



3.2 Lost space

realm, although unlike many others, he also recognised the vital role of public space management: 'Looking after towns and cities also includes after-care – caring about litter, fly-posting, where cars are parked, street cleansing, maintaining paved surfaces, street furniture, building facades, and caring for trees and planting' (Tibbalds 2001: 7). For him, after-care mattered every bit as much as getting the design right in the first place.

Empirical evidence that backs up claims that there has been a decline in the way we care for the urban environment (at least in the UK) is provided at the start of Chapter 5. The implications of this neglect are now widely accepted. Through their influential 'Broken Windows Theory', for example, Wilson and Kelling (1982) graphically demonstrated what a failure to deal with minor signs of decay within an urban area could bring – a rapid spiral of decline. They showed how a failure to repair broken windows quickly, or to deal promptly with other signs of decay such as graffiti or kerb crawlers can lead to the impression that no one cares, and quickly propel an area into decline.

Lost spaces

Other writers have written about certain types of contemporary urban space that make the management of public space a particular challenge. Loukaitou-Sideris (1996: 91), for example, writes about 'Cracks in the City'. For her, cracks are defined as the 'in-between spaces, residual, under-utilised and often deteriorating'. She argues that poor management is also to blame for the state of many corporate plazas, car parks, parks and public housing estates, 'where abandonment and deterioration have filled vacant space with trash and human waste'.

Trancik (1986: 3–4) has used the term 'lost space' to make similar arguments. For him, lost space is a description of public spaces that are 'in need of redesign, antispace, making no positive contribution to the surrounds or users'. Examples of lost spaces are 'the base of high-rise towers or unused sunken plazas, parking lots, the edges of freeways that nobody cares about maintaining, abandoned waterfronts, train yards, vacated military sites, and industrial complexes, deteriorated parks and marginal public-housing projects' (Figure 3.2). He argues the blame for creating lost

spaces lies squarely with the car, urban renewal, the privatisation of public space, functional separation of uses, and with the modern movement.

However, not all writers are critical of these neglected spaces. Hajer and Reijndorp (2001: 128) suggest that:

The new public domain does not only appear at the usual places in the city, but often develops in and around the in-between spaces. ... These places often have the character of 'liminal spaces': they are border crossings, places where the different worlds of the inhabitants of the urban field touch each other.

They quote a broad group of supporters for the idea of 'liminality' (Zukin 1991; Shields 1991; Sennett 1990), each arguing in different ways that such spaces can also act to bring together disparate activities, occupiers and characters in a manner that creates valuable exchanges and connections. Worpole and Knox (2007: 14) have termed such spaces 'slack' spaces arguing that they should be regulated with a light touch. For them, urban areas need places where certain behaviours are allowed that in other circumstances might be regarded as anti-social.

However, responsibility for the state of these types of public space seems to rest with the fact that it is rarely clear who should be managing them after they are built, or after they have declined. As a consequence, they are universally neglected, with Hajer and Reijndorp (2001: 129) arguing that much greater attention needs to be given to such transitional spaces.

24-hour space

Other forms of space are not neglected in the sense that 'lost' or 'slack' spaces are, but have nevertheless also taken on some of the characteristics of liminality. Roberts and Turner (2005) argue that the increasing emphasis on the evening economy and support for 24-hour city policies has brought with it forms of behaviour that even the perpetrators would feel is unacceptable in their own neighbourhoods. In such places the conflicts often revolve around the needs of local residents versus those of the revellers and local businesses serving the evening economy. Leisure and entertainment destinations such as London's Soho are of this type.

In the UK, the 24-hour city and concepts of the evening economy became a major thrust in the regeneration efforts of towns and cities throughout the 1990s, and the government-led deregulation of the drinks industry that followed stoked this heady mix, turning many urban centres into what have been termed 'youthful playscapes' (Chatterton and Hollands 2002). For some, these spaces may not have been neglected, but they have nevertheless been abandoned to market forces and to a clientele of the young with disposal income to burn (Worpole 1999), in the process