



The Temporary City Workshop

Synopsis

University College Dublin, 21 October 2014

Dr Niamh Moore-Cherry and Prof Linda McCarthy



Keynote lecture

The Temporary City: Strategies for a Fluid World

Prof Peter Bishop, director at the architecture firm Allies and Morrison and Professor of Urban Design at the Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London.

Temporary urbanism has been attracting the attention of academics, practitioners and entrepreneurs. In part this is a response to a structural shift in the ways that we shape our cities in a fluid world of economic, social and political change. Is temporary urbanism an important force or a passing fad and the indulgence of wealthy developed economies? If it is a force for renewal, what strategies can we devise that harness rather than stifle its creative energy? Finally I will look at whether it has any relevance as a tool in rethinking the rapidly (and sterile) new urban forms being designed as a response to rapid urban growth in Asia and other parts of the world.



Figure 1: Prof Peter Bishop at The Temporary City Workshop, UCD

Workshop session 1

Exploring narratives, governance, and opportunities and challenges associated with temporary uses for urban land and buildings

1. What is the nature of temporary when it comes to vacant or underutilized land and buildings, in cities generally and in Dublin specifically? Does temporary use represent a 'stop-gap' reaction to broader forces affecting cities or is it a new development paradigm?

- Temporary can be formal (e.g. Granby Park) or informal such as bonfires etc. There are significant regulations to negotiate when there might be a “one-time” event.
- Temporary uses can sometimes be a stop-gap measure / sometimes not. This raises the question of who the temporary use is for and who benefits?
- There are no “zones of tolerance” in Dublin.
- Relationship between temporary uses and capital / money. Capital often the driving force for site allocation to specific uses but there are other benefits (e.g. social / community) that need to be recognised.
- To some extent there can be a lack of contestation, for a variety of reasons, if the site is expected to generate jobs Temporary uses are often opportunistic by both developers and site users.
- Different users have different perspectives on the timeframe of temporary use e.g. owners views of temporary might be as short as possible but the social innovator may be working to a different timeframe.
- Temporary uses are not exclusive to the central city. For example, temporary uses such as van shops pre-existed in Ballymun, run by the community. The professionalization of community groups in place like Ballymun is strong as they are well-organised. Community development approaches might provide lessons for how temporary might be done.

2. How do temporary interventions challenge traditional 'planning' approaches / paradigms and planners. How can planners use the idea of the 'temporary' to fulfill their objectives?

- Raises larger question about the nature of traditional planning itself and the extent to which it is changing while recognising that the planning systems / bureaucracies are resistant to change.
- Planning tends to focus on the long-term rather than temporary use related to the need to generate revenue.
- The formal planning system / regulations work to longer timeframes and can stymy creativity / temporary use so planners are helping negotiate alternatives to the formal system to facilitate temporary interventions

- Temporary uses can reinforce planners objectives around community development, while recognizing that it can exclude others particularly if it involves gentrification.
- Larger issues such as housing should obviously demand first use on a site. On publicly owned land, however there may be greater opportunities for planners to harness the 'temporary' for their own goals.
- Planners need to understand that the level of expertise and experience varies amongst the groups proposing temporary uses. Groups need to be aware that they should ask for the help of the local authority, and that it will be forthcoming, in developing proposals for temporary interventions.

4. How does a focus on the temporary or temporary interventions open up new spaces of participation / 'bottom-up' engagement?

- A focus on the temporary can open up new spaces of participation because they often harness existing community-based professionals. e.g Granby Park engaged the community through the Area Housing manager
- Temporary interventions can highlight rifts between different groups where existing businesses see a temporary use as competition.



Figure 2: Exploring the narratives of temporary use, Workshop activity

Workshop session 2

Exploring types of uses, impacts, and lessons associated with temporary uses for urban land and buildings

1. What are the main kinds of temporary uses?

- Vacant space; open spaces (public/private); streets/footpaths – food, art, cultural, seasonal
- For-profit/ legal; community uses e.g. park; mixture between opportunistic and community: thirdspace
- Formal, working within regulatory framework v informal, not strictly legal or just meeting regulations to the letter
- A space used outside normal hours for non-conventional uses that may be informal, not just vacant spaces

2. How can we conceptualise their difference?

- Public/private; “ownership” who feels comfortable claiming space versus who legally owns it; whose creativity is valued?
- Origins of space and the intention of user. Need to conceptualise different kinds of uses if we are to attempt to learn from other projects
- Part of regulatory framework, semi-legal or working around regulatory framework
- Not for profit e.g. Granby Park; for profit; mixture of both
- Agency: temporary by local authority, Local authority + community of practice; Community of practice e.g. Fumbally Exchange; Social entrepreneurs; Bottom-up / community driven actions (Dublin Exchange)
- Bottom-up isn't as clear-cut as people may think, it may include involvement by both public and private actors, issues of perception. Does corporate involvement mean it is not good?

3. What sorts of impacts – both positive and negative - do these have, directly and/or indirectly?

- Positive impacts should just be considered commercially but broader social, sustainability impacts can be recognized.
- Depends on the type of temporary uses. Parasitical temporary uses can be negative but somebody still benefits
- We are so used to celebrating the temporary that it focuses us on the immediate and we don't pay enough attention to the long term
- Whether something is good/bad is hard to identify so we must look at it based on intention reflecting a maturing of temporary movement. Need to think about whether the temporary intervention is reactionary, e.g. to the crisis.
- Creatives creating value for others to exploit in the future and as recognized by some city authorities e.g. Mayor of Kreuzberg, Berlin.

- When creatives recognize their efforts are ultimately benefitting corporations, then this model will not be sustainable in the long term.
- Need to distinguish clearly between temporary v pop-up: Proof of concept for a business v people who don't have access to a permanent space.



Figure 3a and 3b: Evaluating impacts of temporary use in cities, Workshop activity

Lessons learnt / Recommendations

- A policy discussion about the wider benefits to society of temporary uses should be initiated. Can temporary interventions be embedded in planning? ***The planning system might consider appropriate points at which temporary uses and interventions might be built into the development process.***
- In the absence of a vacant site levy, perhaps land hoarding should be accepted and developers actively approached to consider an interim use on their site. Through ***developing a database or record of successful temporary uses including from a developer perspective***, developers can be assured that a claim on their site will not result.
- Dublin City Council should ***consider creating “zones of tolerance”*** in the city within which temporary uses could be facilitated with limited need for formal regulation.
- If interested in temporary uses, Dublin City Council needs to ***make a clear public statement*** on this issue and adopt a more pro-active and encouraging approach. This might involve clearly identifying a designated contact point within the organization for interested parties. The perceived impenetrability of the local authority needs to be addressed.
- If temporary users want to effectively develop interventions in the city, there needs to be a ***much greater demand on the local authority to formally create a platform*** that would support this activity.
- Temporary users should be aware that projects are often brought to fruition through more informal power structures. ***Developing networks and asking for help is critical.*** However, the broader political economic context of decision-making needs to be recognized.
- A support tool for temporary users needs to be developed that would ***share the lessons and create an institutional memory of previous events***. This might be a very simple guidance document, peeling back the process generically and recognizing that each project might have different circumstances. The GIY checklist for community garden development might be a model.
- The ***city must appropriate the role of broker*** playing an active role in networking people and negotiating between different stakeholders to facilitate temporary interventions.

List of Participants

Name	Affiliation	Email
Prof Peter Bishop	University College London	peter.bishop@ucl.ac.uk
Ms Ruth Comerford-Morris	University College Dublin	Ruth.Comerford-Morris@ucd.ie
Mr Stephen Coyne	Liberties Business Improvement Initiative	Stephen.Coyne@dublincity.ie
Ms Orlaith Delargy	Dublin Chamber of Commerce	orlaith@dublinchamber.ie
Ms Kellie Fagan	University College Dublin	kelliek91@hotmail.com
Ms Stephanie Fy	Architect / Urban Designer	stephanie@urba.ie
Ms Esther Gerrard	Landscape Architect	esther.gerrard@gmail.com
Ms Ali Grehan	Dublin City Architect	Ali.Grehan@dublincity.ie
Ms Laura Howe	Voidbusters Social Enterprise	lauramhowe@gmail.com
Dr Philip Lawton	NUI Galway	philip.lawton@nuigalway.ie
Dr Madeleine Lyes	City Intersections Urban Forum	madeleine.lyes@ucd.ie
Ms Rachel McArdle	NUI Maynooth	rachel.mcardle123@gmail.com
Prof Linda McCarthy	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee	lmccarth@uwm.edu
Mr Conor McQuillan	Exchange Dublin	conor.mcquillan@gmail.com
Dr Niamh Moore-Cherry	University College Dublin	niamh.moore@ucd.ie
Ms Naomi Murphy	Upstart	naomiannamurphy@gmail.com
Mr Derry O'Connell	University College Dublin	derry.oconnell@ucd.ie
Ms Roisin O'Doherty	Dublin City BID	roisin@dublintown.ie
Mr Eoin O'Mahony	Independent researcher	eoinomahony@gmail.com
Dr Simon O'Rafferty	Voidbusters Social Enterprise	simonorafferty@gmail.com
Mr Stephen Rigney	NUI Maynooth	sjrigney@gmail.com
Ms Pauline Riordan	Dublin City Council	pauline.riordan@dublincity.ie
Mr Ciarán Stanley	Dublin City Council	ciaran.stanley@dublincity.ie
Ms Johanna Varghese	Dublin City Council for EU TURAS Project	johanna.varghese@dublincity.ie