REFRAMING THE MARKET HALL

NEW APPROACHES IN LONDON

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Contents

Introduction

This dissertation will investigate the rise of new market halls in London during the 21st century, to reframe traditional perceptions of the typology in Britain. It aims to address the fact that 'traditional food markets have been neglected, and even ignored, in much of the agri-food literature, which tends to focus on retail restructuring and modernised supermarket systems.' [1] The subject reflects my interest in public space, food security, and community regeneration. Not only does food sustain life, but it links society together; it drives the economy, affects the environment, impacts human health and is a central part of cultural life. Over the next ten years London's population is expected to rise by one million and is forecast to reach 9.84 million by 2031[2]. This population growth, along with the increased effects of global warming, and trade complexities brought about by Brexit, has resulted in food security in the United Kingdom becoming an ever more pressing issue because the country is heavily reliant on imports to support its complex food system.

The first chapter will address the historical context of the 'market hall' typology in the United Kingdom through engagement with historical resources to understand the different categories of food market. It will then demonstrate the rise in new market halls in London, through mapping of the current food markets (*figure 1*), and timeline of the new site openings (*figure 2*). The second chapter will investigate the recurring architectural approaches to these new market halls through an analysis of two case studies, Pop-Brixton, and Market Hall Fulham. These case studies have been selected as they demonstrate two different approaches to the architectural design of new market halls in London. I have named these differing approaches the 'Pop-Up' and the 'Renovated'.

In her book, *Hungry City*, Carolyn Steele investigates and critiques the current methods of feeding London and argues that food-led architectural design is vital for tackling these issues.[3] Building on this argument, chapter three will investigate the social, economic, and environmental factors that have led to the rise in these new types of market hall. It will then examine the potential impacts of this phenomenon, to analyse whether they are an effective method for tackling issues of food security and positive community regeneration.

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[1] J. Smith, D. Maye & B. Ilbery, 'The traditional food market and place: new insights into fresh food provisioning in England' *The Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (2014), 122.

[2] https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/trend-based-population-projections [accessed 13/09/21]

[3] C. Steele, *Hungry City: How Food Shapes Our Lives* (London: Vintage, 2013), 299.

This dissertation will demonstrate that there are many positive impacts of new market halls. They can provide a testbed for new businesses, an abundance of job opportunities, and a place for social connection. However, the dissertation will also argue that, although the 'pop-up' approach appears to be more concerned with community regeneration than the 'renovated', there are potential issues related to acceleration of gentrification. This especially occurs when new market halls are used as promotional strategies by government and developers to draw people to a specific area of London for capital gain.

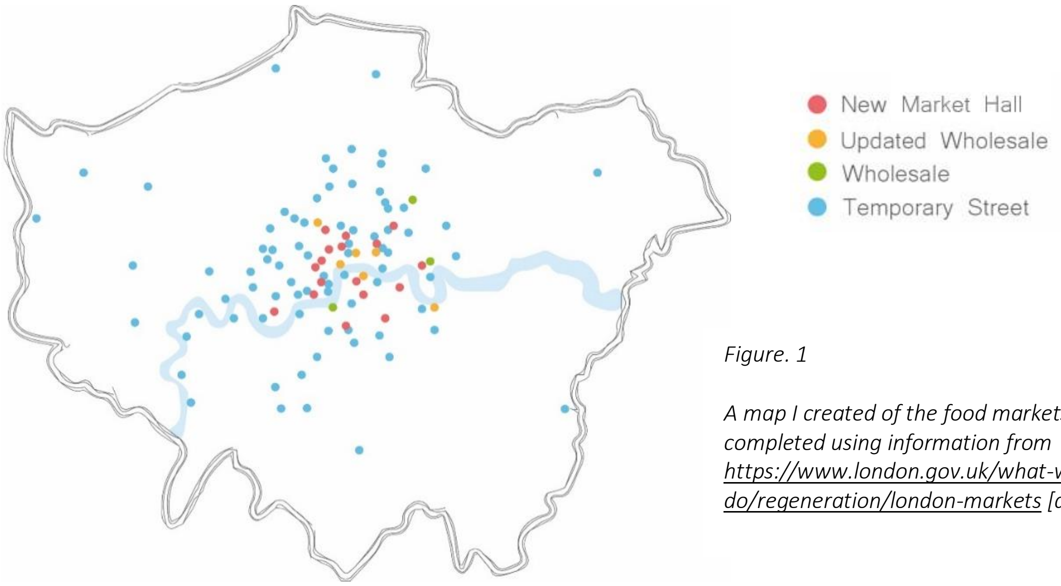

Figure. 1

A map I created of the food markets in London, completed using information from [*https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/regeneration/london-markets*](https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/regeneration/london-markets) *[accessed 10/11/21]*

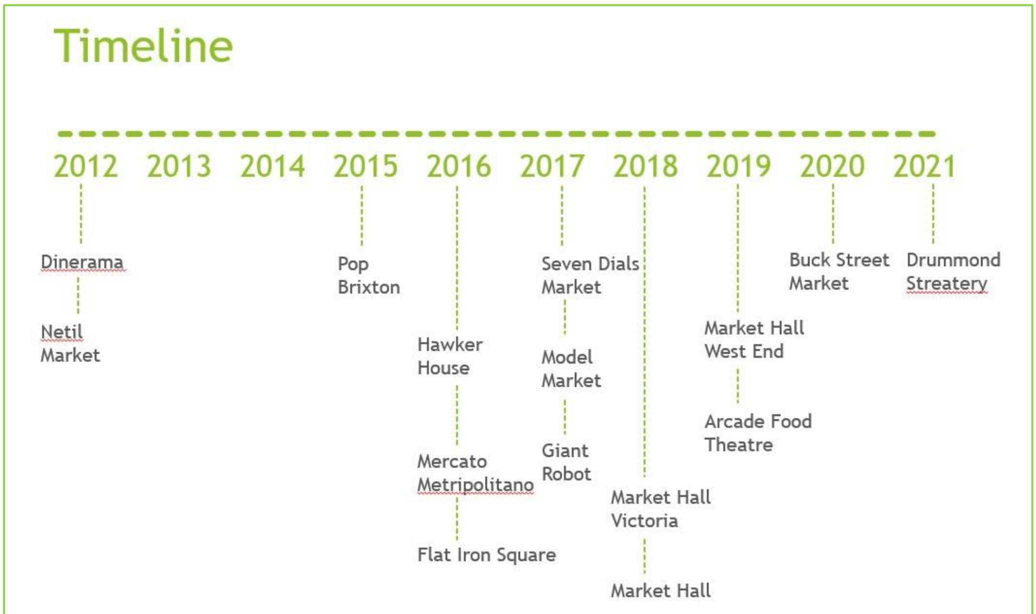

Figure. 2

A timeline of the new markets in London from the last ten years. In 2017 the London Markets Board mapped around 280 markets, a rise from 163 in 2010. (GLA: London's Markets- A Toolkit.)

1. Context and Growth

This section lays out a framework to understand the reasons for, and the impact of, the rise in new market halls in London. To achieve this the chapter will briefly trace the historical and social phenomenon of the market hall typology in the United Kingdom, analyse the different categories of food market in London today with the aid of a market map in *figure. 1* and plot the recent rise in the number of market halls in London using the timeline in *figure 2*.

At a fundamental level, a 'food market' is understood as a place where trade of food is conducted. Nowadays this can occur in almost any location: in restaurants, supermarkets, corner shops, on modes of transport and, more recently, over the internet. The 'marketplace' sits within this category, defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as 'an open space in a town where a market is, or was formerly, held'[4]. It is the aspect of 'open space' that differentiates the 'market hall' from the 'marketplace'. A 'market hall', the focus of this essay, is defined as: a 'covered space or a building where food and other articles are sold from stalls by independent vendors.'[5] The market hall typology 'paved the way for the modern chain store, the department store, the supermarket, and eventually the shopping mall.'[6]

There is a long and rich history of market halls in the United Kingdom. In Britain there have been more than seven hundred market buildings constructed since 1750, with the grand era of the market hall occurring between 1830-90.[7] In their book *The British Market Hall*, James Schmiechen and Kenneth Carls plot the social and architectural history of the 'transformation of people purchasing produce in the streets to within enclosed buildings' from the Victorian era to the end of the Twentieth Century. Interestingly, Schmiechen and Karls omit London from their survey because the Capital's wholesale market system did 'little to move retail off streets.'[8] This essay will demonstrate a change in direction in London to that which Schmiechen and Karls noted twenty years ago: there has been a trend in London of the opening of new off-street market halls, shown by the red dots in *figure. 1*. However, this essay will also demonstrate that these spaces differ architecturally and in terms of what they sell to those cited in the *British Market Hall* survey.

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[4] Oxford English Dictionary
[5] R.W. Caves, *Encyclopaedia of the City* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 263-264.
[6] J. Schmiechen, *The British Market Hall: A Social and Architectural History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), Introduction.
[7] *The British Market Hall,* 144-160.
[8] *The British Market Hall,* 2.

Historically, market halls were locations that people would frequent to purchase their daily groceries. The image in *figure. 3* of Liverpool Market Hall is a typical example of how these spaces were used throughout the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century. However, the new market halls discussed in this essay are not sites that people visit routinely for this purpose, as most people now use supermarket outlets instead.[9] At the new market halls raw ingredients are rarely available, instead stands sell readymade dishes to be consumed on or near the site for leisure purposes. The concept of several food retailers in proximity with communal tables is not a new idea in the United Kingdom; food courts within shopping centres have been a frequent phenomenon since the widespread increase of this typology in the 1970's. However, this new category differs further in that it is not bursting with chain food outlets and is no longer attached to a shopping centre; they are stand-alone spaces that predominately house independent food retailers. Rather than food as fuel to be consumed on a day out shopping, in the new market halls the food *itself* is the leisure activity. This phenomenon is part of the 'repopulation of cities accompanied by a growth in leisure facilities'[10] associated with the rise of 'café culture', which is 'a lifestyle characterised by regular socialising in pavement cafes, typically that associated with continental European countries such as France or Italy'[11] that gained momentum from the 1980's onwards.

Based on my research, I have identified four main categories of food markets in London today displayed in the map in *figure 1*. The most abundant in the capital is the 'temporary street' market, represented by the blue dots. The temporary street markets are those that occur once or twice a week, are characterised architecturally by temporary stalls with awnings and canopies, and frequently sell both daily groceries and freshly prepared dishes. The daily groceries are intended to serve local communities, and the takeaway meals tend to target those people on their work lunch break in offices local to the market. One example of this type of food market is Broadway Market in London Fields, shown in *figure. 4*, which is only set up on Saturdays.

The next category is the 'wholesale' market, displayed by the green dots. These markets sell only raw food ingredients, frequently retailed in bulk to other food service operators, such as shops and restaurants. They tend to have a long-standing history, are open only in the early hours of the morning, and are characterised architecturally as large open spaces reflecting the sheer volume of produce they sell. The wholesale market is exemplified by Billingsgate Fish Market (*figure. 5*), which originates from the early nineteenth century and currently sits on a thirteen-acre site in Canary Wharf.

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9 A. Simms, *Tescopoly: How One Shop Came out on Top and Why it Matters* (London: Constable, 2007), 20.
10 P. Jones & J.Evans, *Urban Regeneration in the UK* (London: Sage, 2013), 230.
11 https://www.lexico.com/definition/cafe_culture [accessed 21/12/21]

[12] In London some of the historically wholesale markets have been 're-invented' as spaces for selling more premium goods directly to the consumer.[13] On the map these are named the ‘updated wholesale’ markets, displayed by the orange dots. Examples of this category include Borough Market (*fig.6*) and Old Spitalfields, which historically used to be fruit and vegetable wholesale markets, but now opens daily to sell both groceries and readymade dishes directly to the consumer.

In the past ten years there has been an overall increase of the number of markets in London, in 2017 the London Markets Board mapped around 280 markets, a rise from 163 in 2010. [14] It is important to note that this data encompasses those selling both food and other items, such as clothing or antiques. The new food-specific market halls have been mapped using the red dots in *figure.1*. The timeline in *figure. 2* displays the recent opening of new market halls in London; it shows that fifteen new market hall sites have opened since 2012.

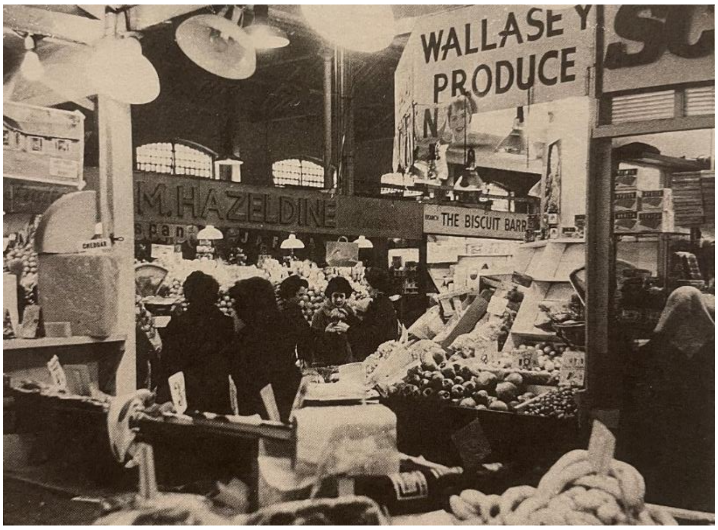

Figure. 3

Vegetable Sales at St John’s Market Hall, Liverpool, CA.1955. Image Source: The British Market Hall: A Social and Architectural History, page 138.

Figure. 4

Broadway Market in London Fields open on Saturdays only, an example of a temporary street market. Image source: https://broadwaymarket.co.uk/ [accessed 14/11/21]

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[12] https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/supporting-businesses/business-support-and-advice/wholesale-markets/billingsgate-market/about-billingsgate-market [accessed 04/11/21]

[13] B.F Coles & P. Crang, ‘Placing alternative consumption: commodity fetishism in Borough Fine Foods Market’, in eds. T. Lewis & E. Potter, *Ethical Consumption: A Critical Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2011) 87-102.

[14] Greater London Authority, ‘Understanding London’s Markets – A Toolkit Report’ (June 2019), 17.

Figure. 5

Billingsgate Fish Market, an example of a wholesale market. Open from Tuesday to Saturday. 4:00am-8:30am. Image Source:https://www.billingsgatefish.co.uk/about-style-2/ [accessed 11/09/21]

Figure. 6

Borough Market in London Bridge. An example of an updated wholesale market, which is open daily. Image Source: https://boroughmarket.org.uk/visit-us/ [accessed 14/09/21]

2. Varying Approaches in London

This chapter will demonstrate that the new market halls differ architecturally and operationally from the 'temporary street', 'wholesale' and 'updated wholesale' markets discussed above. My research shows that that there are two recurring approaches to new market halls in London. I have named the first approach the 'Pop-Up' market hall aesthetic, which will be discussed through the case study analysis of Pop-Brixton. The second category is the 'Renovated' aesthetic, discussed using Market Hall

Fulham as a prime example. This section analyses these two approaches, with the aid of photographs, technical drawings, and documents relating to the projects.

Pop-Up Aesthetic

Pop-Brixton opened in May 2015 as a Meanwhile Project in the Borough of Lambeth. It was designed by Carl Turner Architects and is located on a site owned by the council of approximately 2,000 square metres where a former ice rink was located. The project sits on the corner of Brixton Station Road and Pope's Road, and is adjacent to a car park, displayed by the annotated aerial view in *figure.7*. The project is configured in an 'L' shape, spread over two floors, shown in the ground floor plan (*fig.9*) and first floor plan (*fig.10*) The main entrance is on the South West corner of the site, from Brixton Station Road.

The project is constructed from an array of low-cost building materials including shipping containers, of which there are 33 (14 single, 19 double), spread over four storeys. Accompanying these there are timber slats, chipboard panels, scaffolding, netting, and polycarbonate sheets, as well as a 'polytunnel' structure containing covered seating on the first floor, see *figure 8*. Since it is a Meanwhile Project, a flexible design approach was taken to allow for easily future disassembly or reconfiguration. These types of flexible building elements are used in other projects within the 'Pop-Up' market hall category, as they allow the project to be 'popped' up and down quickly.

The shipping containers are configured to create three distinct zones on the site. The northern area accommodates the workshops, coworking spaces and offices, the south-eastern corner comprises event space and an enclosed screening area, and the rest of the site is allocated to market stalls and communal seating. A series of semi-outdoor spaces are created, with much of the site left open to the elements. The plans and photographs show that timber plant boxes are a common feature throughout the site, further blurring the lines between indoor and outdoor spaces. The décor of Pop-Brixton includes fairy lights and bunting (*figure.8*), which adds to what could be described as a 'pop-up' or temporary aesthetic. This is further accentuated with the bold colours that have been used to paint some of the containers, including the one sat above the main entrance (*fig.11*), which is decorated using a vibrant pattern of green and yellow.

The site is open seven days a week from 9:00am until 11:00pm. In terms of food, it sells freshly prepared dishes from independent food retailers, housed in individually decorated shipping containers, exemplified in *figure. 12* with the *Dough Time* unit, which sells Lebanese baked goods.

There are a range of global cuisines available, including Colombian Street Food, Caribbean dishes, Pizzas, Japanese Curry, Chicago style hot-dogs, Vietnamese noodles, and plant-based burgers. These dishes are intended to be consumed on site in the communal seating areas.

In addition to selling food, Pop-Brixton provides workshops, events spaces, exhibition spaces, and a community garden shown in *fig.13*. There are business start-ups such as *Curfew Grooming*, a barber shop, and *Convey* design studio, as well as social enterprises such as *Key Changes*, which provides a recovery service for musicians experiencing mental health problems. This exemplifies a recurring characteristic of the Pop-Up Market Hall operational approach, in that they offer a programme of other activities in addition to the opportunity to purchase food.

The Pop-Brixton website states that it was founded as community initiative, delivered as a partnership between Lambeth Council and Make-shift. Make-Shift is a platform that supports local enterprise projects.[15] In their book *Urban Regeneration in the UK,* Phil Jones and James Evans argue that 'Perhaps the most dramatic difference between urban regeneration and previous interventions in UK cities has been the emphasis put on partnership between different branches of government, the private sector, and communities.'[16] Pop-Brixton is a good demonstration of the characteristics of urban regeneration that Jones and Evans describe.

Nevertheless, whilst Pop-Brixton is marketed as social enterprise project, when getting communities 'involved with regeneration projects, in practice the community is often the weakest partner'[17]. According to the successful planning application submitted by Carl Turner Architects in 2014 the former ice rink space was set to be used temporarily 'for a period up to five years for the Grow:Brixton project, involving the installation of re-purposed shipping containers to provide studios, live/work spaces, workspaces, retail units, workshops, bar/cafe, performance space and green spaces.'[18] Grow:Brixton was the name of a partnership between Edible Bus Stop (EBS), a local group of gardeners and horticultural activists, and Carl Turner Architects (CTA). However, through a series of developments, EBS believes it was 'side-lined' from the process, whilst CTA stated that 'it was clear that the relationship between the two parties was unfortunately unsustainable'. [19] Following this, the project became known as Pop-Brixton, with 'POP' being an acronym for 'places on Pope' Road, which

15 https://popbrixton.org/about/ [accessed 19/12/21]
16 P. Jones & J.Evans, *Urban Regeneration in the UK* (London: Sage, 2013), 226.
17 *Urban Regeneration in the UK*, 62.
18 https://planning.lambeth.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=N7XJ3ZBO67000&activeTab=summary [accessed 14/10/21]
19 https://www.brixtonbuzz.com/2016/06/exclusive-grow-brixton-to-pop-brixton-how-a-green-oasis-for-the-community-turned-into-a-21st-century-business-park/ [accessed 29/10/21]

would be run by *Make-Shift*, without the involvement of the existing community of EBS. Arguably, this demonstrates that the community was indeed the weakest partner in this regenerative project.

In this context it is worth noting that Lambeth Council expected to retain 50% of the profits from Pop-Brixton, perhaps revealing the project to be mainly commercially, rather than community driven. To counter this, in its 2019 planning application to extend the lease for another five years to 2024, Make-Shift stated that initial up-front costs have not yet been recovered through profits from the project.[20] Additionally, community events do take place at Pop-Brixton; there is a programme of activities including horticultural training, children's art classes, community support programmes and film screenings.[21] Whilst the balance may shift, these examples demonstrate that Pop-Up markets such as Pop-Brixton generally act as *both* commercially and community driven projects

Although the 'pop up' approach was examined through analysis of Pop-Brixton, other examples of the 'Pop-Up' market hall include: Dinerama (2012), Netil Market (2012), Hawker House (2016), Mercato Metropolitano (2016), Giant Robot (2017), Model Market (2017), Buck Street Market (2020). Brixton Village market is another market in Brixton, located near Pop-Brixton in the nearby arcade of Market Row, where market stalls co-exist with small international restaurants. It is important to note that this market has not been chosen for in-depth discussion in this dissertation as it differs from Market Halls since there is no communal dining space shared between food retailers.

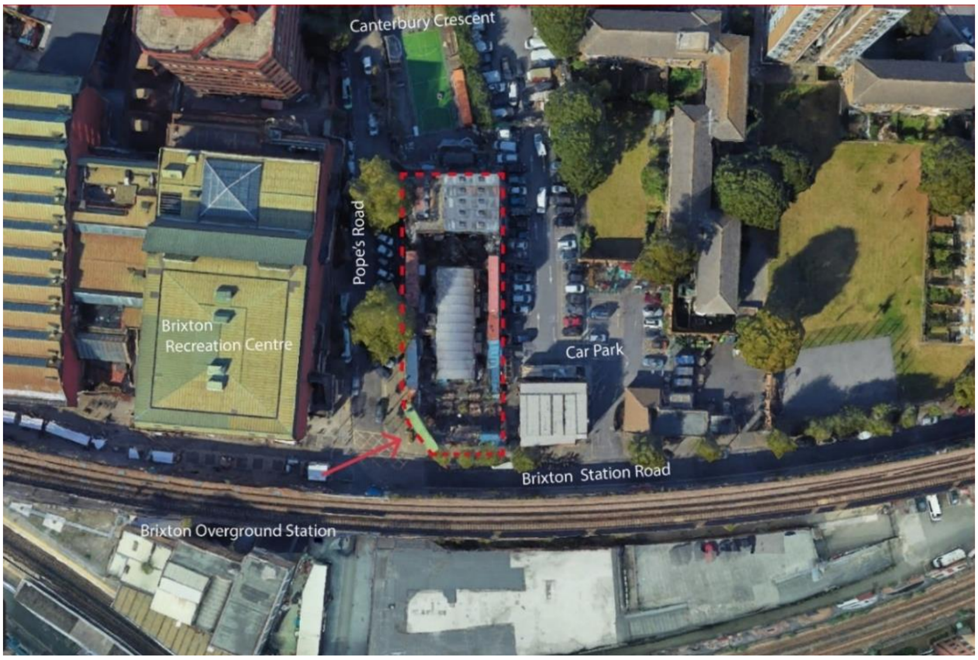

Figure. 7

Aerial view of Pop Brixton, showing local amenities and roads. The site is shown in red and the arrow displays the main entrance. Image Source: https://earth.google.com/web [accessed 10/10/21] with my annotations.

[20] https://planning.lambeth.gov.uk/online-applications/files/94F12C28AED234CC13B01CC0F0639EC3/pdf/19_01190_VOC-PLANNING_STATEMENT-2235009.pdf [accessed 14/10/21]
[21] https://popbrixton.org/about/ [accessed 19/12/21]

Figure. 8

Internal view of Pop Brixton, displaying the array of low-cost building materials, the project is predominantly formed from shipping containers.

Figure. 9

Ground Floor Plan of Pop Brixton, design by Carl Turner Architects.

Figure. 10

First Floor Plan of Pop Brixton, design by Carl Turner Architects.

Figure. 11

Main entrance of Pop-Brixton from Brixton Station Road. The shipping container above the entrance is painted in bright green and yellow colours.

Figure. 12

'Dough-Time' Market stall at Pop-Brixton, a Lebanese Bakery.

Figure. 13

Pop-Farm at Pop-Brixton, the community garden, where local people come for horticultural classes.

Renovated Aesthetic

Though the ‘renovated market hall’ approach will be described using the case study of Market Hall Fulham, other examples of this approach include: Flat Iron Square (2016), Seven Dials Market (2017), Market Hall Victoria (2018), Market Hall West End (2019), Arcade Food Theatre (2019).

Market Hall Fulham opened in 2018, located next to Fulham Broadway Station on the Fulham Road, shown by the aerial view in *figure 14*. Market Hall Fulham was the first in a series of planned openings by the *Market Halls Group*, ‘a group of community-minded property investors and entrepreneurs, that are aiming to redefine the British concept of food halls, turning unloved disused spaces with special architectural or historic interest, public again.’[22] The Market Halls Group, which now includes two other sites Market Hall Victoria and Market Hall West End, was established in 2017 directed by chartered surveyor and property developer, Andy-Lewis Pratt, and restaurateur, Simon Anderson.

Market Hall Fulham is housed in the former Fulham Broadway Ticket Hall, a Grade II Listed Edwardian building (*figures 15 & 16*) which was completed in the 1880’s and designed by architect Harry Wharton Ford. The renovation of the building was completed in 2018 and was designed by FaulknerBrowns Architects. In contrast to the ‘Pop-Up’ market halls, many ‘Renovated’ Market Halls in London are housed in existing refurbished, frequently Victorian buildings that occasionally have a food related history; Market Hall Victoria is contained in a former WWI canteen and Seven Dials Market in Covent Garden is located within a renovated banana warehouse.

The entrance façade of Market Hall Fulham is on the South, (*fig.17*) along the Fulham Road, and remains very similar to how the ticket hall façade appeared in the Edwardian period. Dark green paint has been added to the window frames and signs with bold ‘M’ emblems flank the main doorway. This green tone continues with glazed tiles that cover the front of the drinks bar seen to the left of *figure.18*. The choice of a dark green tone used externally and internally is perhaps an echo of Borough Market’s distinctive green tone that dominates its steel structure, seen in *fig.6*, perhaps referencing the long and rich tradition of grand Market Halls in the UK.

Internally, Market Hall Fulham consists of one large main space containing communal seating under a central roof light, with food kiosks and bars around the outside. This contrasts with the Pop-Up approach, which is characterised by a series of semi-outdoor rooms. Instead, the entirety of Market Hall Fulham is housed within an enclosed space, protected from the elements.

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[22] https://faulknerbrowns.com/latest/news/market-hall-fulham-opens [accessed 06/12/21]

Market Hall Fulham consists of seven food retail outlets and a central communal dining area with a capacity of approximately two hundred people. In terms of food, Market Hall Fulham provides access to a variety of global cuisines including Japanese Poke Bowls, Pizza and Thai street food. Much like Pop-Brixton, the food kiosks are decorated with varied frontages, according to their brand, see *figure 19*. However, by contrast the renovated market halls tend to sell food at more premium prices, suggesting it targets a wealthier demographic than the Pop-Up category. Another difference is that the renovated halls do not typically provide space for community activities or other enterprises; Market Hall Fulham is purely commercially driven, focussing on the food retail.

The décor of Market Hall Fulham is consistent across the scheme, the existing structural limestone columns and varnished wood panelling have been retained. Traditional building materials have been added in the renovation including wrought iron dividers, glazed ceramic tiles and wooden floor panels and tables (*fig. 18*). A series of circular farmhouse-style light pendants hang down into the central space, adding to the traditional aesthetic. Other historical elements of the original building have been revealed and restored during the renovation, including the enamel 'To the Trains' sign and the wooden framed ticket office boxes. The senior architect on the project stated that in 'stripping out the more recent architectural interventions, they were able to reveal fantastic period features which were used to frame the individual kitchens and a bar.'[23] Arguably, these retained historical elements are intended to mirror the style of the traditional British Market Hall aesthetic, albeit, achieved on a much smaller scale and selling freshly prepared meals, rather than daily groceries. In contrast to the Pop-Up approach, this establishes a sense of architectural permanence that permeates the renovated approach to new market halls.

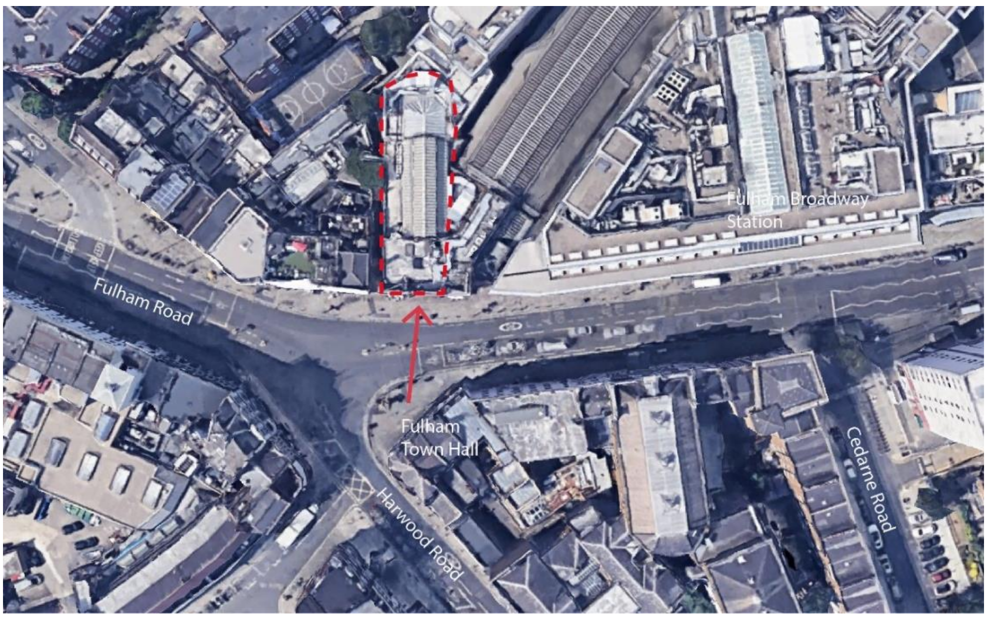

Figure. 14

Aerial view of Market Hall Fulham, showing roads and local amenities. The site is shown in red, and the arrow displays the main entrance to the Market Hall.

[23] https://faulknerbrowns.com/latest/news/market-hall-fulham-opens [accessed 06/12/21]

Figure. 15

Fulham Broadway Ticket Office front façade view completed in the 1880's and designed by Harry Wharton Ford.

Figure. 16

Fulham Broadway Ticket Office internal view, 1880's.

Figure. 17

Market Hall Fulham main entrance, (2018) along the Fulham Road.

Figure. 18

Market Hall Fulham main dining space, with the bar to the left, covered in glazed ceramic tiles.

Figure. 19

Market Hall Fulham Food Kiosks decorated according to the brand they house.

Figure. 20

Buzzer at Market Hall Fulham, used to warn visitors when their dishes are ready to collect from the food stalls.

3. Cause and Effect

This chapter investigates the reasons for the rise in these new market halls in London and assesses the potential positive and negative impacts of the opening of these spaces in terms of sustainable development and community regeneration.

One clear reason for the emergence of new market halls has been a governmental policy-led increase in food-led urban design in the capital. Cities now sit within 'a global economy where they are now competing to attract inward investment' and in the UK context 'regeneration is a political strategy using a whole range of planning regulations and other policies to encourage developers to invest in brownfield sites.'[24] In the 2018 London Food Strategy the Government encourages the public to support street and farmers markets, whilst promising to champion London's markets through the *London Markets Board*, established in 2017.[25] Furthermore, the *Street Markets Toolkit* was published in 2019 by the Government with the aim of helping local authorities and market operators ensure that London's markets 'continue to flourish' by encouraging them to collect data to prove the positive social and economic impact of their respective markets.[26] At a more local level, Lambeth Council supported the opening of Pop-Brixton as a Meanwhile space, extending the lease for a further five years beyond the initial period of the agreement. Consequently, it can be argued that these new market halls are a manifestation of these governmental strategies.

The rise in new market halls may be driven by the continued rise in London's population, which grew from 8.003 million in 2010 to 9.002 million in 2020.[27] The greater number of people creates increased demand for spaces to consume food in the Capital. Another driver behind the rise in these new market halls is that there is a growing consumer desire for these types of spaces. This is perhaps due to affluent middle classes in Britain having the opportunity to holiday regularly, exposing tourists to overseas market hall models seen in other cities across Europe and around the World. One example is *Eat Italy*, which was first opened in Turin and has been brought to over thirty cities around the world, including Milan, Munich, Stockholm, and Istanbul. In these types of market halls, food is cooked, sold, and consumed all in one semi-outdoor public setting, which is not traditionally done in British food culture. The exposure of people to this Market Hall model, has contributed to normalising a food sharing culture in the past twenty years and created an appetite for new market halls in the UK. In some cases, the influence of overseas market models on new market halls in London is direct.

[24] P. Jones & J.Evans, *Urban Regeneration in the UK* (London: Sage, 2013), 7-8.
[25] Greater London Authority, 'The London Food Strategy; Healthy and Sustainable food for London' (2018), 21-25.
[26] Greater London Authority, 'Understanding London's Markets – A Toolkit Report' (June 2019), 5-8.
[27] https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/londons-population [accessed 22/12/21]

Demonstrated by a statement from Andy Lewis-Pratt, who established the Market Halls Group in relation to Lisbon's Timeout Market: 'This beautiful old market was suffering. They turned it into independent restaurants with seating and a couple of bars. It had a great vibe… I was blown away.'[28] Following his visit to Timeout Market, he went on to research other similar models, such as EatItaly in New York, before looking for a site in London to set up Market Hall Fulham.

Moreover, consumer desires for a wide variety of cuisines have also led a rise in these new market halls. Perhaps due to tourism, diners have become more adventurous with food choices, consequently if in a group, deciding where to eat can be a challenge. This is a trend seen across many urban populations, C.J Lim notes in *Food City* that 'the vast majority of modern cities have become less singular in their tastes and instead have come to embrace a pluralistic food culture consisting of numerous competing culinary cultures.'[29] There has also been a rise in allergies and intolerances, with more people becoming vegan, vegetarian, gluten free or lactose intolerant. The new wave of market halls addresses this issue, by providing access to different types of food all in one place.

Furthermore, it could also be argued that it is the conviviality of these market hall spaces that has made them popular with consumers. Co-founder of Market Hall Co., Simon Anderson argues that 'part of the beauty of communal food halls, is that they are designed to engineer social interaction through shared tables, shared dishes, conversation with friends and between complete strangers.'[30] In their book *Urban Regeneration in the UK,* Phil Jones and James Evans argue that, although 'high density living in the heart of the city came back into fashion… city centres now have a population, but little in the way of community.'[31] There are several factors that have perhaps resulted in a loss of community connection in British society with regards to food in the public realm. Firstly supermarkets, where most people buy their food, provide little space for social connection, especially with the implementation of self-checkouts. Secondly, the rise of food delivery, particularly with the birth of apps such as *Deliveroo* and *Just Eat*, means that people do not even have to leave their home to purchase a high street meal. Additionally, in a broader sense, the rise in technology, social media, and the Covid 19 pandemic have greatly reduced opportunities for physical social interactions in the public realm. The popularity of these new market spaces is, arguably, a reaction to the lack of social connection felt in public settings. Ben Campkin contends that 'regeneration often appears to remove

[28] https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2019/03/26/market-halls-food-court-21st-century/ [accessed 06/12/21]
[29] C.J. Lim, *Food City* (New York: Routledge, 2014). 47.
[30] https://www.telegraph.co.uk/food-and-drink/features/future-dining-food-hall-traditional-restaurants-threat/ [accessed 03/10/21]
[31] P. Jones & J.Evans, Urban Regeneration in the UK (London: Sage, 2013), 6.

spontaneous, informal community and citizen led manifestations'[32]. However, it could be argued that the new market halls counter Campkin's negative view of regeneration because they provide an informal setting, where opportunities for spontaneous social interactions take place.

Historically market halls 'were viewed as an agent for the promotion of class unity, a way of harmonising the classes'[33]. It could be said that the new market halls of today act in a similar way; the informal communal eating space can provide a public setting for social interactions between people of different socio-economic demographics. I believe that the 'pop-up' approach would be more effective at this in comparison with the 'renovated' approach. This reflects the casual aesthetic and inclusion of social enterprises and community events on the site of 'pop-up' market halls. However, as a corollary, it could also be argued that these spaces are not as effective at providing chances for rich social encounters in comparison with a high street restaurant. This is because at new market halls there is generally no table service experience, instead food is ordered at the stall and then collected by the consumer when an electronic buzzer notifies them, such as those seen in *Figure. 20*. Furthermore, the pandemic has meant that different groups of people are encouraged to sit spaced out from one another, reducing the chance for spontaneous social interactions.

One reason for the rise of new market halls could be due to consumers being more concerned with food sustainability. Adam Hyman, the Founder of CODE, a hospitality community, contends that this rise in market halls is being driven by millennials, who 'are not only doing it from a health point of view but from a sustainable and ethical point of view.'[34] However, CJ.Lim maintains that 'people do not appreciate that each step in the food cycle from the farm to the fork… generally urban food habits are becoming increasingly unsustainable, unhealthy and exploitive.'[35] Carolyn Steele would support this statement with her argument that the popularity of these types of market spaces are 'a manifestation of our overwhelming disconnection with food in Britain, not the opposite'[36]. Furthermore, I argue that the new market halls serve to perpetuate the disconnect between farm and fork; the fact that there are global cuisines all in one place creates the illusion that it has travelled there with ease, ignoring the negative impact of food-miles.

On the supplier side the new market halls may have arisen since many restaurateurs can no longer afford to keep open a high street restaurant. Shown by the timeline (*fig.2*) the majority of these new markets have arisen following the 2008 credit crunch. Consequently, it can be argued that these

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32 B. Campkin, *Remaking London: Decline and Regeneration in Urban Culture* (London: IB. Tauris, 2014), 6.
33 *The British Market Hall,* 56.
34 https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/02/24/death-big-chain-household-names-open-pop-ups-order-claw-back/ [accessed 06/12/21]
35 C.J. Lim, *Food City* (New York: Routledge, 2014). 98.
36 C. Steele, *Hungry City: How Food Shapes Our Lives* (London: Vintage, 2013), 58.

markets are perhaps partly a response to recessionary impacts on the high street. During this period opening and maintaining a high-street restaurant became ever more challenging with rising business rates and increasing food costs and wages. Consequently, it can be argued that many restaurateurs turned to smaller scale market stall retail because the of lower investment, rents and greater flexibility of tenure than for high street sites. Market Hall Fulham's owner, Lewis-Pratt states that stall retailers 'pay no other outgoings, the only upfront cost is what they spend on frontages and décor. For £5,000 to £10,000 they can open a restaurant – that couldn't be done anywhere else.'[37] In most cases the market hall operator will fit out the kitchen, provide cleaning services, take care of marketing, and, as customers are prompted to collect their dishes via a buzzer, there is also no costs for waitering staff. All these operational factors reduce cost to the food retailers, which is perhaps a reason there is a growing trend of new market hall spaces.

Furthermore, this cheaper model for the supplier is carried through as a benefit to the consumer. The food in these market halls is on average cheaper than a meal out at a chain or high street restaurant in London. At market halls, a typical main with a beer will cost approximately £15 and visitors are less likely to pay a service charge for waiting staff. Therefore, the popularity of the new market halls may be due to urban populations being drawn to cheaper options following the effects of the 2007-8 Financial Crisis.

One potential benefit of these new market halls is that they offer a platform with reduced financial risk for less experienced, mostly young, independent chefs. The market halls can act as testbeds for new food business ideas. One 'pop-up' market example is *Mercato Metropolitano* in Elephant and Castle, which is run in a way that supports young businesses. 'Rather than charging a flat rent for space, the market is more like an incubator programme, working with young food and drink start-ups and taking a percentage of their sales, so the vendors only pay if they are doing well.'[38] Indian Inspired pop-up stall, *Kricket*, is an example of a food retailer that was born in a shipping container at Pop-Brixton. *Kricket* became so successful that it moved out of the shipping container space onto a larger restaurant site in Brixton, and now operates two other restaurant locations, one in Soho and one in White City.[39] New markets acting as an effective testbed of opportunity is perhaps part of the reason food-retail suppliers have been drawn to them over the past ten years.

However, hospitality journalist Tony Naylor points out that these food-halls can in fact 'be quite conservative environments…consequently the dishes are those that are crowd-pleasing and insta-

[37] https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2019/03/26/market-halls-food-court-21st-century/ [accessed 06/12/21]
[38] https://www.cityam.com/mercato-metropolitano-is-on-a-mission/ [accessed 09/10/21]
[39] https://kricket.co.uk/brixton/ [accessed 04/12/21]

friendly rather than Szechuan offal dishes.'[40] To reduce financial risk the selection of food retailers chosen by the operator may be dictated by current food trends, rather than championing new and inventive ideas. Therefore, in practice, these market hall sites may not offer such an effective space for chefs to test their more creative food ideas.

The rise of these new market halls can be understood as part of the process of urban regeneration in London. 'Regeneration has recently become a pervasive metaphor for urban change in London.'[41] Although 'the main goal of regeneration is to generate employment and to revive economic growth', it must be acknowledged it is not a straightforward process but one of 'compromise and trade-offs between different concerns'.[42] One positive impact of these new market halls is an increase in employment opportunities, 'on a per square foot basis markets provide more jobs than supermarkets.'[43] Pop-Brixton has created over 350 jobs on its site and Market Hall Fulham provides employment for approximately 100 people. In their 2019 planning application to extend the lease of land for a further 5 years, the operators of Pop-Brixton, Make-shift, argues that the project 'has been successful in its contribution to the local night-time economies, along with supporting community-led and local entrepreneurship and social enterprises.'[44]

However, Campkin sees 'gentrification strategy as an only very thinly veiled by a regeneration strategy' and believes that the function of government in regeneration 'is to market the potential of land and labour in order to attract global capital'[45] The new market halls are a manifestation of this process and may lead to indirect effects of gentrification. Since Ruth Glass coined the term in relation to London in 1964, the term 'gentrification' has mutated and can now be understood as 'a process involving a change in the population of land users such that the new users are of a higher socio-economic status than the previous, together with an associated change in the built environment.' [46] 'The UK has seen a process of re-imaging undertaken to make cities hip, fashionable and dynamic places where people actually want to be.'[47] As part of this process, these new market spaces have been marketed as trendy places, illustrated by the google maps label of Pop-Brixton captioned as 'Complex with global dining and hip bars'[48]. 'Branding and image are increasingly central to

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40 T. Naylor 'Market Forces: Why Food Halls are now a major part of the eating out Market' *Restaurant, Oct,* 2019.
41 B. Campkin, *Remaking London: Decline and Regeneration in Urban Culture* (London: IB. Tauris, 2014), 4.

42 P. Jones & J.Evans, Urban Regeneration in the UK (London: Sage, 2013), 68-72.
43 Greater London Authority, 'Understanding London's Markets – A Toolkit Report' (June 2019), 17.
44 https://planning.lambeth.gov.uk/online-applications/files/94F12C28AED234CC13B01CC0F0639EC3/pdf/19_01190_VOC-PLANNING_STATEMENT-2235009.pdf [accessed 12/12/21]
45 B. Campkin, *Remaking London: Decline and Regeneration in Urban Culture* (London: IB. Tauris, 2014), 163-164.
46 L. Lees, H. Bang Shin & E. Lopez-Morales, *Planetary Gentrification* (Cambridge: Policy Press, 2016), 9.
47 Jones & Evans, *Urban Regeneration in the UK* (London: Sage, 2013), 228.
48 https://www.google.com/maps/place/Pop+Brixton [accessed 22/12/21]

regeneration partnerships, and are used to market schemes to developers, business, and the public.'[49] Through this method more people are drawn to 'trendy' areas, driving up living costs, and leading to potential displacement of existing communities. Therefore, in some cases it could be said that these new market hall spaces are being used as promotional strategies by developers and councils to gain media attention to boost specific areas and encourage economic growth.

It has been observed that 'regeneration often fails to consider the ways that people already identify in positive ways with the places subject to change.'[50] The rise of these new market halls may change the specific physical character of a place and the local demographic through gentrification processes. However, the sites of these new market halls are frequently located on unused or empty sites, therefore communities are not likely to identify with these sites in positive ways and existing communities would not be directly displaced in the process. Furthermore, the gentrification process may not always be negative for existing communities. Those residents who are not displaced may benefit from improved value of their homes, a cleaner environment, thriving economy, and healthier local services.

Phil Jones and James Evans argue that 'rather than demolishing vast areas… cities can opt to retain characteristic features, demanding more creative and higher quality development proposals… that stand more chance of producing socially inclusive developments.'[51] Architecturally, the 'renovated' markets follow these principles, as they reuse existing structures to create a new typology. The 'pop-up' category mostly uses prefabricated building elements on brownfield sites that can be deconstructed and repurposed in the future. Both the 'renovated' and 'pop-up' architectural approach to creating new market halls are relatively low embodied carbon methods, making them more environmentally sustainable than the construction of whole new buildings. This is clearly a positive aspect of the new market halls in London.

Furthermore, when considering the environmental and social impact of these markets, it might be useful to investigate what alternative future these sites may have. The site of Pop-Brixton 'has plans for a permanent, mixed-use scheme including residential uses'[52]. It could be argued that this is likely to result in a bland mono-cultural apartment block targeted at young professionals. Therefore, in comparison with the current market project, the future development is likely to provide much fewer

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49 P. Jones & J.Evans, Urban Regeneration in the UK (London: Sage, 2013), 94.
50 B. Campkin, *Remaking London: Decline and Regeneration in Urban Culture* (London: IB. Tauris, 2014), 166.
51 P. Jones & J.Evans, Urban Regeneration in the UK (London: Sage, 2013), 233.
52 https://planning.lambeth.gov.uk/online-applications/files/94F12C28AED234CC13B01CC0F0639EC3/pdf/19_01190_VOC-PLANNING_STATEMENT-2235009.pdf [accessed 22/12/21]

job opportunities for local communities, be less sustainable, and more likely to accelerate the negative effects of gentrification. Therefore, I speculate that these new market hall spaces are on the whole positive forms of urban regeneration, as they may offer a better option than alternative schemes.

Conclusion

This dissertation has demonstrated that there has been a rise in the number of new market halls in London over the past ten years, contributing to the long history of the British 'Market Hall' typology in the United Kingdom discussed at the beginning of Chapter One. These new markets have differed from previous market typologies in terms of how they are operated, the food they sell and their architectural design.

Using the case studies of Pop-Brixton and Market Hall Fulham, Chapter Two showed that these new market halls can be divided into two approaches, the *Pop-Up* and the *Renovated*, with various similarities and differences to each other in terms of their architecture and operation. The final chapter demonstrated that there is an abundance of factors contributing to the rise in new market halls in London. These include fresh approaches in governmental policy, the rise in London's population, change in consumer behaviour, the influence of overseas market models and the effects of the credit crunch.

Writing in 2014, Ben Campkin stated 'now more than ever before, there is the acute tension between market-led approaches to regeneration that fragment the city and democratic processes for the achievement of community-led visions of urban improvement.'[53] I argue that the new market halls discussed in this dissertation exemplify this tension, as there are both positive and negative effects on a range of stakeholders. The key negative impact is that they can indirectly accelerate issues of community displacement when used as promotional strategy by councils and developers to draw wealthy demographics to a specific area. However, I believe the factors set out in this dissertation also show that regeneration is not a purely positive process and gentrification is not a purely negative one; in each situation there is a complex set of trade-offs. In some cases, where existing communities are not displaced, they may benefit from a range of economic, social, and environmental benefits of new market halls. These benefits include the creation of job opportunities, access to a testbed for new businesses, building of a distinctive neighbourhood identity, architectural sustainability, and provision of a public space for rich social interactions at a time of societal disconnection.

[53] B. Campkin, *Remaking London: Decline and Regeneration in Urban Culture* (London: IB. Tauris, 2014), 168

C.J Lim states that 'there is a great urgency for cities to reform existing planning law and policies relating to urban food production… food security is critical in community regeneration at a local and national scale.'[54] I have argued that food sustainability is an area where the new market halls fall short. Both the 'pop-up' and 'renovated' typologies provide easy access to a range of global cuisines, and very few sell local produce. There is little effort to demonstrate to the consumer where the food has been sourced, consequently there remains an acute lack of awareness of the issue of food miles. In her book, *Market Place Food Quarter Design and Urban Renewal*, Susan Parham concludes that consciously designing for food is broadly a good thing for sustainable cities, producing authentic places important for experiencing food led conviviality in everyday life.[55] Following on from this, these new market halls have an important role to play as popular destinations for urban populations to purchase food. Therefore, if the food is sourced from sustainable and local sources, issues of food security will be addressed, and these market spaces can have an even greater positive impact on urban community regeneration in London.

[54] C.J. Lim, *Food City* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 154.
[55] S. Parham, *Market place food quarters, design and urban renewal in London* (Newcastle upon Tyne : Cambridge Scholars, 2012), 269.

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