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FROM CLEANING TO CLEANSING

Maintenance as an Urban Development Practice at Paddington Waterside, London

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Prologue

In 1969, the New York artist Mierle Laderman Ukeles wrote *Manifesto for Maintenance Art, 1969!*. The short text marked a break in her practice, away from making physical artworks that she describes as "stuffings" and "inflatable pieces" (Harakawa 2016), to focus instead on maintenance practices and their associated material flows. The manifesto provided a means to critique the term 'development' as it refers to the products of contemporary art and claim the potential of 'maintenance' as art. She writes that "Avant-garde art, which claims utter development, is infected by strains of maintenance ideas, maintenance activities and maintenance materials" (Ukeles 1969: 2). Ukeles questions art practices that deny the presence of maintenance and render invisible the workers associated with these tasks, asking: "After the revolution, who's going to pick up the garbage on Monday morning?" (ibid.: 1).

Introducing Maintenance

In this chapter, I use Ukeles' manifesto as a point of departure, to discuss actions, practices and rhythms of maintenance associated with large-scale urban redevelopment. Development and maintenance offer a contrasting lens through which to examine the masterplanned transformation of an 80-acre former industrial canal-side in West London, named *Paddington Waterside*, a development process dependent on maintenance operations of cleaning, repairing, programming and securing. Based on a combination of interviews, observation, document surveys and visual analysis, my research in the years 2013–2018 investigated the roles, practices, rhythms and spaces of individuals and organizations transforming Paddington Waterside.[1] Semi-structured interviews—with developers,

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managers, local authorities, landowners, designers and residents—and shorter conversations with security guards, cleaners, event managers, tourists, residents and others who used the space reveal contrasting accounts of clearing, building, sweeping, mending, securing, polishing, placing, replacing, wiping, patrolling, checking and cleaning. The chapter questions how maintenance is employed as urban development projects like Paddington Waterside unfold.

I draw reference to the first part of Ukeles' manifesto, in particular, the relationships that she establishes between processes and products of development and practices of maintenance. The development for Ukeles, as "pure individual creation; the new; change; progress; advance; excitement; flight or fleeing" (1969: 1), reflects the process of creating the landmark buildings and pristine landscapes of Paddington that are acclaimed in marketing brochures—a form of architectural development that is more akin to the 'stuffings' of Ukeles' earlier work. In contrast, the role of maintenance is to "keep the dust off the pure individual creation; preserve the new; sustain the change; protect progress; defend and prolong the advance; renew the excitement; repeat the flight" (ibid.: 1). These are practices of cleaning and protecting that reflect the sustaining of the architectural objects. At Paddington Waterside, these practices are staged as an inseparable part of urban experience, exhibiting the extent to which maintenance is intertwined with contemporary design and associated with the single goal of delivering and preserving a glossy curated image of a masterplanned urban development.

Recognizing both affinities with and divergences from Ukeles' manifesto, I find that discussing urban development and maintenance in relation to each other provides an important perspective for reading masterplanned change in London. In the first section of this chapter, I unpack how 'development' and 'maintenance' manifest at Paddington. The second section highlights how urban redevelopment unsettles the lives of existing residents and businesses through a masterplan that is constantly rewritten across formerly industrial areas. The third section reveals an intensity of maintenance practices that uphold the architectural setting of the area, while the fourth and fifth sections recognize how design and maintenance practices intersect to exclude people and activities that are deemed out of place. The final section explains that despite the low-paid nature of maintenance work, the business of maintenance adds value to the developments and creates significant profits for management companies.

Maintenance of Development

'Development' at Paddington Waterside has involved decades-long masterplanning of formerly industrial wharves along the Paddington arm of the Grand Union Canal in West London, a process that has produced new buildings and landscapes for residential and business tenants (Paddington Waterside Partnership n.d.). Since the area was designated as Paddington Special Policy Area (PSPA) by the City of Westminster in 1988, it has been the subject of intense profit-driven developer-led

masterplanning processes. It has been divided into 14 development parcels (see Figure 12.1) and sold on long leases by British Waterways (now the Canal and River Trust) and the National Freight Corporation to commercial developers who have subsequently bought and sold to other developers. This process of masterplanning at Paddington reflects an approach to planning in central London that focuses on neighborhood scale redevelopment (see Shane 2011), led by or involving commercial developers, facilitated by local government, and frequently involving the demolition of existing buildings and infrastructures. These enclaves of redevelopment create dense clusters of buildings connected by networks of privately managed, maintained and secured pedestrian spaces (see Figure 12.2).

As the masterplan has been realized renowned architectural offices have proposed landmark structures—what Ukeles (1969:1) would term "pure individual creation"—with each building and phase competing with its neighbors

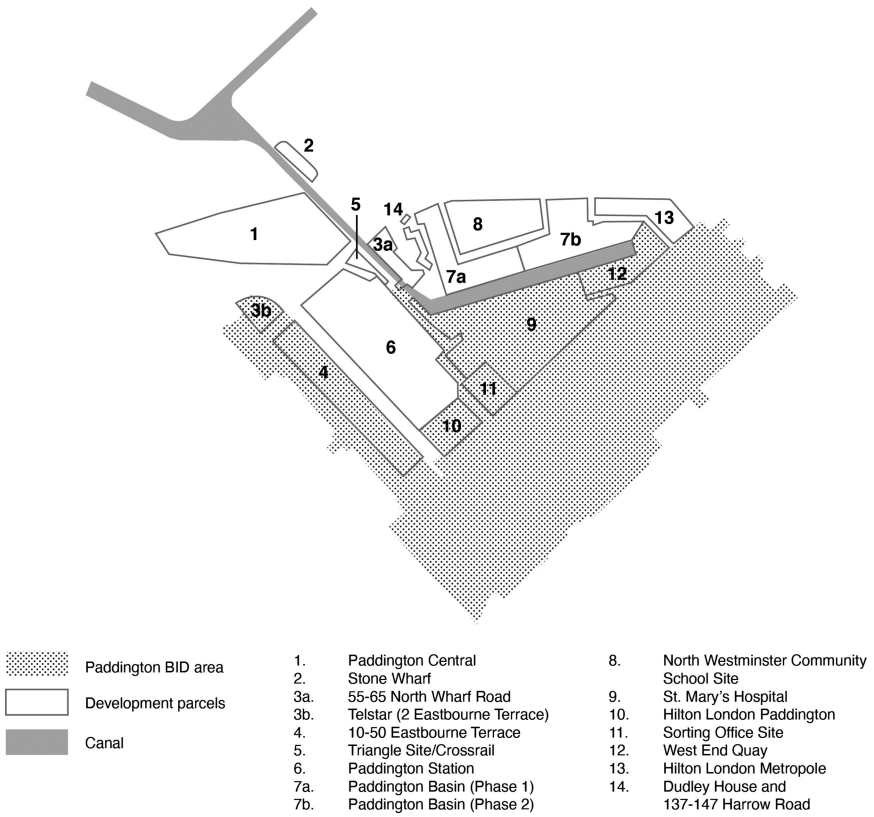

FIGURE 12.1 The extent of development parcels, each with different management and maintenance structures, and the BID (Business Improvement Area) which employs further maintenance and security teams reveals the scale of private control over the Paddington's public realm.

Source: Ed Wall, 2021.

FIGURE 12.2 Sparsely populated open spaces between the historic canal basin and new commercial buildings, with limited places for stopping and sitting.
Source: Ed Wall, 2013.

for attention. The transformation of former rail yards and canal sides into corporate offices and apartments, with the designs for the latter buildings becoming taller and more luxurious with each subsequent phase of development, has created an enclave of intense development around an increasingly important transportation hub on the edge of central London (Imrie et al. 2009). The demolition and remaking of the masterplan area have been almost comprehensive, with no historic buildings, structures or businesses being retained in the main development parcels. Development can be understood in terms of the processes of clearing the development area and building anew, but it also represents the objects of development, from development parcels to buildings and from office space to residential apartments, that are relentlessly maintained.

When describing 'maintenance', I refer to all the activities of maintaining the physical development, including cleaning and repairing the buildings and open spaces, as well as security patrols that preserve order and events that contribute to the image of the development. Ukeles describes in an interview with Maya Harakawa (2016):

> The thing about maintenance is that if you decide that something has value, then you want to maintain it. […] Whether it's a child, an institution, or a city, it's all the same: if you want them to thrive, you have to do a lot of maintenance—a whole lot.

But while maintenance of Paddington involves many teams of workers who preserve and protect the 'value' of the development, such services are reliant on

low-paid jobs: "The culture confers lousy status on maintenance jobs = minimum wages" (Ukeles 1969: 2). Instead, the value of maintenance reflects the value of the development—there is commercial value for the companies that control and profit from maintaining the developments. Multiple, often competing, management teams vie to service both the masterplanned area and the area defined by the Business Improvement District (BID) (see Figure 12.1). Each development includes networks of publicly accessible open space, the management of which is highly profitable for private contractors, such as Broadgate Estates.[2] The maintenance of the adjacent public areas along the canal, that remain in full ownership of the Canal and River Trust, have also been handed to the developers. Outside the development area, the BID, which was initiated by the developer consortium and supported by the City of Westminster, extends a regime of cleaning, repairing, preserving and policing the surrounding neighborhoods—contributing to elevated property values and social controls around and within the development.

If one of the aims of the development has been to reimage the area through new buildings, bridges, publicly accessible plazas, streets and canal towpaths, we can understand maintenance, as framed by Hilary Sample (2016: 7) in *Maintenance Architecture*, to be "dedicated to safeguarding the holistic image of the architectural work" that has been produced. For the developers and the BID "maintenance represents an investment in the persistence of architecture—both as an image and as an ideal" (ibid.). Because maintenance at Paddington includes acts of cleaning, repairing and securing, it becomes both an act of settling the architectural forms into a state of preservation while simultaneously ensuring that the presence and activities of teenagers and homeless people are restricted within the area. To borrow from Ukeles (1969: 1), maintenance "preserve[s] the new" through cleaning and repairing the open spaces and controlling activities within them.

Incremental Development

Despite the confidence of the developer's statements during planning, the *Paddington Waterside* masterplan has been consistently changed by the developers. The spatial forms of the masterplan and the timeframes of its realization have been continually adapted to respond to financial circumstances and market demands. It has taken decades for the masterplan to be built and its buildings are very different than originally proposed. The masterplan, led by a 22-partner developer consortium, has moved forward sporadically. As the redevelopment has slowed or accelerated, the masterplan has been amended and sometimes entirely redrawn, in particular, designs for residential accommodation superseding plans for office space at Paddington Waterside as London's housing market has surged. The masterplan provided the urban designers, developers and planners with useful tools to communicate total visions for redevelopments, while the accompanying documents, such as design guidelines, codes and drawings, reassured stakeholders and encouraged investors. The imposing top-down perspective and bold

architectural forms, as found in the masterplan drawings, follow a tradition of architectural representations that can offer assurances of order and clarity. In contrast to the comprehensive vision of the first masterplan, the development progressed intermittently, and the developers kept open the opportunity to adapt so that they could benefit from changing financial and market conditions.

The sporadic progress of development significantly benefited the developers who were able to renegotiate densities of development, land uses and development contributions, such as percentages of social housing. The prominence and size of the masterplan development meant that there was a lot to be gained from investing in the projects, both economically and politically, including banks funding private developers and the Canal and River Trust, the BID, planners and architects associating themselves with such a large project of city-making. The promise from developers for comprehensive transformations of Paddington initially involved closing down existing businesses, relocating a school and demolishing many buildings—synonymous with a clearing and cleansing of the area. The developers' commitments commanded the attention of the local authority and central government who responded by improving transport infrastructures, facilitating planning permissions, transferring formerly public assets into private hands, renegotiating planning obligations and the handing over of future control of this large area of London to private interests. While support for private development has been common in London since the 1980s (Imrie and Raco 2003; Imrie et al. 2009), the degree to which the City of Westminster facilitated the Paddington masterplan has raised questions over its interest in regulating development and its role representing existing business owners and residents (Raco and Henderson 2009).

Maintaining Settings

Well-maintained open spaces of squares, canal towpaths and an amphitheater have sustained scenic settings for this intensely commercial development. Maintaining what the development looked like in architectural and marketing images has been prioritized over the potential for diverse and more messy relations between people who live, work, use and pass through the area. Ukeles (1969) recognizes that the development of avant-garde art relies on maintenance to 'prolong the advance' and 'renew the excitement': in the development of Paddington, maintenance is tasked with sustaining, renewing and prolonging all forms of commercialized urban space. Daily teams of personnel employed in cleaning, mending and securing keep areas clean and move people on who seem out of place, denying incremental changes to the physical forms and limiting daily activities in the area (see Figure 12.3). These are public spaces presented as finished works, preserved as new and protected from what the BID and development teams deem to be inappropriate use.

The layout and security of the development make it difficult for some people to access and spend time in the area. Along with the physical transformation of

FIGURE 12.3 Cleaning equipment for emptying bins, sweeping the stone paved canal-side, wiping stainless steel handrails, cleaning glass balustrades, polishing door handles, picking up litter and removing graffiti.
Source: Ed Wall, 2013.

the area, new regulations that deny a range of social activities have been applied unevenly by the developers and the BID. The regulations are enforced in an attempt to control the life of the development and maintain its image. Maintenance operations of cleaning, security and events have prioritized the appearance of the open spaces further enforcing an architectural and marketing language of visual and social control. Visual images represent what Don Mitchell (1997: 323) describes as "a place of comfort, of relaxation perhaps, of leisurely consumption, unsullied by images of work, poverty, or social strife"—"keep the customer happy", Ukeles (1969: 2) describes of maintenance—ensuring the continued long-term income on which the Canal and River Trust and their investors rely. These are development images that need to be maintained, resulting in the eviction of homeless encampments on the edge of the canal, Police being called to remove teenagers smoking behind the corporate headquarters, displacement of sex workers from the neighborhood, or students on field trips being told not to take photographs.

Maintaining Discomfort

The corporate nature of Paddington Waterside leaves many people uncomfortable walking through the area, with some concerned that they were trespassing. This discomfort is exacerbated by a language of exclusion created by both the architectural design and the visible presence of private security guards. When it first opened, and for over a decade, Paddington Waterside was quiet for much of

the day, particularly in the evenings and during weekends (see Figure 12.2). As observed during fieldwork in 2013, people tended to keep walking through the area with minimum engagement with each other or the development. One of the architects involved in the masterplan criticized the design as a "completely introspective piece of work" (personal interview, January 2013). Although he believed that this perception would improve as the development was completed, the location, arrangement and adjacent buildings continue to make it difficult to identify the front of the development, where people arrive and where they leave. The inward-looking arrangement of the development is compounded by a lack of permeability along some edges, blocked by buildings or dissected by the canal, in ways that one of the developers describes makes "you feel as if you shouldn't be there" (ibid.). He explains: "It is not physically impossible [to go through our estate] if you know where you are going, and the security guards won't stop you", however, he believes that "the condition of the spaces makes people feel that they are trespassing".

Individuals and groups are managed through the public realm—with few places to sit and regular patrols of security guards—as if they are being moved through an art gallery. Across the development, hourly routines of cleaning, maintaining and securing the open spaces remind visitors that this is a very different public realm, with uneven rights and access, to that which exists outside. Despite early developments having been completed almost two decades ago, the intense cleaning and repairs of the space have preserved the open spaces as new. Windows are cleaned, trees are pruned, handrails are polished, and the canal is dredged of algae. Throughout the day and night, the private developments and publicly accessible spaces around the canal are repeatedly maintained. As such Paddington Waterside contrasts with the streets and parks beyond the development masterplan, creating a new form of pristine public realm that excludes through discomfort and alienation. Such exclusion is reinforced by regular rhythms of security teams who are employed to remove people deemed out of place in this overtly commercial space. While old buildings have been demolished and former land uses extinguished, the management regimes of the development hold new designed landscapes in place and enforce what is acceptable to do within them.

Maintenance as Exclusion

Repeated daily and hourly maintenance of the development area provides an extension of private controls. Through the BID, the large developers have succeeded in expanding their role in directing the public realm to encompass neighborhoods and landmarks beyond Paddington Waterside. While Neil Smith (1996: 12) describes that "hostile landscapes are regenerated, cleansed, reinfused with middle-class sensibility", this was not possible through redevelopment alone: neither the purchase of the land from British Waterways and the National Freight Corporation, its redevelopment nor the extended management of the

public canal towpaths, provided the development partnership with the means to completely control the spaces and image of Paddington. Therefore, the developers needed an additional tool to control the residential neighborhoods beyond the development boundary. They established the BID and funded its chief executive, thus extending the 'frontier' of the development into the adjacent Paddington neighborhoods. Without the BID, its chief executive describes, the image of the development could "fall of the edge of Paddington into a different Paddington" (personal interview, December 2012). The BID organizes programs for cleaning and waste collection, hires its own police and community support officers and attempts to coordinate the businesses in the area.

The language of exclusion established by the physical design is reinforced by polished stainless steel signs that remind visitors that they are on private property and that many activities are prohibited (see Figure 12.4). The extensive signage at Paddington Waterside, which proclaims that the 'public spaces' described at the planning stage are actually private property, reflects that of private shopping malls. Rules that restrict smoking, skateboarding, rollerblading, cycling, feeding pigeons, unauthorized parking, double-berth mooring, trespassing and even public access define this public realm. But in contrast to commercial malls, the many different sign-posted regulations across Paddington Waterside reflect the

FIGURE 12.4 Signs across Paddington Waterside explain the multitude of rules that visitors must follow.

Source: Ed Wall, 2013.

fragmented ownerships across the masterplanned area. Multiple teams of security guards, each employed by different landowners and enforcing different rules, find a common concern with taking photographs and the presence of individuals who may appear out of place. Furthermore, as not all regulations are listed on these signs, security guards are tasked with deciphering what is acceptable within the development areas.

Gains of Maintenance

Despite the financial value that maintenance practices created, in terms of property sales and rental income, the developers and their corporate tenants were not keen to pay the full cost. When the BID was established by the developers, its boundary did not align with either the Paddington Waterside development area, the PSPA or the subsequent Paddington Opportunity Area (defined by the Greater London Authority). Instead, it covered an area beyond the masterplan boundary, only slightly overlapping the development area (see Figure 12.1). The large office buildings in which the international corporations were tenants, namely Merchant Square and Paddington Central, were omitted from the BID area. Because the BID levy is based on the ratable value of the businesses (a UK tax on the occupation of non-residential properties), the larger and more valuable corporations that were attracted to the large floor plates of the new developments would have had to make significant contributions. The BID chief executive explained that there were significant management charges already for Merchant Square and Paddington Central: "whether they [the developers and tenants] pay on top of that to have something that they are already paying for" she said "is too big a risk to take" (personal interview, December 2012).

Financial benefits gained by the developers have been highly facilitated by the embrace of market-led regeneration by the City of Westminster and other public agencies. As the developers were supported, other individuals and businesses were intentionally unsettled: small industrial workshops were shut down, the presence of sex workers on Praed Street was eliminated and low-cost hotels that supported homeless people were closed. One of the residents who also sits on the board of the BID explained that the developer-led partnership facilitated the BID so that the area around Paddington and along Praed Street could be "regenerated to compliment the new development and improve the whole area" (personal interview, October 2012). In this way, the influence of the development and the BID in improving the environment, security, safety and marketing extended outside of the masterplan area, a process that researchers Mike Raco and Steven Henderson (2009: 309) found, "skewed the priorities of public service providers, particularly the police and WCC (Westminster City Council)". During interviews, I heard how additional police officers were funded by the BID to patrol the area. Such resourcing by BIDs of enhanced policing exacerbates the contrast between BID areas and neighborhoods outside. Furthermore, the result of such increased security by private and public agencies contributes to, what one

of the planning managers at City of Westminster recognizes as, 'social cleansing' (personal interview, October 2012):

> Because of the dynamics of central London policy, the degree of what some social commentators call social cleansing does go on. It is called how the market operates, so you might as well call it for what it is. It's not an act of anyone's policy.

Conclusion

While Ukeles' manifesto explores relations between development and maintenance, she does not present them as a duality. She describes new development that is sustained by boring, repetitive maintenance tasks: "Maintenance is always circular and repetitive" (Ukeles in interview with Harakawa 2016). She argues that conceptual art claims "utter development" (Ukeles 1969: 2) in ways that I have identified developers and architects claiming their development to be comprehensive—both, however, rely on constant practices of maintenance.

I draw three conclusions from the discussion of Paddington Waterside read through relations between urban development and maintenance of cleaning, repairing and securing. First, I conclude that through obsessive cleaning and overbearing security, people have been removed and excluded from the area. By continuously cleaning, repairing and securing, the developers and the council have maintained specific groups of people and uses from the masterplan and BID areas that they feel are incompatible. While most people are able to visit and pass through Paddington Waterside with ease, the instances of security guards disrupting teenagers and the local authority evicting a homeless person point to practices of unsettling inherent in the development process. Furthermore, as the school, hostels and shelters have been closed to make way for and then maintain the development, teenagers and homeless people appear out of place in the transformed public realm of the gentrified neighborhood of the BID. What has resulted is a sanitized public realm, the 'development' of which saw the demolition of dilapidated wharf buildings and the closing of local businesses, while its subsequent 'maintenance' has preserved settings by keeping out undesirable people and activities while facilitating marketable images of an area.

The second conclusion is that the management and maintenance of the development and BID areas contribute to a relentless process of control and privatization that undermine claims of the developers and local authority of creating a public realm. The operations of cleaning, repair and security maintain a sense of discomfort and actively unsettle many public practices from taking place. The openness and permeability of the masterplan area give the illusion of a public realm consistent with other districts in London where the streets and squares are adopted into public ownership. The spatial forms, such as the amphitheater, also allude to democratic forms of public space and street signs mimic signage implemented by the City of Westminster public authority. But the private controls that are imposed across the open spaces deny terms of publicness that require more inclusive and

participatory actions. The developers have realized a circumscribed public realm where participation is limited, contrasting with the streets beyond the control of the masterplan and the BID where public lives are more evident. As Raco and Henderson (2009: 309) recognize at Paddington, "There is a growing sense of polarisation between the controlled and regulated spaces and those outside of it".

Third, I conclude that the multiplicity of maintenance practices in Paddington Waterside creates contradictions and contestations over responsibilities to maintain and opportunities to profit. I have highlighted the legal contestations over responsibilities for maintenance at the West End Quay phase of the development. The liability of maintenance resonates with Ukeles' concerns about her earlier "stuffings" artwork; she explains: "Basically the materiality became a burden: instead of a means of expression it became something I had to take care of" (Ukeles in interview with Harakawa 2016). But despite the costs of maintaining Paddington Waterside, there are also significant benefits to be gained through providing maintenance services to new urban developments, as the contracting of Broadgate Estates to manage the public realm highlights. Further contradictions are revealed as small businesses outside of the development area pay for the operations of the BID despite many benefits for the maintenance of the BID area being gained by corporate tenants of the masterplanned area who do not contribute to the costs. The continuous presence of security guards, builders and cleaners in the public realm also emphasizes that architectural development is never complete (see Sample 2016: 9; Wall 2017). Instead, as I have revealed in this chapter—and in contrast to the two systems that Ukeles describes in her manifesto—the masterplanned 'development' of clearing the site and building new becomes inseparable from the 'maintenance' practices of fixing, washing, polishing and policing.

To end, and returning to Ukeles (1969), we can understand that development and maintenance contribute to practices of urban transformation and control where development is "infected by strains of maintenance ideas, maintenance activities and maintenance materials" (ibid.: 2), a process of masterplanning that is expanded by and reliant on activities of management companies and the BID—even when the masterplan creates an illusion of comprehensive development.

Notes

1 This chapter develops further research published in Wall (2022).
2 Broadgate Estates is a property and estate management company that was founded in 1986, named after the management of redeveloped properties at Broadgate, London. Broadgate Estates is owned by British Land, a private development company whose properties it also manages.

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