



Pich

The impact of urban planning and governance reform on the historic built environment and intangible cultural heritage



Project Summary

The PICH project will provide a comprehensive assessment of the impact of fundamental reforms in urban planning and governance on the historic built environment and place identity. Urban planning and governance systems mediate conflicting interests over the built historic environment with significant implications for the cultural heritage and collective place identity. The cultural meaning of places may be revealed, enhanced or exploited by planning and governance of urban development, or it can be swept away completely by planning decisions that reflect other policy priorities and interests.

Global forces and European integration are fundamentally changing the processes and doctrine of urban planning and governance. Neo-liberal ideology reinforced by economic crises, the risks associated with climate change, and growing individualism and diversity in society have undermined traditional planning methods.

The project will evaluate the effect of fundamental reform in planning and governance in three settings: the historic urban core, sites of industrial transformation, and the wider landscape heritage. It will assess the impact of reform on the tangible built environment and place identity, and develop evaluation and education tools.

The project is a collaborative exercise of aca-

demics, policy makers and civil society in Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom. This combination gives added value in potential for comparative evaluation across all the main models of planning. Associate partners will be involved from municipalities, heritage organisations and other countries not directly funded by this call to test ideas under other conditions.

The project will meet a pressing demand for guidance on managing the built cultural heritage and place identity under more complex and uncertain conditions. It will make a broad contribution to the Strategic Agenda in understanding the implications of fundamental reform, by drawing transferable lessons, and by proposing effective transferable methods and tools.

Application and impact

The PICH proposal is designed to provide new research-based knowledge about the impact of reform of governance on the management of the urban cultural heritage and its interlinked intangible dimension, especially place identity. Section A2 explained that whilst the academic and practice communities are very aware of the current challenges to the urban heritage, the depth of knowledge is limited, partly because of the rapid nature of changing conditions in

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some countries. There is as yet no assessment of these effects and only limited opportunities to systematically exchange and evaluate experiences. Thus the PICH project has potential to make a significant contribution in terms of knowledge of current processes (especially the relation between tangible and intangible), and alternative ways of influencing heritage management in practice.

We have given special attention to the need for impact beyond the academic relevance because there is a real problem of managing change under more uncertain conditions that could have damaging consequences for the cultural heritage. We aim to share the task of knowledge creation and provide guidance on practice that could lead to tangible implementation. In relation to the topics, the PICH proposal is cross-cutting, and aims to address the three main topics in combi-



A snapshot taken at the Ouseburn Valley, an industrial heritage site in Newcastle, UK.

nation. The findings should assist in safeguarding the urban cultural heritage in tandem with its intangible dimensions because some management mechanisms are becoming redundant in the wake of changing conditions. It should assist governments to develop more effective strategies combining a range of tools and it should encourage effective re-use of the cultural heritage through innovation and better targeted urban governance and planning.

Coordinator

Newcastle University, Global Urban Research Unit (UK)
Delft University of Technology (NETHERLANDS).

Participants

- Newcastle University Global Urban Research Unit (UK)
- Università IUAV di Venezia (ITALY)
- Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NORWAY)

Dates

01/06/2015 - 31/05/2018

Budget

Total project funding: € 829.880,45
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Subject area(s)

Heritage, urban planning, governance, place identity

Project website

<https://planningandheritage.wordpress.com/pich-2/>