Comparison Between Two Neighbourhoods In Glasgow: Castlemilk And Woodlands

At the beginning of the 19th century, Glasgow was expanding to accommodate for businessmen who sought housing outside of the city center. Now, a mix of townhouses, terraces and tenements can be found in the Woodlands area. With the Glasgow University campus, hospitals, schools and public spaces, the area has developed well in comparison to Castlemilk. Built to combat the housing crisis of the mid-1900s, Castlemilk was designed as an independent township to provide housing for the working class. The comparison between Castlemilk and Woodlands is of crucial importance to recognize the effect which such areas have on the communities and to allow for the positive growth of Glasgow as a society.

As one of the four post-war peripheral housing estates constructed in Glasgow, Castlemilk spans across an area of two and a half square miles. The estate consists of modern tenements of uniform height. These classical 4 storey tenements can also be found in the Woodlands area, where the buildings are rarely taller than the street width. This highlights the parallelism between the two areas. It indicates that, despite sending Glasgow Corporation to Marseille to study the unité d’habitation for the development of the new estate, Castlemilk is equally as invested in the context and history of the Glasgow region as is the Woodlands area.

Following Castlemilk's initial 4 storey tenement plans, multi storey blocks were added in the 1960s. The aim was to plant the blocks on the top of the hill to integrate with the skyline. However, relating to the rest of Castlemilk with its moderately low buildings, the multi-storey blocks can be criticized as ignoring the context of the area. On the other-hand, the Woodlands refrained from building into the sky, instead receiving the classification of a conservation area to preserve or enhance the areas architectural character and historical interest. This can imply that the Woodlands priorities were to provide appropriate housing whilst also remain contextually sensitive and reverberating deeply within the local context whereas Castlemilk was not concerned with maintaining harmony with the wider Glaswegian region.

Following the regeneration scheme of the Woodlands, new buildings with symmetrical brick clad facades were introduced, quite similar to the modern tenements found in Castlemilk. In the Woodlands these can be found around Ashley and Carnarvon street and in Castlemilk the symmetrical brick is found, but not limited to, in Stravanan Gardens. The use of brick brings both Castlemilk and the Woodlands into harmony with the historical context. The symmetrical red and beige brick clad facades take some aspects from historical tenements including horizontal ledges indicating the extent of the sensitivity to the context of the area. Despite Castlemilk’s attempt to developing appropriate housing for the working class, the Woodlands was able to work with and reverberate deeply within the local context. Consequently, the return to brick and like facades once again indicate to the similarities between both Castlemilk and the Woodlands.

Due to it’s proximity to the city centre as well as the Glasgow University campus, the woodlands area is popular amongst business men and women and students. There, they can find parks, shops and pubs, along with the facility of public transport which each allow the area to thrive as a neighborhood. On the other hand, in Castlemilk up until the regeneration scheme

there were minimal shops and pubs to provide employment and entertainment for the citizens. This led to a rapid decline of quality of living which was not found in the Woodlands area. Consequently, as these amenities play such a vital part in both areas, we can assume they are the biggest cause for the differences found in the community lives of the Woodlands and Castlemilk.

As Castlemilk was a new development in the 1950s, its population resulted from its sole purpose of providing working class with appropriate housing. As a result, you'll find single parent households make up half of those providing for children and just over a quarter of the adults hold qualifications at higher level or above. In comparison, the Woodlands report to have just under half of the proportion of the population claiming out of work benefits when compared to Glasgow and Castlemilk reports to have 73% more people claiming out of work benefits compared to Glasgow. From these numbers we can draw the conclusion that the population of the Woodlands includes successful middle class families and individuals whereas the population of Castlemilk seems to be disadvantaged.

In conclusion, the Woodlands and Castlemilk share some similarities. The uniform height across the majority of the buildings in both settlements indicate sensitivity to the context as well as with the use of symmetrical brick clad facades. However despite these similarities, I would argue that Castlemilk and the Woodlands' differences are much greater and more influential over the area and what sort of Believe it or not, there is actual official law in Scotland which defines what a tenement is Section 26 of the Tenement (Scotland) Act 2004: "Two or more related but separate flats divided from each other horizontally". communities they result in. This is because though maintaining uniform height across the majority of the buildings, Castlemilk still built multi storey blocks which do not integrate with the settlement well. Furthermore, the Woodlands has always offered it's habitants a variety of amenities along the Great Western Road. In Castlemilk, many of the amenities which we can find today were only introduced after the regeneration scheme in the 1980s and the area has been disadvantaged by this. Lastly, the population of both areas differ vastly, the Woodlands was offered to middle class business men and women whereas Castlemilk was to provide housing for the working class. As a result, we see that Castlemilk and the Woodlands are two separate regions which differ immensely from one another despite few similarities. It is these differences however which provide the city of Glasgow with a variety of communities and experiences to enable the society to learn from one another and thrive.