shared experience (Stokols and Shumaker 1981; Milligan 1998; Campelo *et al* 2014). This is a particularly valuable finding, and one which again adds to knowledge concerning how cities have unique qualities resulting from the components of their urban character. The findings augment the understanding of the ways in which the tangible and intangible attributes of place can result in different architectural outcomes, depending on the hierarchical importance of the components of urban character (Sepe 2017; Cheshmehzangi 2020; Majerska-Paubicka 2020). Of particular note here, are the distinctions and comparisons

drawn between the case study and the neighbouring and capital city of Edinburgh. The nation's capital is identified as being more reliant on its tangible urban character for its identity, for example via landmark buildings. This provides a useful contrast with the more intangible components deemed essential to the case study, and again highlights the importance that such components, often more overlooked in design (Ellui 1967; Auge 1995; Arefi 1999; Latham 1999), bring to place identity.

Furthermore, the interplay between tangible components and those intangibles related to social and cultural attachment were highlighted, with the findings contributing to the understanding of how certain buildings are associated with the urban character of place, and how these attract hard to define qualities like presence (Jacobs 2006). Moreover, within the context of the case study, the research drew attention to the ways in which a failure to understand how the interplay between the socio-cultural components of urban character can result in built environments which inadequately express and facilitate the unique characteristics of place. The empirical findings highlighted a certain frustration with the case study's built environment, which was discussed as often failing to adequately reflect the intangible identity of the social and cultural characteristics of its citizens (see Chapter Seven: 7.3.3). This therefore further supports arguments by, for example, Neill 2004; Carmona *et al* 2010; Sepe and Pitt 2014; Cheshmehzangi 2020, that the identity of a city needs to express all the characteristics of a place's life through built environments cognisant, inclusive, and supportive of the tangible and intangible components of place. The findings also further confirm that the tangible and intangible components of place are inseparable (Campelo *et al* 2014) in place identity. It is the relationships and interplay between all the components which creates the '*habitus of place*', and which in fact can result in very tangible outcomes due to how these are expressed (Bourdieu 2002: 106, cited in Campelo *et al* 2014:156).

Another key contribution of this thesis relates to the impact of globalised approaches to the built environment. As highlighted already in Chapters Two, Three and Eight, this study argues that the dominance of commercial and corporate agendas can be detrimental to place identity. The phenomenon of globalisation can be seen as a supercharged aspect of this dominant neoliberal

agenda (King 2004; Sklair 2006). There is extensive academic literature arguing that globalisation has led to a shift away from the creation of built environments rooted in a place-specific approach - for example, Frampton 1983; Cuff 1991; Ellin 1996; King 2004; Sklair 2006; Adam 2008; Piotrowski 2008. This is further argued as having resulted in more standardised and generic places and architecture, often due to particularly similar styles and approaches to buildings as a result of perceptions that these represent and project corporate success, as highlighted by Jacobs 2006; Sklair 2006; Adam 2008. **This research supports overall accusations that the undermining of the urban character of place results from globalised approaches to built environments. However, importantly, the study findings also to an extent refute, and certainly nuance, such accusations concerning the phenomenon's impact, at least within the context of the case study.**

Through the deeper examination of the processes of hybridisation and embedding of architectural styles and approaches, particularly relating to the *in situ* design and construction aspects of globalised approaches, suggested by Faulconbridge (2009) as warranting further investigation, the research further nuances arguments that globalisation can be conceived **solely** as a force undermining or necessarily eroding local identity and the components of urban character, explored by, for example, Arefi 1999; Thrift 2000; Sklair 2006; El Zeini 2017; Cheshmehzangi 2020; Majerska-Paubicka 2020. While the findings support that globalisation can undoubtedly pose a threat to the unique identities of cities by failing to identify the local components of urban character, and by ignoring these in design processes, within the context of the case study this research refutes that globalisation acts only as a negative influence on place identity. Here, the case study's tangible urban character is identified as being very much rooted in the mainly Victorian architecture of the city centre. However, the research highlights that this architecture is largely an appropriation of international design styles. Through the processes of hybridisation and embedding these global architectural styles, and their symbolism of the city's past economic role (Venturi 1972), have become identified as intrinsic to the case study's identity. The research found that a combination of the ways in which these buildings were interpreted and placed, along with material and climatic considerations and adaptations, resulted in

international architecture embedding and localising in the case study. Components like contextual response and scale integrated these buildings, with more contemporary styles like modernism also becoming part of the overall character of the area via such methods of contextual integration (Sanders and Baker 2006; Caliskan and Marshall 2011). This further supports the findings already highlighted that architecture is not the main component of tangible urban character, and that it is the wider contextual elements like scale and topography, and how people respond and interact with these, which is crucial to the case study's urban character. This again demonstrates the value of the interplay between the components of urban character in placemaking and creating built environments rooted in the uniqueness of place (Neill 2004; Campelo *et al* 2014; Sepe and Pitt 2014; Verbes 2015; Cheshmehzangi 2020).

The research findings related to the role of hybridisation and embedding of globalised styles of architecture is a particularly important contribution to knowledge concerning the impact of globalisation on urban character (Faulconbridge 2009; El Zeini 2017; Majerska-Paubicka 2020). Building on existing literature (*ibid*), this thesis argues that it is the supplanting and reproduction of globalised architecture *verbatim* which results in a standardised and replicative approach to built environments, and that it is this which is the real cause of generic and non-specific place design. The findings therefore support arguments that it is this approach which is the real enemy of place identity (El Zeini 2017; Majerska-Paubicka 2020). However, this research demonstrates that through processes of hybridisation and embedding which take cognisance of the local tangible and intangible components and influences on urban character, and the interplay between these, globalised architecture can nevertheless result in built environments which are, to an extent, rooted in the components of urban character. This study's findings suggest that a deeper excavation of these processes uncover more profound impacts on the localising of such architecture. This supports and augments knowledge relating to globalised built environment approaches concerning influences such as local construction practices and planning codes, as well as the social production of space and the co-production of materiality relating to how buildings become localised post-construction via their use (Thrift 2000; Jacobs 2006; Faulconbridge 2009).

Furthermore, this research's findings add to arguments which point to processes of hybridisation and embedding having the potential for the '*synthesis of different elements*' (Pieterse 1995, cited in King 2004: 28). The thesis argues that such synthesis provides entry points for the inclusion of the tangible and intangible components of urban character and their contextual interpretations within contemporary placemaking and built environment processes (El Zieni 2017; Cheshmehzangi 2020; Majeska-Palubicka 2020). As already highlighted, it is standardisation which is often responsible for the marginalising of the components of urban character and thereby place identity (El Zeini 2017). However, the empirical findings of this research also suggest that a tentative reappraisal of the ways in which globalised approaches to built environments, via the wider cognisance of the importance of the interplay between the components of urban character, is beginning to happen - as examined in Chapter Eight of the thesis. Therefore, this research's analysis of the case study contributes to knowledge concerning the potential for a cross-fertilisation and local interpretation of urban character's components via processes of hybridisation and embedding of global design ideas (Faulconbridge 2008; El Zieni 2017; Cheshmehzangi 2020; Majeska-Palubicka 2020). Following an extensive literature review and empirical research **this thesis builds on arguments that these processes are ways of fusing the old and new identities to create contemporary urban character within the context and practicalities of factors impacting the concept, but which nevertheless respect existing components of urban character** (Faulconbridge 2009; Caliskan and Marshal 2011; Sanders and Baker 2016; Cheshmehzangi 2020; Majeska-Palubicka 2020). Study Area 1 in the case study highlights and emphasises that this is achieved through dialogues of mutual respect between existing and new built environments, and the coexistence of local, regional, and global values (Frampton 1983; Cheshmehzangi 2020) guided by the broader components of urban design in the case study's gridded street pattern.

This reappraisal, while not downplaying the often homogenising and eroding impacts of globalised approaches to the case study's urban character - see findings re Study Area 2 - needs to be viewed within the context of the broad consensus in the field of urban studies that the identity of cities is not static

(Lynch 1960; Relph 1976; Sepe and Pitt 2014; Jarratt *et al* 2019; Cheshmehzangi 2020; Majeska-Palubicka 2020). Rather, it is dynamic and in a constant state of flux and evolution, reflecting the socio-cultural and economic aspects of society (ibid). Furthermore, the evolution of the identity of cities also shifts with changes in the social production of space (highlighted by the findings as especially important to the case study's urban character) and the co-production of materiality (Law and Mol 1995; Thrift 2000; Jacobs 2006; Faulconbridge 2009) due to changes in the socio-cultural and economic purposes of a place. Perceptions of what a place is, including by those who inhabit it, reflect the dynamic and evolutionary nature of cities (ibid).

However, the research highlights that the style and symbolism of architecture is argued as coming from references and evocations of the past and chosen from existing vocabularies, catalogues, and stereotypes (Colquhoun 1969; Venturi 1972; Majeska-Palubicka 2020). This leads to accusations that design lacks creative theory at a contextual level, and therefore fails to engage with and express the physical and social components of the urban character of the place in which the design is being realised (Colquhoun 1969). This thesis's examination of the potentially reinvigorating (Lippard 1997; El Zeini 2017; Majeska-Palubicka 2020) effects of the input from the synthesis of the tangible and intangible components of urban character through the localising of architecture, via hybridisation and embedding processes, adds to the understanding of how the impacts of globalisation can create more place-specific responses to the built environment. This study demonstrates that through hybridisation and embedding processes, built environments can gain a new sense of place that reflects modern demands and expectations of cities (ibid). This study further highlights globalisation's potential as a conduit for the hybridisation and indigenisation of the movement of people, ideas, and cultures, and how this translates, transforms, and embeds in a place (Pieterse 1995; El Zeini 2017; Cheshmehzangi 2020; Majeska-Palubicka 2020). This is demonstrated via the thesis' examination of how globalised approaches have successfully hybridised and embedded in the urban character of Glasgow city centre. This is evident in the way that 'Victorian', modernist, and contemporary architectural styles have travelled and translated (Faulconbridge 2009) to the point that participants identified the area as being integral to the case study's tangible identity; with this localising

process further layered and embedded via interplay with the case study's intangible components.

To conclude and summarise the section. This thesis' findings enrich existing knowledge relating to the identification of urban character, and how the interplay between the concept's tangible and intangible components can help form built environments viewed as integral to a place's unique identity. The study supports, augments, and nuances existing knowledge concerning some of the key factors impacting the identification of urban character and its role in architectural processes, particularly regarding globalised approaches to built environments.

Applying the lessons learned in relation to the holistic approach to urban character's role, this thesis contributes to knowledge relating to the factors impacting place identity. Rather than necessarily being solely a threat to the uniqueness of particular character and identity of places (Sklair 2006; Adam 2008; Sepe and Pitt 2014) **this research finds that globalisation can in fact also be a source of design inspiration and opportunity through the adaptation and fusion of approaches enriched by global design** (Frampton 1983; El Zeini 2017; Cheshmehzangi 2020). **However, this thesis strongly argues that an essential imperative of this is the cognisance and incorporation of the tangible and intangible components unique to specific places.** Without this, built environments risk continuing accusations of ignoring the particular indigenous context and existing attributes of place, in favour of often generic and non-place specific architectural outcomes driven by the dominant demands of commercial and corporate interests (Arefi 1999; Sklair 2006; Adam 2008; Sepe and Pitt 2014). The consequences of this are built environments that disconnect people and place and perform purely functional roles devoid of the inclusive qualities of place that allow the expression, enabling and enriching of society as a whole (Latham 1999; Adam 2008; Sepe and Pitt 2014).

9.4 Planning Policy and Design Implications

This section will examine the policy and design implications of this research in relation to the power dynamics between commercial and wider interests in the

creation of built environments; the clarity of policy rhetoric and tensions in communication between planning and design professions in interpretation and implementation of such policy; and the design understanding of, in particular, the intangible components of urban character and the use of these in architectural design.

Within policy and practice, this research has highlighted that there is a growing recognition and understanding of the important role built environments rooted in distinctive identity play across the diverse aspects of society, including the economic, social, and cultural wellbeing of places (Giddings *et al* 2011; Jarratt *et al* 2019). This is reflected in a raft of national and local planning policy, over the last decade or so, which indicates the shift away from a '*land based*' to '*place based*' (GCC 2017b: 4) approach (Scottish Gov't 2011a; 2011b; Scottish Gov't 2013a; 2013b; GCC 2017a, b). However, the findings of this research suggest that policy has had limited direct impact on wider architectural practice in relation to the identification and role of urban character in the case study. Indeed, it can be argued that a shift in the political economy of Glasgow from urban managerialism to urban entrepreneurialism and the accompanying accusations of revanchist urbanism supporting this, negatively impacted the recognition and role of urban character in the built environment (McLeod 2002; Doucet 2013). Furthermore, findings suggest that, within the case study, tensions exist between architectural design which is cognisant of the components of urban character and the distinctive place identity that this brings, and that which is either unable or unwilling to. The findings demonstrate that more needs to be done to ensure that the wider role of built environments in society is recognised by all actors involved in its production. The thesis draws attention to the implications for planning in needing to recognise that additional methods and resources are required, beyond policy rhetoric alone, to highlight the benefits of a shift in emphasis towards built environments being place-based and more inclusive of the broader aspects of society (GCC 2017b). Currently, policy attempts are insufficient, as well as, in the case of revanchist urbanism, counterproductive, in dealing with the commercial forces identified by this research as driving and dominating globalised approaches to architectural production - see Chapter Eight. The empirical research findings indicate that the balance of power in influencing built environment outcomes continues to lie

with multinational corporations, and that the role of the wider components of urban character remain marginalised due to commercial pressures on design and planning, as well as a disconnect between architectural theory and practice largely stemming from these pressures - see Chapters Three and Eight.

This thesis highlights implications for planning policy relating to the barriers to the inclusion of the tangible and intangible components of urban character within design and planning processes. While the identification and role of the components of the concept is viewed as generally positive, the research demonstrates that these components, particularly the intangible, are frequently omitted for a number of reasons. Firstly, a lack of clarity in policy aimed at promoting the components of urban character was discussed by participants. Policy promoting the central importance of design rooted in place identity via placemaking (Scottish Gov't 2013a, b; GCC 2017 a, b) was seen by many participants as vague. There was also the suggestion that policymakers did not really understand the design processes in achieving placemaking. This also drew out that there was a certain resistance to a policy-led approach to placemaking, with a clear suggestion that it was not the job of non-designers to dictate how architects fulfil the creative aspects of their profession. Therefore, this thesis argues that more direct and consistent dialogue to explicate and coalesce the understanding of the processes and challenges, especially commercial, to placemaking and built environment identity more widely, is needed between planning and design.

Although policy is seen as lacking detail and clarity in relation to a place-based approach to urban design and architecture, research participants identified design approaches aimed at deconstructing and applying components of urban character, like feel and ambience (see Lynch 1960; Neill 2004; Campelo *et al* 2014; Polat 2017; Ziyae 2017). Design frameworks which focus on elements like balance, cohesion, and scale, were cited as techniques for delivering architectural projects rooted in the specifics of place. This design understanding of urban character and how it can be practically implemented therefore has important implications for planning policy. Dialogue focused on better agreement of design frameworks that provide more clarity and guidance, without stymying the individual creativity of architectural practice, could assist

in delivering built environments more likely to achieve the distinctive elements of the case study sought by planning policy rhetoric.

Furthermore, and as already mentioned, the empirical findings also highlight existing tensions between architects and planners able and willing to understand the importance of urban character, and those unable, or unwilling, to consider and apply the concept's components like feel and ambience and wider *genius loci* in design. As argued by scholars (Cuff 1991; Ellin 1996; Piotrowski 2008) and also cited by research participants, this stems partly from professional educational approaches which fail to sufficiently include and promote the importance of such aspects. This can result in an absence of wider critical thinking in the profession, and be compounded, understandably, by the commercial pressures of sustaining practices (ibid). Therefore, this thesis argues that the issues surrounding built environments failing to be inclusive and balancing the physical, social, and economic characteristics of place, as a stated policy aim (GCC 2017a) needs to be addressed at an educational level, both pre and post professional qualification. Without this fundamental intervention to address the ways in which architects understand the role and impacts of their profession on society, beyond merely the physical production of buildings in isolation, the success of policy seeking to create places which express and respond to the diverse needs and aspirations of citizens is likely to be sporadic.

This thesis therefore argues that if built environments are to become more rooted in urban character, as many academic scholars, policymakers and designers agree they should (see, for example, Lynch 1960; Cullen 1961; Ellui 1967; Relph 1976; Arefi 1999; Neill 2004; Ziyae 2017), then a more cohesive approach between planning and design to the importance and communication of place identity is required. Academic literature (Arefi 1999; Neill 2002; Giddings *et al* 2011; Sepe and Pitt 2014; Polat 2017) has long highlighted the importance of a holistic and inclusive approach to urban design, and the broader impacts that distinctive place has on the social, environmental, economic and health issues of cities. The findings of this research also point to the importance of a reconnection and engagement between architectural theory and practice - distanced due to the post-war dominant pressures of neoliberal urban entrepreneurialism (McLeod 2002; Doucet 2013). This is to elevate the

understanding, ability, and desire of architectural practices to incorporate and advocate for the importance of a holistic approach to built environment design which understands, and is able to interpret, the tangible and intangible components of urban character. However, given that finance and commercial considerations are shown to dominate built environment processes (Ellin 1996; Jacobs 2006; Sklair 2006; Adam 2008; Piotrowski 2008; Rapoport 2013) and are likely to continue to do so, the promotion of strong place identity needs to pursue practical methods which deliver on policy rhetoric that good design is also good business (Arts Council 1994; Scottish Gov't 2011; GCC 2017a, b).

Furthermore, although this research highlights the beginnings of a paradigm shift in the way in which the role of the built environment is viewed by some multinational corporations, findings suggest this approach is inadequate in delivering places rooted in the components of local urban character - and mainly confined to city centres. The empirical findings indicate that this shift relies, to a large extent, on built environment professionals taking it upon themselves to highlight and advocate for distinctive place-specific architecture and will therefore be limited and inconsistent. While the thesis' findings suggest that this advocacy by architects should be viewed as a central part of their professional responsibilities, rather than leaving this solely to architects, who the research has highlighted may or may not understand and use urban character in design, more needs to be done to ensure that policy tools, (Scottish Gov't 2013b; GCC 2017a), are strengthened and demonstrably required as a means of delivering built environments rooted in the concept's components. The existing piecemeal approach of leaving such an important attitudinal shift towards the wider purpose and benefits of built environments only to architects and planners who are able to understand and apply the necessary design approaches, amplifies this thesis' call to address the wider issues preventing a more cohesive approach. This research's findings have further implications for policy in highlighting that without cross-disciplinary frameworks agreeing and actively disseminating this understanding of the importance of the unique components of place, the study contends that in the absence of alternatives, it is more likely that the supplanting and reproduction of globalised architecture *verbatim* is likely to continue. The research highlighted that this standardised approach to built

environments was the reason for generic and non-specific place design (Jacobs 2006; Sklair 2006; El Zeini 2017; Majeska-Palubicka 2020).

However, crucially the findings of this study point to historical precedent in the city's ability to create built environments strong in place identity (Nairn 1967; CCG 1971), with Glasgow identified by participants as having benefited from a particularly strong design culture. This is demonstrated in the thesis' empirical findings relating to the appropriation of international architectural styles via processes of hybridisation and embedding (Faulconbridge 2009). These processes localised international styles so successfully that participants identified these as being central to the case study's urban character. Participants further suggested that this strong design culture is, to an extent, still within many of the case study's indigenous architectural practices. This thesis therefore argues that there is an opportunity for planning and architectural practice to learn from these successful historical approaches. By applying the fundamental lessons of the ways in which international architectural styles were localised via the processes of hybridisation and embedding, current globalised architectural design can be adapted to create contemporary place-specific built environments (El Zieni 2017; Cheshmehzangi 2020; Majeska-Paubicka 2020). If the negative impacts highlighted as occurring from globalisation are to be limited, and even reversed, the deconstruction of the hybridisation and embedding processes offer ways in which more generic architecture can be integrated and localised to again identify as being integral to the case study's urban character.

Although this research has identified a shift in attitudes towards built environments by multinational corporations, it nevertheless seems likely that globalised approaches will remain the default over the longer term. Therefore, contemporary approaches seeking to deliver built environments more rooted in the components of local urban character must operate effectively within the power relations dominated by multinational companies. The narratives of '*urban boosterism*' (Sklair 2006: 38) are likely to continue as potent ways of such companies influencing architectural outcomes, and therefore the advocacy of the merits of, and methods aimed at, place-specific design need to be pursued in a systematic and cohesive manner to counter these influences. This will require a more rigorous and widespread approach to placemaking in order to

mitigate globalised approaches and continue, and accelerate, the tentative shifts in how commerce understands the business benefits of built environments that are rooted in the places in which they invest.

The limitations of this study, and avenues for further research, will now be discussed.

9.5 Limitations and Further Research

There are several aspects of this research which need to be noted and discussed in relation to participant selection and the external validity of the findings.

Firstly, it is important to remember that the research adopted a qualitative case study approach, with the findings based on semi-structured interviews with built environment professionals. Therefore, the participant responses will be aligned with the perspectives brought by their particular specialisms in architecture, planning and policy. As, amongst others, Tuan (1974), Relph (1976), Sepe and Pitt (2014), Jarratt *et al* 2019 posit, definitions of urban character and place identity are likely to vary significantly depending on who is being asked.

Numerous variants in the perception of a given place are likely, or inevitable, depending on an individual's experience, background, imagination, and so on (ibid). Therefore, the thesis' findings are limited to perspectives through the lens of participants who will almost certainly have given aspects of the research at least some prior consideration in their professional roles. This limits the scope of the generalisability of this thesis' findings to theoretical conclusions as those interviewed are not representative of the wider population (Bryman 2008). However, as discussed in the literature and planning review chapters, the aim of the thesis is to examine the interplay between the tangible and intangible components of the concept of urban character on a theoretical and practical basis in order to understand how it is identified and applied in built environment processes. Therefore, it was necessary to select participants with a general degree of prior consideration of the wider aspects of the research topic.

The intangible components are discussed in existing academic literature (for example, see Relph 1976; Neill 2004; Sepe and Pitt 2014; Ziyae 2017; Majerska-

Paubicka 2020) as particularly important in the processes of creating holistic built environments which are expressive of the unique identity of place. The research contributes to this knowledge via findings relating to design frameworks that produce guidelines that use components like scale, diversity, cohesion, order and balance that enable people to feel comfortable in a place. This encourages intangible components like the feel and ambience of built environments. These findings are largely theoretical and therefore can be generalised to an extent. However, further research in this area would be useful to identify more detail and examples of design specifics and the affects that this has on the ambience of place and people's behaviour in these spaces. This could be focused on ethnographic research approaches.

Further research would also be valuable to explore how a sample of participants drawn from the wider public identify the case study's urban character and understand its role in the built environment. This would add to definitions and potentially enable research to analyse the difference between those responsible for the creation of built environments and those experiencing them from a more lay, and perhaps practical, perspective. Moreover, the original intention of this research's methodology was to conduct a series of focus groups involving participants from the semi-structured desk and walking interviews. However, this was not possible due to the restrictions of the C-19 pandemic. Future research would benefit from conducting focus groups, and with the potential of input from participants from the public, mixed focus groups could bring built environment professionals and participants from the general public together and provide the possibility of a cross-fertilisation of views (Litosseliti 2003). This would further nuance findings on identifying urban character and its role.

Another limitation on the research was in being able to conduct interviews with more of the architectural practices involved with projects in sub-case Study Area 2 of the case study. Although the thesis interviewed from design practices responsible for architectural production in this study area, this was limited due to either the availability of potential participants or practicalities involved in conducting interviews. Additional direct input from these architectural firms would further enrich knowledge on what the research found to be globalised approaches to built environments. Related to this availability of participants, it

is worth noting that Glasgow recently appointed a City Urbanist, whose role is to: ‘... *work with politicians and senior officers to develop and embed an approach to “place quality” in all of the plans and strategies...*’ (Glasgow City Council N/D). However, requests for an interview were unsuccessful, but any future research should again seek input from this particular role.

9.6 Final Reflections

At the outset of this PhD, it appeared to me that globalised approaches to built environments could only pose a threat to the integrity of the urban character of cities. Indeed, a wide body of existing literature in the field of urban studies and geography argues that this is often the case (for example: Auge 1995; Arefi 1999; Sklair 2006; Adam 2008; Eldemery 2009; Rapoport 2013). Moreover, not only are the impacts evident in the research highlighting the tangible architectural outcomes of these globalised approaches, but also that these physical aspects of the phenomenon equally have consequences for the intangible socio-cultural components of a place’s identity (see - Faulconbridge 2009; Campelo *et al* 2014; Jarratt *et al* 2019; Cheshmehzangi 2020; Majerska-Paubicka 2020). Through this research I have further demonstrated this symbiotic relationship and interdependence between the tangible and intangible components of place identity in built environment processes.

It has been via the examination of the components of urban character, and crucially the reduction of the dichotomy between these, that I have demonstrated that these components must be considered as inseparable in built environment processes. The research has highlighted the complexities and barriers facing both planning and design processes as they seek to create built environments cognisant of the inseparability and interplay between tangible and intangible components of urban character. It has also emphasised the importance of applying this awareness and understanding to actual architectural outcomes. In examining these complexities, I have drawn attention to the ways in which the components of urban character can create built environments which successfully localise even globalised architectural production, such as via processes of hybridisation and embedding.

This case study of Glasgow is therefore important to the wider debate concerning globalisation and its impacts on place identity. While it must be emphasised that the negative factors impacting urban character, particularly those of the largely commercial and ideological forces driving globalised architectural production (King 2004; Sklair 2006; Eldemery 2009; Faulconbridge 2009; Rapoport 2013) are evident and unlikely to change entirely, this case study has nevertheless added insight to how such forces can in fact be harnessed and creatively adapted to form new identities. This is essential given that the pursuit of places more rooted in, and expressive of, locally unique identity has to operate within existing commercial ideologies and frameworks. Therefore, this pursuit must seek to be cognisant of the dynamic nature of cities, as well as pragmatic and embrace the potential positives that forces like globalisation offer.

Appendices

Appendix i: Semi-Structured Desk Interviews

(Prompt: To begin I'll ask you a few fairly general questions to help introduce the research)

A “TANGIBLE EXPRESSION OF WHO WE ARE” (Scottish Gov't, 2013a: 5)

General ‘warm up’ questions designed to introduce the subject further and stimulate thinking on the topics

1. What are your thoughts on the government statement: Cities should be a “tangible expression of who we are”? *(Prompt: Just general thoughts and ideas)*

“CURRENT IDENTITY” (GCC 2017a: 27)

General ‘warm up’ questions designed to introduce the subject further and stimulate thinking on the topics

2. Generally, do you think that cities have identities, and if so, what elements do you feel contribute to a place's identity? *(Prompt: encourage answers to be broad an inclusive of tangible and intangible. Suggestions: landmark buildings/architectural style/building materials/creativity/multicultural /climate/city type - industrial, post-industrial, high tech, modern, cultural, historic, touristic/media image - romantic, dangerous, exciting, beautiful, ugly, chaotic)*
3. Do you think Glasgow has an identity and if so, how would you describe Glasgow's “current identity”? *(Prompt: Warm up question so answers can be fairly general at this point, as well as geographically general)*
4. In your opinion what elements contribute to Glasgow's “current identity”? *(Prompt: again, warm up question but include tangible and intangible + answers can be fairly broad)*

“DISTINCTIVE IDENTITY and CHARACTER” (Placemaking Part 1 2017b: 55)
(Prompt: This is similar to ‘current identity’ but more specific and focused on the elements contributing to character and identity. This section also now focuses on the specific study areas)

5. Using examples (e.g., buildings, materials, architectural styles, urban layout/patterns etc) how would you identify and describe the tangible ‘distinctive identity and character’ of the study areas? - firstly within case study area 1 (city centre) then study area 2 (riverfront). *(Prompt: try to include examples of buildings and components i.e., specific buildings and their composition - materials, symbols etc)*

6. As above, and perhaps drawing on answers from Qs 1, 2 + 3 from “current identity” to help, how would you identify and describe the intangible ‘distinctive identity and character’ of the study areas? - (1st city centre) (2nd riverfront)

7. In your opinion how do the two study areas differ in terms of 1) their tangible and 2) their intangible elements? Do you think they both have ‘distinctive identity and character’? *(Prompt: give specific examples how they differ and why they have or don’t have a ‘distinctive character’)*

8 *Additional question: What places in the city do people feel an emotional attachment to?

9. To what extent do you think that the distinctive tangible character of the study areas is affected by its intangible character? In other words, to what extent do you think the built environments in the study areas are influenced by the wider character stemming from factors like its history, culture, users, industry, climate etc?

10. Can you give architectural examples (*from study areas*) of this distinctive intangible character influencing the distinctive tangible (built) character? *(Prompt: perhaps a building which ‘speaks of Glasgow’ or embodies the city to you more than others)*

11 In your opinion what specific elements make this building or space capture the essence and distinctive identity and character for you? (*Prompt: suggest aspects like the building giving the atmosphere of the city's history, politics, climate etc and physically expressing it in some way*)

12 How would this intangible character influence your own work in design/policy? (*Prompt: please give specific examples, e.g., choice of materials, scale, architectural style etc*)

(Prompt: This part of the section focuses on how 'distinctive character' is used and what impacts on this use)

13. What do you think are the main factors impacting on your use of the city's "distinctive identity and character" in design/policy? (*Prompt: for example, client brief, type of client, finance (inc practice profitability), planning regulations, urban policy intent- e.g., attracting inward investment etc*).

14. How does national and local gov't policy around "distinctive identity and character" and place identity impact on your design/policy work in particular? (*Prompt: give specific design/policy outcome examples if possible*).

15. What is your understanding of the term globalisation? (*Prompt: concept generally + on built environment widely*)

16. In your opinion, what are the main impacts of globalisation on Glasgow's built environment?

17. How would you say globalisation impacts on the use of the city's 'distinctive identity and character' in **your** policy/design work?

"GLASGOW-APPROPRIATE ARCHITECTURE" (Placemaking Part 1 2017b: 64)

18. What in your opinion is different or distinguishes Glasgow's architecture generally compared with another city you know well? (*Prompt: be as specific as possible using design examples - materials, styles etc*)

19. What do you think is meant by the policy term: "Glasgow-appropriate architecture"?

20. What specific design elements do you think make “Glasgow-appropriate architecture”? (Prompt: *be as specific as possible - suggestions: materials/ context, style - e.g., ostentatious/bold/bland/repetitive - scale, materials etc*)

21a. How would you as a policy maker advise designers to make their work ‘Glasgow-appropriate’? (Prompt: *specific design examples as well as theoretical*)

21b. How would you as an architectural designer apply this policy term ‘Glasgow-appropriate’ to your work? (Prompt: *specific design examples as well as theoretical*)

“UNDERSTANDING THE ELEMENTS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE ‘FEEL’ [and] ‘AMBIENCE’” of (place) Glasgow (Placemaking Part 1b - 2017: 8)

(Prompt: We’ve looked at aspects of the intangible elements of urban character already, but I’d like to now look at these in more detail)

22. What elements do you identify as contributing to the ‘feel’ and ‘ambience’ of the study areas? (Prompts: *This is about atmosphere and its components so encourage participants to be as specific as possible but also to be creative and inclusive in identifying elements - i.e., answers which are also perhaps sensory and intangible e.g., melancholic, energetic, dynamic, etc*)

23. Do you think that the city’s ‘feel’ and ‘ambience’ are to an extent captured or expressed in aspects of the built environment of the study areas, and if so, in what ways, e.g. in certain buildings and/or in component materials, layout, ornamentation/symbolism, purpose etc? (Prompt: *give design examples if possible - perhaps a building which ‘speaks of Glasgow’ to you more than others*)

24. Repeat (Q-8). Therefore, to what extent do you think that the distinctive tangible character of the study areas is affected by its intangible character?

“IMPORTING GENERIC SPACES” (Placemaking Part 1 - 2017b: 62)

(Prompt: let's now focus on what might be seen as the opposite of distinct character and place identity - 'generic' built environments)

25. How would you describe the term 'generic' in relation to the built environment?

26. Can you give specific examples of 'generic' buildings or spaces in the Glasgow study areas?

27. Do you consider the “importing of generic spaces” and buildings inevitable in the modern age of globalisation?

28. What do you feel are the reasons for generic design? *(Prompt: e.g., finance, client brief and expectation, architectural fashion)*

29. Do you think that globalisation in particular is a major factor in creating generic design, and if so, why? *(Prompt: desire to create a corporate style and image, global branding, international nature and perspective of multinational companies)*

30. What do you feel is the extent of the impact of 'generic' design on the urban character of the study areas? *(Prompt: give specific design examples if possible as well as theoretical answers)*

“STRENGTHENING THE CITY'S CHARACTER” (GCC 2017b: 8)

(Prompt: Now that we have a better idea of urban character, we'll focus more on how it is/can be used)

31a. As an architectural designer how would you strengthen the character of the study areas through your work? *(Prompt: Include the terms and descriptions used in Qs re 'current identity' and 'distinctive character' + specific design examples if possible)*

31b. As a policymaker how would you influence/direct architectural designers to strengthen the character of the study areas? *(Prompt: Include the terms and descriptions used re 'current identity' and 'distinctive character' + specific policy examples if possible)*

Main focus Intangible elements

32. To what extent do **you** think that the intangible/non-physical character of the study areas has a role in “strengthening the city’s character”?

33. How would you use/integrate these intangible characteristics in **your** design/policy work to “strengthen the character” in the study areas? (Prompt: *give specific design/policy examples of this*)

“THE CHARACTER OF THE CITY CENTRE MUST BE PRESERVED AND ENHANCED”
(GCC 2017b: 41)

(Prompt: Similar to Qs re “strengthening the city’s character” policy states that “the character of the city centre must be preserved and enhanced”)

34a. As an architectural designer how would you preserve and enhance this character? (Prompt: *be as specific as possible theory + design examples*)

34b. As an urban policymaker how would you expect architectural designers to preserve and enhance this character? (Prompt: *be as specific as possible with theory + design examples*)

35. What do you think are the main factors impacting the preservation and enhancement of the city’s character? (Prompt: *e.g., finance, client brief and expectation, architectural fashion - including the impacts of globalisation esp. inward investment and global brands*)

“PLACE-MAKING PRINCIPLE” + “SPECIFICALLY GLASGOW CONTEXT” (GCC 2017b: 6)

(Prompt: As you know the place-making principle is at the core of contemporary urban policy, so I’d like to examine it in the specific context of the application of urban character)

36. What do you understand by the term the “place-making principle”? (Prompt: encourage answers to be as specific as possible using design examples in the study areas if possible. Again, emphasise no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers)

37. As a policymaker/architectural designer do you think the place-making principle is a tool for preserving and enhancing a city’s urban character?

38a. As a policy maker how would you expect the place-making principle to be applied in a “specifically Glasgow context”? (Prompt: as above re design examples as well as theory to illustrate. Also drawing on answers re ‘distinctive character’ ‘current identity’ ‘Glasgow-appropriate’ etc)

38b. As an architectural designer how would you apply the place-making principle in a “specifically Glasgow context”? (Prompt: as above re design examples as well as theory to illustrate. Also drawing on answers re ‘distinctive character’ ‘current identity’ ‘Glasgow-appropriate’ etc)

Appendix ii: Semi-Structured Walking Interviews (Sub-Case Study Area 1)

As we walk through the various parts of the city centre, I would like to hear more about, and discuss, your thoughts on some of the topics explored during the desk interviews. This is to extend and deepen my understanding of your identification of urban character.

- Tangible and Intangible Characteristics

- The city's tangible character - I'm hoping that we can find examples that you can use to describe your thoughts on what this is, what its different dimensions are, and so on - as well as examples of what it's not
- The city's intangible character - (as above re describing your thoughts, as well as examples of what you feel does not capture these intangible characteristics)
- Again, I'm hoping we can find examples that you can use to describe your thoughts on how the intangible characteristics influence the tangible characteristics of the city - i.e., the interplay between the intangible and tangible in architectural outcomes

- Globalisation

Focusing on the impact globalisation has had on the city's distinctive identity and character, I would like you to use examples to describe your thoughts on how this has affected the area in tangible and intangible ways

- Feel and Ambience

- Relating to the city's 'feel' and 'ambience' being captured or expressed in the area, I'm hoping that we can find examples that you can use to describe your thoughts on what this is, what its different dimensions are and so on - as well as examples of where this 'feel' and 'ambience' are not captured or expressed

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