

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS  
IJS-14 UGC II: THE UGC AND  
UNIVERSITY EXPANSION  
IN CARDIFF

FIGURE 1.



The Pictures on this page include, from the top, left, clockwise: UWIST, THE WELSH OFFICE, ONE OF THE RESIDENCES TO BE DESTROYED, AND THE PALACE IN ALEXANDRA GARDENS IN CATHAY PARK.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

IJS - 14 UGC II: THE UGC AND UNIVERSITY  
EXPANSION IN CARDIFF

44 Canfield Gardens  
London, N.W.6.  
England  
11th February, 1972

Mr. Richard Nolte  
Executive Director  
Institute of Current World Affairs  
535 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York 10017  
USA

Dear Mr. Nolte:

As part of my continuing study of the British University Grants Committee, I have taken a close look at the role which the UGC can and sometimes does play in working out the competing interests of universities and their surrounding communities. This study of university expansion in Cardiff is not a representative case, for it is rather unusual for the UGC to become involved in the intricacies of local politics as it did in Cardiff. But the situation which emerged (and is still emerging) in Cardiff is so intrinsically interesting and so relevant to an understanding of the potential role of the UGC that I believe this case has much to teach the student of higher education policy.

In the course of this account I intend to explore the following questions: What is the role of the UGC in this affair? How did this role influence the other participants in the process? And what ought the proper role of such an agency be in similar situations? And I shall meander through an inevitable diversion: what lessons can we learn about the proper role of universities in planning physical facilities in urban settings?

But first, the outlines of what happened in Cardiff.

## 1. HISTORY

Cardiff is the beautiful premier city of Southern Wales: the civic, cultural, and shipping capital of the area. In recent years Cardiff has had to contend with the economic difficulties which seem indigenous to the Welsh communities,

although it has continued to be more prosperous than any other section of the old Welsh Kingdom and not at a serious disadvantage when compared with other parts of the United Kingdom.

Since the 19th Century, Cardiff has had an institution of university rank, University College, which became part of the federated University of Wales -- a collection of small liberal arts colleges in Wales, which are independently administered but joined together for the purpose of awarding degrees. University College has historically been located on one side of Cathay Park in Central Cardiff. (See Figure 2.)

In addition to University College, located on the other side of Cathay Park, there was a technical college, which later became a College of advanced technology, and then, after the publication of the Robbins Report (the policy document which recommended the expansion of opportunity for university education in Great Britain), became the University of Wales Institute of Science and Technology: known to everyone in Cardiff as U.W.I.S.T. (pronounced "u-wist"). (See Figure 2.)

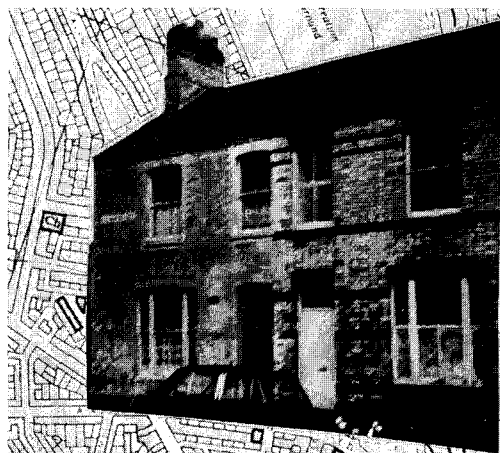
When the Robbins Report was published in 1963, the College of Advanced Technology was a small institution with a very meagre physical plant. So it was clear that the process of becoming a technical university would require significant expansion in plant.

The first request for expanding the plant of UWIST predates its designation as a university. In the late 1950s, the college of advanced technology asked the Cardiff City Council for permission to expand and move to a new site in the suburb of Cardiff called Radyr. (See Figure I.) The Council gave tentative approval. But nothing came of this exercise because of the intervention of the Robbins Report and also the initiation of a systematic city planning operation in Cardiff.

In the early 1950s, the planning law in England and Wales required all cities to file city plans as the condition for major investment in city construction by the national government. Cardiff was interested in improving its system and applied for money for this purpose to the Welsh Office,

FIGURE 2.

The pictures on this page show buildings to be taken over by the universities in the Higher Education Precinct. Some will be destroyed. Most are in sound condition. Most are inhabited by students and their landlords, who are very longtime residents of the area.



Precinct Boundary  
 E.W. Park  
 City Planning Office  
 Cardiff  
 6" to 1 mile

CARDIFF  
 CARDIFF  
 CARDIFF

which is the locus of national governmental authority and money in Wales. The application was turned down, but not until 1959; the reason for the failure of this application at least in part was the inadequacy of city planning in Cardiff.

By the late 1950s the City had organized a planning office. And in 1961 Cardiff hired Colin Buchanan (now Sir Colin), the famous British transportation planner, to prepare a city traffic plan.

In the process of preparing the traffic plan for Cardiff, Buchanan had to make a number of assumptions about land use in the whole central area of the city, so he created a tentative land use plan. It seems important to emphasize the statement "he created," for at least in regard to his plan for university development in downtown Cardiff, it appears that he did not involve the institutions themselves in any significant degree. Local university officials claim that all Buchanan did was ask University College for an estimate of its enrollment in the year 2000. University College responded with the figure of 10,000 students, which was based upon the calculations of the Robbins committee for all of England and then applied to University College. UWIST, which was at that time half the size of University College, was assigned, for planning purposes, 5,000 students, an enrollment one half of that of University College,

The enrollment figures for the future of the university institutions in Cardiff were not based upon any study of the social and economic needs of the area or on any analysis of the implications of differences in possible land use demands made by different sorts of student populations.

In spite of the limited information, Buchanan made a land use map as part of his traffic study which created a Higher Education Precinct in the area along the University College side of the park and along the railroad tracks. (See Figure 2.) The Buchanan recommendation was fairly similar to the actually designated precinct shown in Figure 2, except that his plan was more linear along the railroad tracks than the present plan.



Once the Buchanan plan was published in 1964, the City Planning Officer for Cardiff, Mr. Ewart Parkinson, convened a meeting of the officers of both University College and UWIST to organize a feasibility study for the development of the Higher Education Precinct. UWIST was not very enthusiastic about the prospect, for it still wanted to move out to what the British call a "green field site." By this time in 1964-65, UWIST had already started sounding out the UGC about its attitude toward a new site for UWIST outside of Cardiff and had received little encouragement. Instead the UGC told both UWIST and Cardiff that it would finance jointly with the City a feasibility study of central city development along the Buchanan lines. So UWIST went along with the suggestion and agreed with University College to hire a planning firm jointly. These planners later recommended a precinct quite consistent with the Buchanan plan, but which did not give UWIST the room which it thought it needed for expansion.

Because of UWIST dissatisfaction with the planners' report, it hired a new planning firm to do a feasibility study of another possible suburban site in Wendvoe, again on the outskirts of Cardiff. The second planning firm recommended that UWIST move out to Wendvoe, after comparing its advantages with those of the central city and Radyr sites. (See Figure I.) In addition, UWIST had in hand an invitation from Glamorgan, a nearby town, to move to a site there.

As the battle of the plans proceeded, the City of Cardiff began a vigorous campaign to keep UWIST in the central city and offered UWIST more land in a Higher Education Precinct built along the park and railroad tracks.

At the same time the UGC became an important participant in the Cardiff affair. The first of a number of quadripartite meetings among the UGC, the City of Cardiff, UWIST, and University College was held. It is worthwhile to note that the UGC usually chaired the meetings, and often the man at the gavel was the Chairman of the UGC himself, first Sir John Wolfenden, and in more recent years, Sir Kenneth Berrill. It became quickly quite clear to all those involved that the UGC was not interested in having UWIST move out to a green field site.

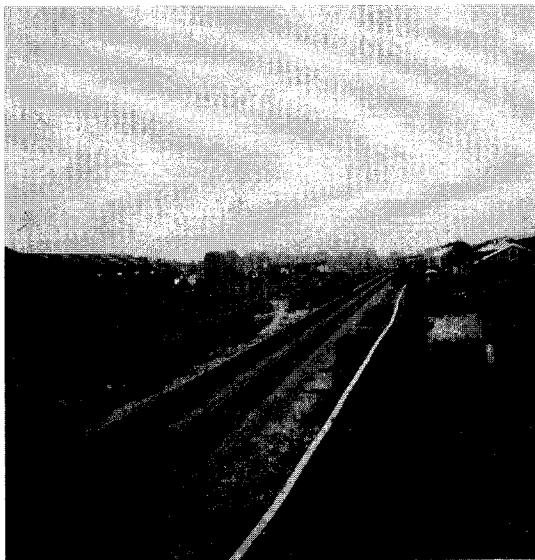
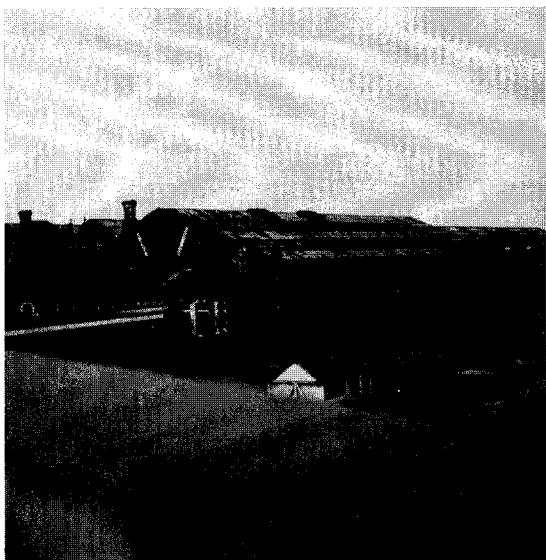
Out of these meetings over a number of years there emerged an agreement that the UGC would provide £1 million ( $\frac{1}{4}$  of the cost) and the City of Cardiff would provide £3 million ( $\frac{3}{4}$  of the cost) for the acquisition and preparation of land in the Higher Education Precinct. Both University College and UWIST agreed to nominate planners to develop detailed plans for actual construction in the designated area. Also, certain joint construction and curriculum projects were agreed to.

Under British planning law, if a planning and development area is to be designated and compulsory purchase orders used, the national government must hold a public hearing about the plan and powers required. This hearing was held in the fall of 1971. The decision has yet to be rendered. This hearing was the first opportunity which the public had to become involved in the planning process regarding the expansion of the universities in Cardiff; eight years after the process had begun.

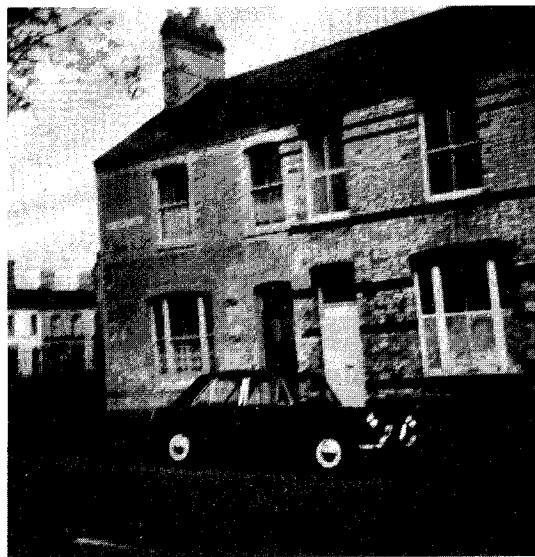
At the public hearing the City, the UGC, UWIST, and University College presented statements about the importance of the expansion of the universities and the role which the Higher Education Precinct will play in the overall development plans for central Cardiff. However, there was strong opposition from residents in the area immediately under consideration for the compulsory purchase orders and those in areas to be affected later. (The hearing officer heard from the latter group over the protest of counsel for the City.) Also, students at University College and UWIST objected to the central city expansion plans.

The objections mainly focused on the destruction of neighborhoods. But each and every objector took special notice of the lack of involvement of those most directly affected in the planning process. An objection to which no meaningful defense was raised by the City or the other authorities involved.

The outcome of the hearing is not yet known at this writing. The hearing officer has reported to the Welsh Office, but the report is still under consideration and no decision has emerged. A final decision is expected by the spring.



These pictures illustrate what will have to go during redevelopment of the Higher Education Precinct. The top two pictures show some railroad property; the others show residential and existing university vistas.





In the meantime, both universities and the City are proceeding upon the assumption that the Precinct will be approved, and the use of compulsory purchase orders will be authorized. Both universities have been buying land on the open market, and most owners are willing to sell, because they expect the worst. A number of common construction projects are already underway. Although the rate of expansion, and therefore the rate of construction, has slowed and will slow even more in the coming quinquennium, a university community which was planned on the land use theories of the '60s will be approved in the '70s and built in the '80s and '90s.

With these facts in hand, we can now turn to an analysis of the roles played by the different groups involved in the decisions and then evaluate the plans for the physical environment of a learning community conceived within the constraints of the best way to get automobiles in and out of Cardiff.

## II. LOCAL PERSPECTIVES

To appreciate the actual role of the UGC in this whole affair, it will be helpful to canvas briefly the perspectives of the other participants of what happened and on their views of the UGC.

### A. UWIST

UWIST created the Cardiff affair. Had UWIST not objected to central city expansion, it is unlikely that any other objections would have been raised by others, because the process of development would have been accelerated. And the sensitivity of local residents in the '60s was less than in the '70s. But UWIST did object, and it is quite important to understand the basis of its objections.

First, one must appreciate the fact that there has been a rivalry between UWIST and University College. My impression is that UWIST feels this rivalry more than University College; one would expect new boys on the block to be more sensitive.

Even with the foregoing qualification, one can find reasonable grounds for UWIST's apprehensions vis-a-vis University College. UWIST retains its technical and practical disposition from its days as a technical college and proudly pursues vocationally oriented university studies. It fears that if it were to be swallowed up by University College -- or even forced to cooperate in too many academic programs -- its distinctive educational approach would be lost.

This fear of restraint from association with University College manifested itself early on in UWIST's life as a university, when it attempted to have a status independent of the federated University of Wales. At that time Cardiff and more generally Welsh establishment figures persuaded the UGC to maintain the integrity of the University of Wales by including UWIST, but giving it a title which was consistent with its history and future plans.

UWIST, as an institution, regularly decided that it wanted to move out of central Cardiff. On every occasion when the issue was put to the various groups in the university, the decision was always: "Move!!" But on every occasion the internal decision was successfully challenged from outside. And whatever the initial source of the challenge, the actual veto was always exercised by the UGC.

Major Watkeys, the Planning Secretary for UWIST, put his -- and one would guess the institution's -- analysis simply: "Even though Sir John Wolfenden (the former Chairman of the UGC) often said that he was not the managing director of universities in Great Britain, in the case of UWIST and expansion in Cardiff, he was indeed our managing director."

To understand how deeply the staff at UWIST feel about the UGC's "interference" in this case, one must appreciate that not only has there been the site veto exercised, but because of the delays entailed in the negotiating process, UWIST has missed the point in the historical cycle of the expansion of higher education in Great Britain where funding has been provided on a generous basis. The growth of UWIST in the next quinquennium will be well below the level which the staff at the institution believes to be adequate.

And many at UWIST sincerely believe that the long range plan of the UGC is for all of the institutions of university caliber in Cardiff (which also includes the Welsh National Medical School) to join together in some sort of integrated institution. The evidence of the "green field" veto and the limitations on the expansion of student and facilities leads them to this conclusion. So every action by UWIST is taken with the intent of doing everything possible to maintain institutional integrity and to inhibit any future amalgamation.

#### B. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

University College, as the long established university in Cardiff, has been able to take a rather relaxed attitude to the whole affair. Because of previous investment in physical plant, there was never any question about University College moving out of Cardiff. And because of the location of most of the existing buildings along one side of the railroad line, there was need only to convince one major landowner -- British Rail -- to sell its facilities in order to provide substantial room for growth.

The difference in position is reflected in the view of University College's Secretary, Mr. K.J. Hilton, that were University College the only institution in the area, there would be no need for a formal Higher Education Precinct with the paraphernalia of compulsory purchase orders. University College has been able to buy most of the property it needs for expansion on the open market.

Hilton minimized the disruptive effect of University College's expansion, by estimating that no more than seventy houses will actually be affected by development in the next decade. And that many of these are already inhabited by students at the College. He emphasized the position of the College that it did not want to displace residents unnecessarily. However, he admitted that no serious consideration had been given to techniques for relocating those displaced back in the redeveloped areas.

University College viewed the UWIST/UGC/Cardiff dispute somewhat as a bystander. It perceives the UGC role as one of benevolent assistance. The UGC is not seen as an interfering agency in this particular affair or in university life in general.

## C. THE CITY OF CARDIFF

### i) THE PLANNING OFFICE

After the Buchanan Report was published, the City Planning Officer became the prime mover in regard to the Higher Education Precinct. The City Planning Officer was and is Mr. Ewart Parkinson, a man considered by his colleagues to be of forceful personality and of sound reputation as a city planner. He and his staff of bright young men see the Higher Education Precinct as a very important component of the overall development of Cardiff. And they see it as an important complement to a grandiose scheme for the redevelopment of the commercial area of the city center, which has also been in the process of design and implementation during this period. So it has been Parkinson and his staff who have orchestrated the policy and technical discussions which have been going on over the years.

Members of the City Planning staff acknowledge the various inadequacies in the planning process which led up to the public hearings on the higher education precinct: especially the lack of participation by local residents and the inadequate canvassing of alternative substantive development plans once the actual Higher Education Precinct was designated. This latter criticism can be levied against the planners, because, for example, no consideration was given to the possibility of heterogeneous land and building use within the Higher Education Precinct. The whole area will be used strictly for university purposes. But although the planning staff is willing to acknowledge the substance of these complaints, they strongly believe that the actual design of the Higher Education Precinct in its present location is the best alternative for the development of the two universities in particular and the development of the city as a whole.

And the City Planning staff is now meeting the criticism of lack of participation by the affected public by including local resident representatives on two planning committees dealing with student housing and sport facilities respectively within the Higher Education Precinct.

The City Planning staff's perception of the UGC is quite complimentary: they see the staff and officers of the UGC as being "very capable indeed." And they believe that without

the intervention of the UGC and the effective chairmanship role of the UGC representatives at the quadripartite meetings, there would have been little hope of getting University College and UWIST to agree on a common scheme for development within a coherent planning area. They see the UGC's role as "determining" in the planning process.

## ii) CITY HALL

The senior administrative officers in the City of Cardiff and the members of the Council seem to view the competition between UWIST and University College as the shenanigans of two misbehaving kids. It is the City's job to make them see what is best for them and best for the City. And the future physical development of the universities within the central city is what is best for the City of Cardiff.

The problems caused to local residents seem to be quite secondary in the City's considerations. Indeed, it seems that officials responsible for housing and relocation were involved in the development of City policy concerning the Precinct only in a secondary manner after the important decisions were made.

The view of City Hall in this matter is a paradigm of the civic pride "what's good for business is good for the community" attitude. The City Treasurer's Office provides the following assessment of the importance of the development of the City. The City will contribute £3 million to acquisition and development of land according to its agreement with the UGC. The overall investment in the development of the institutions will be over £30 million. The rateable (that is, taxable, because in Great Britain university improvements are subject to tax by the local governments) value of these improvements will be about £500,000 per year. In addition, it is estimated that over 4,000 extra staff will be added as well as 10,000 extra students per year admitted (though not necessarily all new to Cardiff). The City estimates that these additional people will spend an extra £10 million in the City. A good investment by anybody's calculation.

In addition to the economic advantages, one must keep in mind the fact that the Welsh have a reputation for love of

learning and education. Higher education is usually a matter of some pride to a city; in Cardiff it is considered to be an invaluable asset.

The City Treasurer, Mr. Mansfield, sees the Higher Education Precinct and the city center business redevelopment project as the two most important projects in the future of Cardiff. And he is especially jealous of both, because he believes that successive national governments have short-changed Cardiff, in that they have left Cardiff out of various area redevelopment schemes designed to aid most of the rest of Wales.

City Hall views the role of the UGC in the Higher Education Precinct affair as quite constructive. The officials go to great pains to contrast the positive performance of the UGC with that of the quarrelsome universities. About the UGC: "You can do business with them."

#### D. THE PROTESTERS

Those protesting against the Higher Education Precinct include the groups one would expect: the local residents, residents living contiguous to the areas designated for redevelopment, and the students. And their arguments could be lifted from this particular context and placed within the framework of any similar situation in the United States. "They have not involved us in the planning process." "Our rights of residence in the neighborhood are being trampled on by the expansionist universities and the city politicians." "They," say the students, "are being exploited by the bureaucrats in the Universities and city hall."

To say that these charges could be put into any similar context is in no way to belittle their importance or to cast doubt on their veracity; it is only to indicate that when the expansion of the physical plant of a university takes place, those whose interests are most immediately and detrimentally affected are seldom given the role which their stake suggests they ought to have. And Cardiff is no exception.

The public hearing was the first opportunity which the local residents really had to participate in the decision concerning the Higher Education Precinct. And by this point, they were confronted with a take it or leave it choice. Even the city planners acknowledge this (and regret it).



And at the point of the public hearing, the public participated under severe disadvantages. Mr. Stephen Weisbart, a lawyer with the National Coal Board in Cardiff, who works with neighborhood residents' associations in his spare time, represented a local residents' group in an area not immediately slated for redevelopment but nevertheless part of the Higher Education Precinct. He said that it was impossible for him and his group to participate in the public hearing in manner equivalent to the participation by the city and the universities. They did not have the financial resources necessary to hire the highest powered consultants or to give the planners they did hire the resources which a major study would require. Most of their presentation was based on part-time study and preparation. When one looks at the actual documentary evidence presented by the protesters and compares it with the city, its substantive impact is obviously light weight. However, the materials submitted by Mr. Weisbart's group did effectively raise procedural issues and challenge the lack of participation by residents, which the planning law could be construed to require. And Mr. Weisbart did make an important planning point: the original plan on which the Higher Education Precinct is based was a transportation study, not a full-fledged developmental program for the whole city. And the effects of all of the particular plans - the Higher Education Precinct, the massive central city business redevelopment plan and transportation plans, - had not been subject to a major public hearing. A partial hearing misses the most important planning points.

The protesters had little to say about the role of the UGC in the affair. They did not even know of the role played by the UGC in various negotiations.

The effectiveness of the points raised by the protesters is yet to be seen.

#### E. THE WELSH OFFICE

The Welsh Office makes the final decision concerning whether or not the Higher Education Precinct as presently planned proceeds. The Welsh Office held the public hearing, although the actual hearing officer was seconded to the Welsh Office from the Department of Environment, which would have

been responsible for such a hearing in England. Since the decision is under advisement, it was impossible to talk to anyone at the Office about it.

The only relationship between the UGC and Welsh Office in this decision seems to be through the public hearing. The UGC presented evidence supporting the Higher Education Precinct on educational grounds.

The UGC's position and how they defend it is the remaining and most important issue to be dealt with.

### III. THE ROLE OF THE U.G.C.

The UGC first became involved in the Higher Education Precinct Affair when it turned down informal feelers from UWIST for financing a major feasibility study of a new green field site campus. Then the involvement grew into a mediation-negotiation role among all of the local parties.

The UGC posture in its dealings with the various parties was at one and the same time both advisory and determining. Advisory in terms of various alternatives before each party. Determining in saying no to certain proposals and yes to others.

The UGC has a fair idea about the costs involved in developing any green field site, because of its experience in a number of such developments during the past decade. Not only are there costs of preparing sites and constructing all new buildings, but there are also the costs of running an old site in the case of an on-going institution, which means that one has duplicated costs over a number of years. So the UGC was able to tell the parties in Cardiff exactly where the cut-off point would be in terms of making the Higher Education Precinct an attractive investment to it. This figure was: £1 million from the UGC. Any additional cost would have to be met by Cardiff if it wanted a central city development. And, as we have seen, Cardiff agreed to finance the Precinct on this condition.

In addition to the financial considerations of development, there is an admitted disposition among the staff of the UGC to encourage the two major institutions in Cardiff to share

facilities and develop joint programs, because the UGC does not believe that either institution by itself is large enough to make the most economical use of physical plant.

In other words, those at UWIST who see the UGC moving them toward amalgamation with University College have some hard evidence on which to base such conclusions. However, my impression of the UGC staff's position is not that it in any way wishes to threaten the identity of either institution, but it only wishes that all new construction and expansion be undertaken in the most efficient possible manner. There is no indication of any intent on the UGC's part to subvert the practical emphasis of UWIST or the liberal arts interest of University College. However, the local institutions are quite correct to be on their guard, because the relentless pressure of economy in construction and also in staff utilization could lead to program homogeneity in both institutions sharing the facilities.

The UGC has self-consciously avoided being involved in the dispute between the local residents and the planners. Sources at the UGC say that it does not think it appropriate for the UGC to consider any interest other than the educational impact of the investment. The City of Cardiff must consider the neighborhood interests and then proceed accordingly. Rather naively, staff at the UGC see it as an advice-giving agency concerned with educational issues, not an agency which in large measure actually calls the shots in the decision-making process.

The UGC reached its policy decisions about Cardiff in a rather informal way, since the issue never really reached the Committee as a formal issue. And in so far as alternatives were considered by the UGC staff, they were evaluated strictly in terms of educational investment, not in regard to the interests of the local residents or the City of Cardiff as a whole.

We now have at hand most of the information necessary to appraise the role of the UGC in this affair. But before attempting such an evaluation, it will be helpful to consider the whole planning process, for our conclusions in regard to its quality will be relevant to our evaluation of the UGC's role.

#### IV. PEOPLE, PLANNING, AND UNIVERSITIES

In both the United States and Great Britain, universities have not been very successful in physical planning in relation to surrounding communities. More often than not, universities have found themselves cast in the role of land grabber lumbering outside of its boundaries and gobbling up the homes and recreational areas of long-term residents of the communities affected. And city planning authorities in the cities have almost without exception abetted the universities in their games.

In the last few years in the United States, political activity by neighborhood residents has forced universities to acknowledge the interests of their immediate neighbors in their plans for physical expansion. Even the worst past offenders of neighborhood rights among American universities (among whom the list would include the best -- Columbia, Harvard, Yale, etc.) are now going out of their way to involve their neighbors in their planning and to recognize the rights of residents to live in the area by including them in the substantive plans developed. The idea of the homogeneous university campus is now a thing of the past in major urban areas. A healthy development, I believe.

Yet in Cardiff, during the period when the approach to planning for universities and their neighbors was changing in the United States, there was almost no involvement of local residents in the planning of the Higher Education Precinct. This lack of participation cannot be justified by Cardiff and the local universities on the grounds often given by American universities in the past: that expansion plans must be kept secret so that real estate prices do not shoot up. They lack this excuse because the City has the power of compulsory purchase orders. Belatedly the universities and the Planning Office of the City of Cardiff have involved local residents in the development of specific components of the plan for the Precinct. However, the tardiness of this involvement has subjected to moral and legal doubt a plan which has much merit.

This lack of participation by neighbors has affected the substantive plan. It might have been a better plan in educational and planning terms if some additional provision had

been made in each of the universities' development programs for residents and local businessmen who already live in the area. Both plans do allow for this in some degree; but neither plan urges the desirability of such heterogeneous use as a principle. Indeed, the possibility of placing local residents back in certain university buildings was never even canvassed. So a real opportunity has been lost.

Although opportunities have been missed in the past, there is every indication that the City Planning Office and the universities themselves now want to remedy the situation. Residents are involved in the planning of student residences and sports facilities. And because of a desire not to impose on more central city neighbors (and of course because land is cheaper outside of the central city), University College is planning an imaginative student residence scheme: the new residences will be built a few miles outside of the city but still along the railroad tracks, and a special station will be built there and at the university, with commuting trains reducing the miles to a few minutes between residence and classroom. Also, in order to encourage the maintenance of existing residential buildings in the Higher Education Precinct, University College is creating a number of student flats in these buildings to be shared by groups of students. So the future of university planning in Cardiff looks brighter than its past.

#### V. THE UGC AND LOCAL PLANNING POLITICS

The first and most important lesson to be learned from this case study is that without the intervention of the UGC in the Cardiff affair, there never would have been a Higher Education Precinct. It was the UGC's veto of UWIST's application to move out of Cardiff that made the Higher Education Precinct viable. Then it was the continuing mediating and advising role of the UGC which allowed the various parties to come to terms. And it was the UGC's judgment on the various issues which influenced the final shape of the agreement: the location of the Precinct and the sharing of costs. Even when a UGC judgment was meant only to be an advisory opinion, the fact that the UGC said, for example, "UWIST needs a little more land" was invoked to justify this particular action or that. Often the position of the UGC is invoked in documents prepared by others. What the UGC said was usually taken as gospel by the local participants.

As one can see from the comments of the various groups reported earlier, the UGC is characterized as the most important actor in this melodrama by most of them. The people in Cardiff perceive the UGC as the authoritative voice in the whole affair.

UWIST especially sees the UGC as the decisive force in the process. To understand the role of the UGC in this enterprise, we must look more closely at its role vis-a-vis UWIST.

Did the UGC "interfere" in the decisions of UWIST in regard to its future? The prima facie answer must be, "Yes." Were it not for the UGC, UWIST would have moved out of Cardiff. Or would it? Where would UWIST have raised the money to move? UWIST could have convinced some affluent Welshman to provide the money for the new plant, but there still would have been the issue of maintenance costs for the old and new plants. Also there would have been the problem of the viability of UWIST as technical university on its own without access to University College resources. And the economics of the future development of both UWIST and University College would have become less attractive. The UGC would have taken a very close look at the recurring settlements for UWIST on a green field site. Would UWIST have been able to attract sufficient private support to make up for any loss of UGC money for current operating expenses?

One must put the UGC "interference" in proper perspective. Anyone who has ever dealt with a major private donor will know that the private character of a donation is no guarantee of lack of strings. Indeed the pressure of the Welsh civic establishment might have been stronger on a private donor than it could be on the UGC.

And once the decision to force UWIST to stay in Cardiff was made, the UGC got the most favorable possible settlement for UWIST within the Higher Education Precinct. The City provided more land for UWIST and also became very sensitive to the needs of this relatively new institution.

Although there was interference by the UGC in the expansion plans of UWIST, there is no indication that this interference was any greater than that of any other potential donor. And in the course of the UGC intervention, UWIST got more from the other competing interests than it was likely to have procured if it had been operating on its own.



A second point about the UGC's role in this affair needs to be made: the attitude of the UGC that it should only consider educational value for money in its decisions in situations like those in Cardiff opens the way for all sorts of actions which are not in the public interest. The UGC can rightly say that the City of Cardiff should protect the interests of its own citizens, not the UGC, but it is quite naive to think that politicians committed to the development of their city, where development is almost always construed in economic terms, will adequately protect the interests of those who live in the areas scheduled for redevelopment, because these persons are usually marginal, economically and politically. So if one conceives of the public interest as including some minimal protection for particular interests of an unrepresented constituency, then it is irresponsible for the UGC to dismiss from its consideration these interests.

At the least the UGC could and should ask universities to include in their planning committees representatives of the local residents who will be most affected by the physical expansion of the universities. And also the UGC should modify its rules regarding expenditure for physical plant in central city locations to allow for greater density and somewhat larger buildings to provide opportunities for displaced persons to return to the area. Since such changes would mean higher construction costs, the universities and the UGC should negotiate with the cities for contributions from local budgets to meet these added expenses, which would be undertaken to preserve the interests of the local residents and the existing character of the central cities.

These recommended actions can be justified in educational terms which are considered appropriate for the UGC. The university itself is likely to be a richer place if it includes a diverse population within its immediate neighborhood. And the university is more likely to be able to tap all of the educational resources of the city if the people who are its neighbors respect it for respecting them.

Finally, I must reiterate the UGC's responsibility to very particular members of the public who are not in a strong position to defend themselves against it, the universities, and the cities. This responsibility falls on the UGC as part of its accountability to the interest of the public at large.

## CONCLUSION

It is very difficult to make any final judgments about the Cardiff Higher Education Precinct affair. It will be interesting to see what the final outcome is from the Welsh Office.

Given the alternatives open to the institutions, the City, and the UGC, the Higher Education Precinct as presently constituted seems to be the best geographical alternative, for it allows both institutions to develop without displacing very large numbers of people while maintaining a central area of great beauty and cultural activity.

However, the process leading up to this development was quite inadequate: the initial study on which the plan was based was not a study of the higher education needs of the City; and the lack of participation by these representing local interests at stake was unfair as well as contributory to a less than ideal plan.

The UGC's role is even more difficult to assess than the Higher Education Precinct itself; especially because it seems to have been unique. The UGC does not as a rule involve itself in the politics of planning and development: and should it do so on a regular basis, this would become an impossible role. In this particular case, one must keep in mind the fact that the issue was one of expansion: the UGC did not tell UWIST or University College what it could or could not do within the constraints of their present resources. So the interference was in the freedom to expand, not the freedom to exist and go about their business.

The crucial lesson to be learned from this case study by the foreign observer is that when one has a powerful and central funding agency for university education, the universe of local as well as university politics gains a new and commanding force. Instead of characterizing this new force as an interference, it is more appropriate to say that the addition of a new vector will change the orientation of both universities and localities.

Sincerely,

Irving J. Spitzberg, Jr.